



WMSC Inspection Report 20260922B

ISSUED 9/28/2026

Inspection Details

Title: Fort Totten (E06) Overnight Roadway Worker Protection Inspection

Location: Fort Totten Station (E06)

Date of Inspection: 9/22/2026

Time of Inspection: 11:00pm on 9/21/26 to 4:00am on 9/22/26

Announced (via email to Senior Director, Safety Assurance on 9/21/26)

Risk-Based (Investigations)

Functional Area: Roadway Worker Protection, Vehicles, Track

Hazard Rating: 3C

Overview

On September 21, 2026, the WMSC conducted an inspection with the goal of observing roadway worker protection (RWP) and rail maintenance machine (RMM) operations for compliance with the Metrorail Operating Rulebook (MOR) and the Roadway Worker Protection Manual (RWPM). This included observing the on-track safety briefing and requesting roadway access, as well as radio communication between the control center and various roadway maintenance machines.

This is a risk-based inspection based on several recent safety events involving roadway maintenance machines:

On Sunday, September 20, 2026, the tamper machine (T005) derailed at L2 137+00 while mitigating a fouled ballast condition in the RSA work zone (Pentagon Station (C07) to L'Enfant Plaza Station (F03)). Fouled ballast is a condition that can cause drainage problems and affect the ability of the ballast to constrain/stabilize the track, creating a potential safety concern. At the time of the derailment, WMATA had not concluded the necessary maintenance work and additional work was necessary to reopen the line for revenue service. Considering this derailment and recent safety events involving roadway maintenance machines, the WMSC determined a risk-based inspection of this RSA work zone was necessary.

The WMSC arrived at this work zone the day after the derailment and found all work complete and the fouled ballast area had been remediated.



Other Related Safety Events Involving Roadway Maintenance Machines

The April 22, 2026, collision between a prime mover flatcar (work equipment) and a stationary Metrorail Silver Line passenger train at Metro Center Station is presently under a National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) investigation with the WMSC and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) parties to that investigation. NTSB published the preliminary report in May 2026.¹

Subsequently, On August 14 and 15, Metrorail reported two additional collisions that met the threshold for safety event code A-3 (b) Collision between two rail transit vehicles.² On August 14, 2026, at approximately 9:40pm prime mover (PM50), while towing a flat car (F520), struck track vehicle NSP01 in West Falls Church Yard (K99). There were no injuries. Additionally, on August 15, 2026, at approximately 3:23am three roadway worker maintenance machines (PM41, T006, GC02) collided between East Falls Church Station (K05) and West Falls Church Station (K06) on track 1. There were three minor injuries reported. All injuries were non-life threatening, and all individuals have been released from hospital since the event. All three of these collisions continue to be investigated. The April 22, 2026, collision that resulted in patron injuries is being led by the NTSB. The two more minor collisions that occurred August 14 and 15 by the WMSC and WMATA, respectively. These investigations are ongoing.

This inspection did not identify any defects based on information known to the Inspectors at the time of the inspection. During the inspection, four RMM's movement and radio traffic was observed. The goal of Metrorail's Track and Structure (TRST) department work that night was to perform track inspection. Track inspections help to detect hazards such as track defects, obstructions, equipment, unsafe conditions, or operational issues that could endanger roadway workers.

After concluding the inspection, WMSC Inspectors conducted a debrief with the WMATA Safety Department personnel onsite in attendance 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.

¹ NTSB Preliminary Report: <https://www.nts.gov/investigations/Pages/RRD26FR015.aspx>

² In accordance with WMSC [Program Standard](#) (Rev. 8) section 7.B Metrorail must "...report all safety events outlined in the Safety Event Notification Matrix in the timeframe and manner specified for each safety event type."



Observations and Defect Determinations

Observation 1

The WMSC Inspectors conducted a review of the On-Track Safety Briefing (OTSB) and the personal protective equipment (PPE) in use by the roadway work crew. On-Track Safety Briefings are crucial for ensuring that all personnel are aware of potential hazards, control measures, and operational expectations before commencing work, through displaying a significant role in preventing accidents in transit environments. The On-Track Safety Briefing is completed by the roadway worker in charge and identifies the form of roadway protection, working limits, job tasks and general hazards. The job description for this inspection was a track inspection that would use Foul Time as its roadway worker protection (RWP). In addition, the roadway worker in charge (RWIC) was in possession of the current Track Access Guide (TAG) dated April 1, 2026. (Confirmed compliance with Metrorail Operating Rulebook 1.5 and 1.5.1.) The OTSB was conducted effectively and covered all required aspects.

Photos

This form must be completed legibly and accurately, and must be made available for inspection for a period of 30 days after completion.

On-Track Job Safety Briefing Form

Work Location: **Edo (BLE)**

Job Task(s): **Track Inspections**

Worksite Hazards: **Poor lighting, footing, tripping hazards, No PPE**

PPE Inspected: ☒ Electronic Device Policy Reviewed: ☒ Radio Checks Performed: ☒ RWP Stickers Inspected: ☒ Tools/Equipment Inspected: ☒ SSWP Reviewed (if applicable): ☒ Specialized PPE Used: **Hardhat, Boots, Vests, Flashlights, gloves, Eyewear**

Emergency Response Plan: **Noting RWIC, RWC, yard supervisor, get to platform**

Section 2: RWP for Fixed Working Limits This section must be filled out when fixed working limits are established.

