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WMSC Inspection Report 20261016A

ISSUED 10/20/2026

Inspection Details

Title: Metrorail Operating Rulebook Inspection

Location: West Falls Church Yard (K99) and Alexandria Yard (C99)

Date of Inspection: 10/15/2026 and 10/16/2026

Time of Inspection: 12:00am to 1:00am

Unannounced

Risk-Based (Corrective Action Plan C-193)

Functional Area: Operations

Hazard Rating: 4C

Overview

On October 15–16, 2026, the WMSC performed an unannounced, risk-based inspection to check for the presence of up-to-date rulebooks (Metrorail Operating Rulebook—MOR) while onsite for a different inspection. Access to the current rules is necessary for safe rail operations. This inspection is a follow up to previous rulebook inspections that were conducted on January 15, 2025 (report 20250115C—all rulebooks up-to-date), April 11, 2025 (report 20250411E—three out-of-date rulebooks), August 28, 2025 (report 20250828—three out-of-date rulebooks), July 9, 2025 (report 20250709—three out-of-date rulebooks), and October 1, 2026 (report 20251001—identified six out-of-date rulebooks).

As background, Corrective Action Plan (CAP) C-193 was issued on April 7, 2022, as finding 13 of the WMSC Audit of Rail Operations: "With frequent modifications due to temporary and permanent orders, and outdated versions of Metrorail's rulebook being distributed to personnel when hard copies are available, the latest Metrorail rules are not easily accessible to train operators. This creates document control issues and makes a rule requiring personnel to carry the latest version of the Metrorail Safety Rules and Procedures Handbook (MSRPH) unrealistic."

Subsequently, on September 1, 2023, Metrorail replaced the MSRPH with the Metrorail Operating Rulebook (MOR). C-0193 requires that only current copies of the Metrorail Operating Rulebook (MOR) are available and in use. C-193 remains an open corrective action plan.

The Metrorail Operating Rulebook sets out the mandatory operations rules for Metrorail service, defining what is required to safely and efficiently move trains, other roadway equipment, and how Metrorail protects roadway personnel. The rulebook applies to all operating personnel, including rail vehicle operators, rail traffic controllers, interlocking operators, field supervisors, and roadway workers. One of the rules in the Metrorail Operating Rulebook stipulates what is required to maintain accuracy and compliance with the rulebook ensuring employees always have the most up-to-date MOR information, Track Access Guide, Roadway Worker Protection Manual, current Bulletin Orders in effect, and Electrical Operations Manuals. This specific rule is laid out below.

MOR 1.5, Required Books and Documents

MOR 1.5.1 Employees must maintain and have access to current copies of the following while on duty if the document pertains to the performance of their duties:

- Metrorail Operating Rulebook
- Roadway Worker Protection Manual
- Track Access Guide
- Current Bulletin Orders in effect, and
- Electrical Operations Manual Employees are responsible for reporting to training with required materials. Training Department staff may not be available before class to assist with materials. Do not rely on Training Department staff to assemble books before a class.

MOR 1.5.2 Rules and processes in this book may change. Each employee is responsible for keeping their Metrorail Operating Rulebook, and other required documents, up to date.

MOR 1.5.3.1 Required Copies Employees must have the current Summary Bulletin Order, the most recent Non-Summary Bulletin Order, and any Supplemental Bulletin Orders.

1.5.3.6 Summary Bulletin orders are issued on the first Monday of each month, containing all current information. They remain in effect until next month's Summary Bulletin Order is issued.

1.5.3.7 Non-Summary Bulletin Orders are Issued on all Mondays except the first Monday of the month. Each new Non-Summary Bulletin Order supersedes the previous one and includes all current information issued after the Summary Bulletin Order, unless otherwise noted.

After concluding the inspection, WMSC Inspectors conducted a debrief with operations employees in possession of the Metrorail Operating Rulebook. Additionally, the WMSC Inspectors debriefed with the personnel in division management office, 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

WMSC Inspectors went onsite for an interlocking operation inspection; however, while present they checked that the current Metrorail Operating Rulebook (MOR) with an effective date of April 1, 2026, was in place at West Falls Church Yard (K99) and Alexandria Yard (C99) breakrooms and tower locations. Additionally, WMSC Inspectors identified that the current Metrorail Bulletin Order 201-22, with an effective date of 0001 hours, Monday October 12, 2026, should be included in all MOR during the time of the inspection for those MOR to be current. This bulletin order replaced the previous Bulletin Order 201-20. Bulletin Order 201-22 covers the following critical safety directives, Permanent Orders and Temporary Orders.

