



# WMSC Inspection Report 20260527A

ISSUED 5/29/2026

## Inspection Details

Title: Roadway Worker Protection Overnight Inspection

Location: Potomac Ave Station (D07), Track One

Date of Inspection: 5/27/26

Time of Inspection: 11:30pm to 5:00am

Announced (via email to Senior Director, Safety Assurance and Director, Track and Structures 5/27/25)

Risk-Based (Inspection, Data Review)

Functional Area: Roadway Worker Protection

Hazard Rating: 1B

## Overview

On October 31, 2024, the Federal Transit Administration issued the new Roadway Worker Protection (RWP) rule ([49 CFR Part 671](#)). The new rule establishes the first ever federal “minimum safety standards for rail transit Roadway Worker Protection (RWP) to ensure the safe operation of public transportation systems and to prevent safety events, fatalities, and injuries to transit workers who may access the roadway in the performance of work.” (49 CFR section 671.3.) On December 2, 2024, the rule took effect, and rail transit agencies were required to achieve a state safety oversight agency-approved roadway worker protection program by December 2, 2025. Metrorail received WMSC approval of its new program that complies with FTA’s Part 671 on December 1, 2025.

On April 1, 2026, the new Part 671 compliant Roadway Worker Protection Program officially replaced the legacy program at Metrorail.

Since the inception of the WMSC’s current Inspection Program in November 2024, roadway worker protection defects have comprised one-third<sup>1</sup> of all defects identified by WMSC Inspectors. Adherence to roadway worker protection rules is critical to the safety of roadway workers and is therefore a continued focus area of the WMSC’s oversight activities.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: WMSC Inspections Dashboard, May 7, 2026.



Metrorail certifies roadway workers as being proficient by affixing a special sticker to Metrorail employees' OneBadge<sup>2</sup> so that other personnel may identify that the worker has received the required RWP training and is therefore knowledgeable on the RWP rules.

The goal of this May 27, 2026, Inspection was to observe compliance with the new Roadway Worker Protection Program, specifically observing overnight work crews to ensure the workers and equipment are compliant with the new Roadway Worker Protection Manual.

After concluding the inspection, WMSC Inspectors conducted a debrief with the roadway worker in charge (RWIC) for the grout pads and anchors replacement crew in accordance with Program Standard Section 6.F.1.

## **Defects and Corrective Actions**

WMSC Inspections identify safety issues that may be classified as defects, findings, or recommendations. Findings and recommendations are defined by Program Standard Section 5.E.2 and 5.E.3, respectively. Ordinarily, issues identified in a WMSC inspection report are classified as defects. Defects are specific safety issues of non-conformance/non-compliance that are identified, and that require remedial action.

This inspection did not identify any findings or recommendations and therefore does not require a WMSC Corrective Action Plan in accordance with Program Standard Section 5.E.4.

## **Defect Observations and Determinations**

WMSC Inspectors observed Metrorail personnel performing grout pad (a rubber material that sits between the running rail sits and the concrete fixation point) and anchor renewal (anchors the rail to the grout pad).

### **Defect 1**

Present in the work zone working limits was a Roadway Maintenance Machine (RMM),<sup>3</sup> prime mover 47 (PM47). WMSC Inspectors observed that one fire extinguisher in the cab of PM47 did not have an inspection tag attached to it. Because of this, it was not possible to verify whether the fire extinguisher had been recently inspected, and, therefore, whether the fire extinguisher was likely to function in an emergency.

### **Hazard Rating: 1B**

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<sup>2</sup> WMATA's OneBadge is the official identification method at WMATA and is the only identification card used and recognized by employees and contractors.

<sup>3</sup> A Roadway Maintenance Machine (RMM) is defined as "A device powered by any means of energy other than hand power. These devices are being used on or near rail track(s). They are for maintenance, repair, construction, or inspection of track, bridges, railway signal, communications, or electric traction systems." (Metrorail Operating Rulebook 17-14.)



## Photos



Photo 1: Fire extinguisher with missing inspection tag located in the cab of PM47.

## Defect 2

A second fire extinguisher located in the Flag person booth (F607) on the flatcar connected to PM47 was last inspected in January 2026. (This is a monthly inspection.)

## Hazard Rating: 1B

## Photos



Photo 2: Fire extinguisher with expired inspection tag located in the Flag Person's booth (F607) on the flat connected to PM47

## Defect 3 (mitigated)

On the prime mover, PM47, chain links designed to serve as fall protection were not connected to the handrails. This was mitigated onsite.



**Hazard Rating: 1B**

**Photos**



Photo 3: Unsecured Chain Link on PM47.



Photo 4: Issue mitigated by onsite staff and the chain link properly connected on PM 47.



**Defect 4**

WMSC Inspectors observed several of the work crew exiting PM47 by stepping from the RMM directly onto the third rail cover board to access the roadway. This poses a potential electrocution hazard through inadvertent contact with the third rail, and poses a slip, trip, and fall hazard. It can also cause damage to the third rail cover board.

This was communicated to personnel on site. Metrorail personnel told WMSC Inspectors that a ladder is typically used to climb from the RMM onto the roadway. However, a ladder was not available or located on the RMM before the work crew deployed from the rail yard to the work site.