Form of RWP: **FT** ☒ ETO ☐ Local Control ☐ IT ☐ CTO (ACS Only) ☐ TC ☐

Rail Line: **E** Track # (s): **1** OPS Radio Channel: **3** OPS Phone #: **969-1502**

Working Limits: **264707 - 276700**

Place of Safety: **Platform, Safety Officer**

RWP Notes: **All PPE, Proper WMA ID, WMC nearest ER**

How Will Speed Restrictions be Implemented on the Adjacent Controlled Track(s)? **N/A**

and Type of RMMs within Working Limits: **N/A**

Watchperson Placement: **Red Tag** ☐ Supervisory ☐ Tagging Relay ☐ No Power Outage ☐

Power Outage Type: **WSAD Calibration Due** WSAD Serial #/Asset ID: **1**

Power Outage Tag #: **WSAD Calibration Due** WSAD Serial #/Asset ID: **1**

Revised: 12/01/2021

Photo 1: Correctly Completed On-track Safety Briefing Form

Observation 2



WMSC Inspectors also monitored radio communications on radio Ops 1 and Ops 3: Listening for movement authority and absolute block³ protection established by the control center, as laid out in Metrorail Operating Rulebook (MOR) 12.5.4 (RMM movement, reproduced below). Additionally, WMSC Inspectors listened to ensure radio communications were conducted as required by MOR 13.11 (reproduced below). WMSC Inspectors monitored radio communications to confirm the application of MOR rule 12.5.4 for several RMMs. The RMMs were PM58, PM25, PM49 + 1 (Convoy Block) and GV01. None of the listed RMMs were observable in the WMSC Inspectors location except PM65. Therefore, the photo of PM65 is provided as physical confirmation of an RMM that followed MOR rules 13.11.1, 13.11.2, 13.11.3, 13.11.4, and 12.14.1. All observed radio communications followed Metrorail Operating Rulebook the below standards.

12.5.4 Governs RMM Movement

RMMS not equipped with Automatic Train Protection must not be moved on revenue tracks until an absolute block is established by the Rail Traffic Controller.

13.11 Governs Radio Messages: Content & Code Words

13.11.1 Metro personnel must use commonly accepted terms for radio communications.

13.11.2 When communicating location information that is Alpha-numeric (e.g., C-07, B-11), ICAO phonetics must be used for “alpha” character.

13.11.3 ICAO phonetics must be used when communicating about Traction Power Substations or Tiebreaker Stations.

13.11.4 Employees must use phonetic spelling during poor communication conditions.

13.11.5 Communications must be as brief as possible and must use these key words:

“Copy” To signify that the message was received and understood.

“Over” At the close of each transmission to which a response is expected.

“Out” At the close of each transmission to which a response is not necessary. “Out” must be preceded by proper identification.

³ An absolute block is “A section of track that must not be occupied by more than one (1) train or piece of equipment. Metrorail Operating Rulebook Glossary of Terms 17-1



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“Emergency”..... Transmitted three times to obtain use of radio channels for initial report of conditions endangering rail vehicle movements.

Observation 3

Class 2 vehicles are defined by the MOR as “Any rail vehicle designed only for maintenance purposes;” Roadway Maintenance Machines (RMM) are Class 2 vehicles and are further defined as “A device powered by any means of energy other than hand power.” WMSC Inspectors monitored compliance with the requirement of the MOR 12.14.1 for Prime Mover (PM65) and its attached flatcar (F606). Rule 12.14.1 states “Roadway Maintenance Machines operating at night must display white lights to the front and red lights to the rear.” (See Photos 2 and 3)

Photos

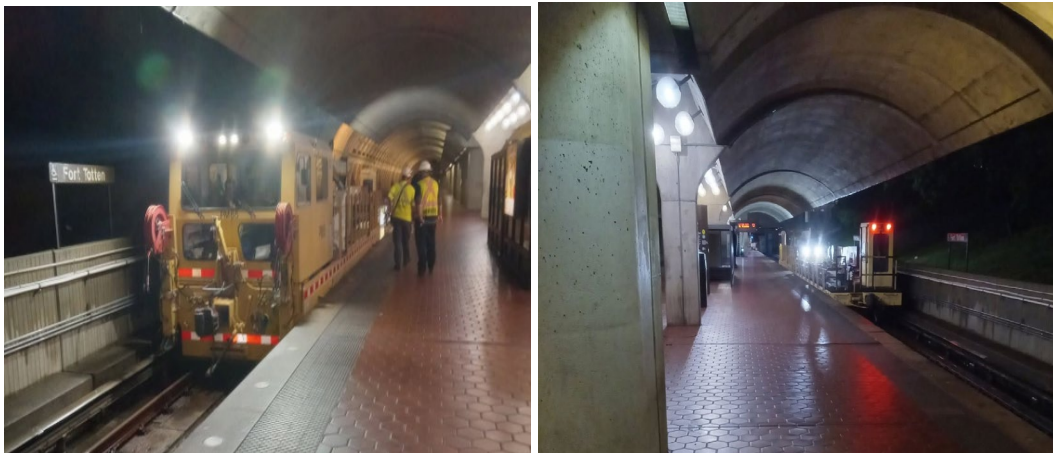


Photo2 (left) PM65 with white lights front facing and Photo 3 (right) Flatcar F606 with red rear lights active

Next Steps

Please respond **by Thursday, October 1, 2026**, to acknowledge receipt.