Critical Safety Directives:	26-01: Enhanced Rules for Operation
	26-02: Absolute Block
Permanent Orders:	25-17: Required Training, Qualifications, & Examinations, Rule 1.7.1
	26-01: 1B New Rule Language
	26-04: Radio Communications-Blanket Announcements Standards and Signal Management Requirements
	26-05: Radio Communications – Positive Identification Sequence Requirement
	26-06: Radio Communications – Signal Indication Communication Prohibition and Signal
	26-07: Radio Communications – ICAO Phonetics Applicability and Passenger Station Identification Standard
	26-08: Radio Communications – Key Word Usage and Communication Loop Closure Standard
Temporary Orders:	25-11: Amtrak RWP Exemption

25-23: Limiting RWP Responsibilities for Level One (1) Qualified Personnel

26-07 Temporary removal of physical characteristics requirements

In accordance with Corrective Action Plan C-193, these locations are where Metrorail must maintain current copies of the MOR and required documentation:1

1. Operations breakroom
2. Interlocking operator's office
3. Terminal supervisor's office

WMSC Inspectors visited only two of these locations (Interlocking Tower and Breakroom) as those locations were near at hand. The results are as follows:

Inspection Location	April 1, 2026 – MOR present (Yes/No); if No, MOR edition present	Bulletin Order 201-22 Available (Yes/No); if No, present Bulletin Order date
West Falls Church Breakroom	No – July 1, 2025, edition	No – October 5, 2026
West Falls Church Tower	Yes – April 1, 2026, edition	No Bulletin Order present
Alexandria Yard Breakroom	Yes – April 1, 2026, edition	No - October 5, 2026
Alexandria Tower	Yes – April 1, 2026, edition	No – March 2, 2026

Table 1. Lists the locations, MOR editions identified at the location, and whether the most current bulletin order was present (Bulletin Order 201-22).

Defect 1

The West Falls Church (K99) Rail Vehicle Operator (RVO) Breakroom MOR contains the previous July 1, 2025, version and not the current April 1, 2026, edition.

Hazard Rating: 4C

[1] As an interim mitigation as part of C-193, Actionable Item 11, copies of the Metrorail Operating Rulebook are to be "available and under control of division Managers in every tower, terminal, and breakroom." Additionally, that "Physical MORs will be clearly marked to identify the responsible division name and location and will be updated by division Managers when new orders are issued."

Photos

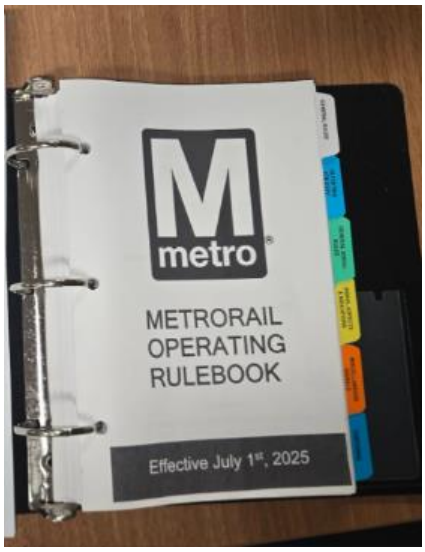


Photo 1: The breakroom at West Falls Church Yard with the July 1, 2025, MOR edition.

Defect 2

The West Falls Church (K99) Rail Vehicle Operator (RVO) Breakroom MOR did not have the current Monday October 12, 2026, bulletin orders included.

Hazard Rating: 4C

Photos

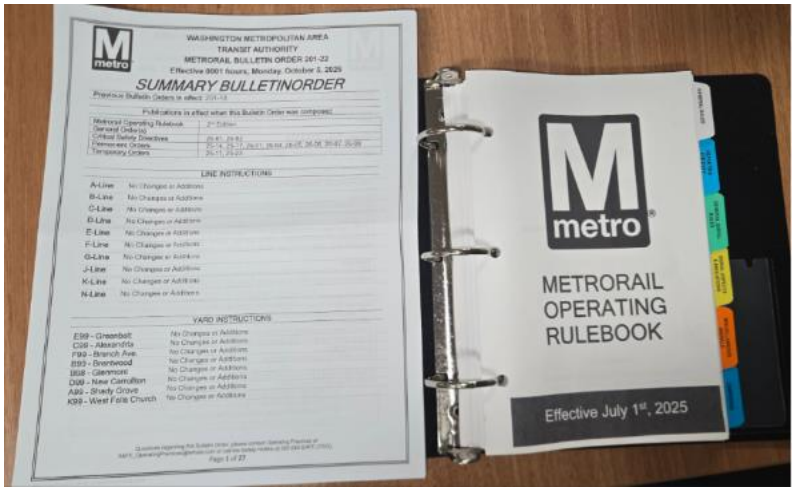


Photo 2: West Falls Church Yard breakroom previous edition with outdated bulletin orders.