**Hazard Rating: 1B**

**Observation 1**

The Roadway Worker in Charge (RWIC) used the proper form while conducting the On-Track Safety Briefing and additionally briefed those personnel who were late arrivals, as required by the Roadway Worker Protection Manual (RWPM). In addition, the RWIC checked to ensure that personnel had the proper personal protective equipment (PPE), he read the Good Faith Challenge statement to workers, and made sure all the attendees, including late arrivals, signed the document.

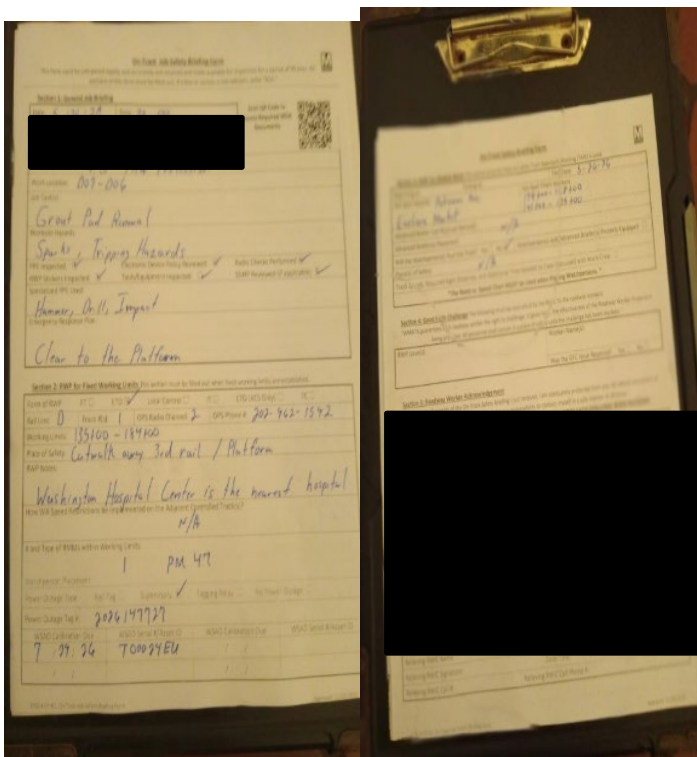


Photo 5 and 6: OnTrack Safety Briefing form, front and back, correctly completed.



## Observation 2

The RWIC correctly placed the track safety equipment at the boundaries of the work zone which included work mats, shunts, and red e-flares that are required for the Exclusive Track Occupancy (ETO)<sup>4</sup> work zone safety protection.



Photo 7 (left) and 8 (right): RWIC properly placing shunts and work zone mats during the work zone set up.

## Observation 3

Additionally, the RWIC used special safety equipment for hot sticking<sup>5</sup> the third rail to confirm power was down. The RWIC's Class 0 high voltage gloves used were up to date and in compliance.

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<sup>4</sup> Exclusive Track Occupancy (ETO) is a form of roadway worker safety which is considered Local Control (LC). Local Control is defined as: "A method of Exclusive Track Occupancy working limits using controlled signals that are placed under the exclusive control of Automatic Train Control personnel." (Metrorail Operating Rulebook 17-10.)

<sup>5</sup> A Hot Stick is defined as "A voltage testing device used to verify third rail power outages, or the use of the device." (Metrorail Roadway Worker Protection Manual, RWPM-59.)

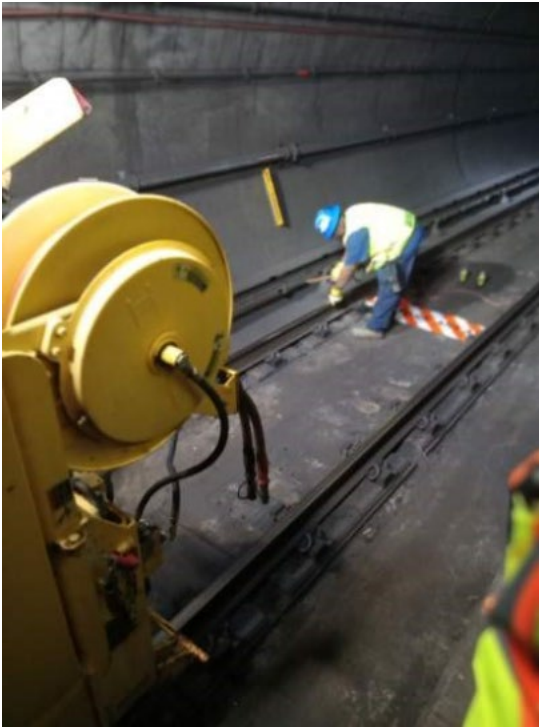


Photo 9: Hot Sticking of the third rail.

#### Observation 4

The Warning Strobe Alarm Device (WSAD)<sup>6</sup> was properly calibrated. Additionally, the WSAD was properly installed between the third rail and the running rail by the RWIC.



Photo 10 (left) and 11 (right): The Wayside Strobe Alarm Device (WSAD) with a calibration date of 7/29/26 and the RWIC's proper installation of the device.

<sup>6</sup> A WSAD is defined as, "The third rail safety device which provides work crews with an alarm in the form of both siren and strobe light if the third rail to which it is connected becomes energized. After confirmation of a power outage, the device is connected between the de-energized third rail and the negative return rail. The device alarms crews if the third rail is energized or if the device is accidentally disconnected or knocked over." (RWPM-64.)



## Next Steps

Please respond **by Monday, June 1, 2026**, to acknowledge receipt and to convey responses to the WMSC regarding what, if any, actions will be or have been taken in response.