



WMSC Inspection Report 20260710

ISSUED 7/13/2026

Inspection Details

Title: Authorized Construction Site (ACS) Inspection

Location: Bethesda (A09) to Grosvenor-Strathmore (A11)

Date of Inspection: 7/10/26

Time of Inspection: 8:00am to 1:00pm

Announced (via email to Senior Director of Safety Assurance)

Risk-Based (Corrective Action Plan C-0287)

Functional Area: Roadway Worker Protection

Hazard Rating: 2C

Overview

On July 10, 2026, WMSC Inspectors performed an announced Roadway Worker Protection (RWP) compliance inspection of the summer 2026 Construction Track Occupancy (CTO) work location between Grosvenor-Strathmore Station (A11) and Bethesda Station (A09) Tracks 1 and 2.

This is a risk-based inspection based on open corrective action plan (CAP) C-0287, finding 8 from the [2024 Roadway Worker Protection Program Audit](#): "Metrorail has no controls to ensure that rules being applied in areas it designates as an 'Authorized Construction Site' provide the same or greater level of protection for roadway workers as those workers have in other parts of the WMATA Rail System." Additionally, this Authorized Construction Site (ACS) is the first time WMATA has used the new Construction Track Occupancy RWP protection. The RWP program was updated as required by 49 CFR 671 and approved by the WMSC on December 1, 2025, and implemented on April 1, 2026.

The objectives of the inspection were to observe the Construction Track Occupancy (CTO) track set up, RWP track safety equipment, On Track Safety Briefing (OTSB), personal protective equipment (PPE), and the usage of any additional specific safety equipment required in the Authorized Construction Site (ACS).

The Authorized Construction Site working limits are separated into two zones within the chain markers 569+86 to 325+65; currently scheduled from July 6, 2026, through September 6, 2026. The Authorized Construction Site is being operated under the authority of Clark Construction. All personnel that access the site are required to attend and complete the required safety training



provided by Clark Construction. Upon completion of the required safety training, a sticker was provided, to be placed on the required hard hat.

WMSC Inspectors first entered the working limits at Grosvenor-Strathmore Station (A11) and attended the On Track Safety Briefing (OTSB) for Zone 2. WMSC Inspectors then observed an additional OTSB at Bethesda Station (A09) after arriving at Zone 1 of the ACS, then traversed Zone 1 of the ACS from chain marker 536+86 to 536+43 verifying the required safety equipment on each end (chained wooden rail tie barrier, shunt straps, two red e-flares, and an end-of-working-limits mat).

After concluding the inspection, WMSC Inspectors conducted a debrief with the WMATA SAFE manager 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.

Observations and Defect Determinations

The Roadway Worker in Charge (RWIC) used the proper, and newly implemented, on track safety briefing form while conducting the OTSB. The RWIC checked to ensure that personnel had the proper PPE, read the Good Faith Challenge statement, and received the signatures of all attendees. The Warning Strobe Alarm Device (WSAD) calibration sticker was verified and compared to the on-track safety briefing form.

Mitigations to resolve the identified defects were discussed with the SAFE personnel that attended the inspection.

Observation 1

WMSC Inspectors observed a gauge rod installed at A1 357+00. According to Maintenance Bulletin #20160929-05, gauge rods are a temporary fix and must be removed no later than 14 days after installation. On site, it was not possible to determine how long this gauge rod was present in situation.



Photos



Photo 1: Existing gauge rod at A1 357+00.

Defect 1

WMSC Inspectors observed two broken third rail insulators within a 39-foot section at A1 365+50. According to the TRST-1000 table 107.7G, this defect is considered a yellow condition warranting a medium speed restriction.

Hazard Rating: 3C

Photos



Photos 2 (left) and 3 (right): Show broken third rail insulators.



Defect 2

This is the same tie at issue in defect 3. WMSC Inspectors noted that the required locking device (here, a chain) to mark work limits was not locked onto the wood tie, Track 1 on the chain marker 569+86.

RWPM 1.28.6 Construction Track Occupancy Set-Up Construction Track Occupancy working limits supplemental protection, consisting of two (2) red lanterns or e-flares, supplemental shunting devices, a wooden rail tie chained and secured to the running rails with an effective locking device, and “End Work Area” mats, shall be placed at each end of the working limits prior to beginning scheduled work.

Hazard Rating: 3D

Photos

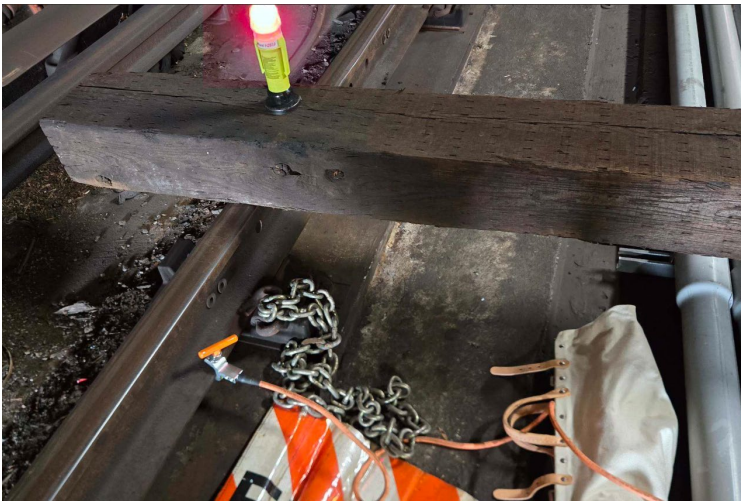


Photo 4: Missing chain lock at the end of the work zone.

Defect 3

This is the same tie at issue as defect 2. One of the observed wood rail ties was only secured with one lock and not the two required by PROJDEL-SOP-100-20-01, Approval Procedures for Authorized Construction Sites (1/23/2026):

6.2.2.1 Physical Isolation: A detailed description of how the Organization of Infrastructure will physically isolate the ACS, which must include:



WASHINGTON METRO RAIL SAFETY COMMISSION

Note: All ACS physical barriers located on the Metro roadway must be secured with both a Metro owned lock and a primary contractor-owned lock to ensure any movement of the barriers be agreed to by both parties.

Hazard Rating: 3D

Photos



Photo 5: Wood tie only secured with one lock.

Defect 4

WMSC Inspectors noted unsecured access to the Authorized Construction Site. Personnel were observed without safety equipment entering the ACS through an open gate adjacent to MD Route 355 presenting a potential safety risk.

Hazard Rating: 2D

Photos



Photo 6: Unsecured and open area to the ACS, easily accessible from Rockville Pike – MD 355.



Defect 5

The access gate for the authorized construction site was left open and unchecked. This presents the opportunity for individuals to enter the work site who are unauthorized or who have not attended the required On Track Safety Briefing (OTSB). Individuals were observed freely walking both past the RWIC and through the open gate entrance without any sort of badge check.

Hazard Rating: 3D

Next Steps

Please respond **by Thursday, July 16, 2026**, to acknowledge receipt and to convey responses to the WMSC regarding what, if any, actions will be or have been taken in response. Additionally, for the gauge rod in Observation 1, please provide when this gauge rod was placed and the plan for addressing the underlying gauge deficiency that necessitated the gauge rod being placed.