Defect 3

The West Falls Church (K99) Interlocking Tower had the most recent version of the MOR but did not contain the bulletin orders.

Hazard Rating: 4C

Photos



Photo 3: The West Falls Church Yard Tower had the correct edition but no bulletin orders.

Defect 4

The Alexanderia Yard (C99) Rail Vehicle Operator (RVO) Breakroom MOR did not have the current Monday October 12, 2026, bulletin orders included.

Hazard Rating: 4C

Photo:

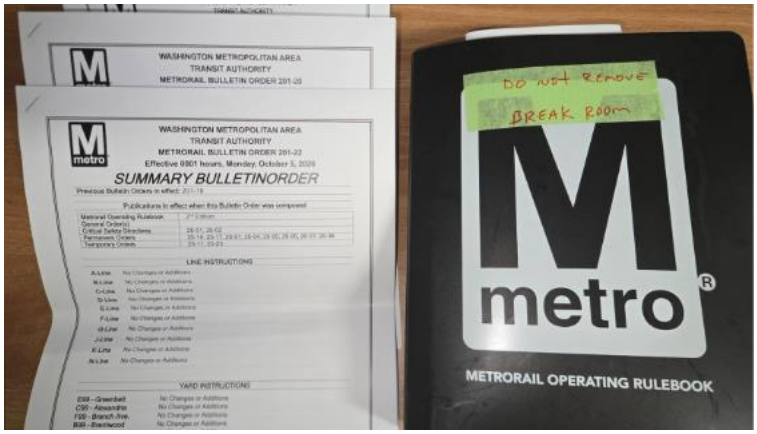


Photo 4: The Alexandria Yard breakroom's outdated bulletin orders.

Defect 5

The Alexandria (C99) tower had the correct April 1, 2026, edition of the MOR but did not have the most current Monday, October 12, 2026, bulletin orders.

Hazard Rating: 4C

Photos:

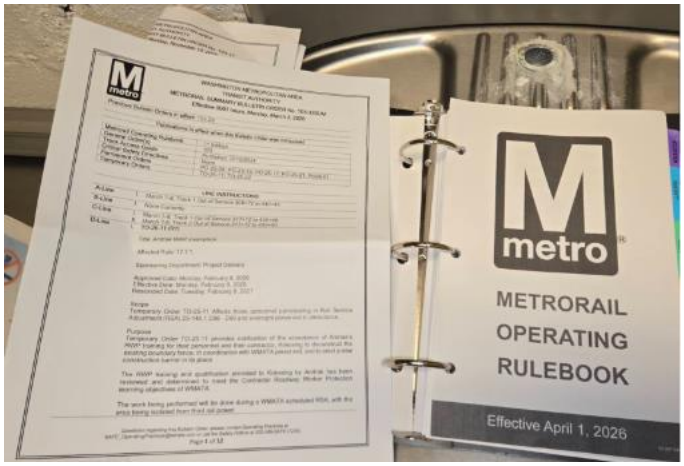


Photo 6: Alexandria Yard tower's correct MOR with outdated bulletin orders.

Defect 6 (Mitigated)

WMSC Inspectors observed contractors performing elevated work inside the West Falls Church (K99) Service and Inspection (S&I) facility. The inspectors inquired in the supervisor office about the requirements for the use of harness straps required when using scissor lifts. Metrorail personnel onsite stated that tethers (or straps) are required and immediately went to the shop floor and requested the contractors to attach safety harnesses for any elevated work they were performing, thus mitigating the risk.

Hazard Rating: 3C

Photos



Photo 6: Contractors performing tasks while not tethered to the scissor lift.

Next Steps

Please respond **by Monday, October 26, 2026,** to acknowledge receipt and to convey responses to the WMSC regarding what, if any, actions will be or have been taken in response.