

Update on COG and WMATA Metrorail Safety Coordination

Presented by:

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Presented to:

COG Board of Directors

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Presentation Overview

- Background
- NTSB Hearings
- Principal 2011 Agreement Revisions
- Process for Executing 2015 Policy Agreement
- Report on Emerging Operational Trends
- Communication Study

Background

- Senator Warner requested COG and WMATA collaborate to assess public safety radio and other communications.
- Senator Mikulski requested COG and WMATA develop a regional Metrorail training plan for first responders.
- COG Fire Chiefs, the Communications and Passenger Rail Safety Subcommittees and WMATA collaborated to develop the 2015 agreement revisions.
- COG, in coordination with WMATA, is preparing transmittals to inform the Senators of progress and formalization of the revised Agreement.
- COG is administering consultant study on radio, cell and other communications for Fire Chiefs, DC HSEMA/OUC, and WMATA.

NTSB Investigative Hearing on January 12 L'Enfant Plaza Incident

- June 23-24 at NTSB Conference Center
- Preliminary agenda released
- Panel sessions will focus on the following:
 - State of WMATA's Infrastructure
 - Emergency Response Efforts
 - WMATA's Organizational Culture
 - FTA and Tri-State Oversight Committee's Efforts for Public Transportation Safety

Metrorail Transit Fire/Rescue Emergency Procedures Policy Agreement

- Signed by COG Fire Chiefs and WMATA General Manager
- Maintained by COG Passenger Rail Safety Subcommittee
- Outlines common operating procedures/concepts to guide actions during emergencies involving Metrorail system
- Original Agreement signed in 1997
 - Current edition revised in 2011
- 2014- 15 revisions under review by Fire Chiefs and WMATA
- Goal – new agreement signed in mid-June 2015

Major Policy Agreement Elements

- Incident Notification
- Fire/Rescue Emergency Response
- Command and Control
- Removal and Restoration of Third Rail Power
- Rail Car Movement and Evacuation
- Release of Information
- Hazardous Materials Detection and Operations
- Evacuation Cart and EMS Storage and Maintenance

2015 Update

- Radio testing protocol and corrective action procedures
- Training plan framework for responders on Metro system
- Full-time Fire/Rescue operational liaison at ROCC
- Standardized incident command post procedures
- Loudoun County as an Agreement participant

2015 Update:

Public Safety Radio Testing Protocol

- Delineates testing sites, frequency, audio quality and reporting.
 - Jurisdictions report findings to WMATA through a web portal
 - WMATA electronically reports operational status and corrective actions to the jurisdictions
- Data will provide insight on trends

2015 Update:

Regional Metrorail Training Plan

- Details jurisdiction and WMATA collaboration and coordination
- Provides roles and responsibilities for content, training facilities
- Includes training curriculum and progress evaluation
- Develop a regional Metrorail Training Manual

2015 Update:

Fire/Rescue Liaison at WMATA's ROCC

- Full-time uniformed fire officer will be stationed at WMATA's Rail Operations Control Center
- WMATA allocating funding to pilot position
- Responsibilities include:
 - Ensure effective coordination between ROCC and jurisdiction Fire/Rescue response during incident.
 - Develop policy recommendations regarding emergency communications between ROCC, 9-1-1 answering points, and jurisdiction communications centers
 - Assess life safety culture and makes recommendations for corrective actions

2015 Update: Incident Command Post

- Includes Unified Command description
- Specifies green strobe light to identify the command post (CP).
- Details CP location and attributes
- Describes CP information to be included in WMATA notification

Emerging Operational Trends/Issues

- Increased Call Volume
 - Increased awareness of issues within Metro system
 - WMATA's evolving engagement with 911 centers
- Tactical bi-directional amplifier (BDA) operationalization
 - COG Public Safety Communications Committee coordinating with Fire Chiefs to implement deployment plan for portable BDAs

Finalizing the Agreement Revisions

- CAO review/feedback 6/3
- COG Board review/feedback 6/10
- Fire Chiefs, WMATA review
- Endorsement and signatures of
 - COG Fire Chiefs
 - WMATA General Manager
- Transmittal to COG Board, WMATA Board
- Transmittal to Senators Warner & Mikulski, NTSB

Metrorail Communications Study – Drivers and Objectives

- Drivers:
 - Concerns regarding reliability of Fire radio communications in Metrorail system, especially tunnels
 - Concerns regarding cell phone connectivity/reaching 9-1-1
 - Concerns regarding lengthy upgrade timetable for radio and cell communication systems (2021)
- Major Objectives:
 - Identify short term enhancements to existing radio communication systems
 - Frequent radio testing and corrective actions
 - Infrastructure replacement/redundant options and procedures
 - Review WMATA 2021 upgrade RFP to insure new radio system will meet regional needs; identify potential options for accelerating installation
 - Advise WMATA regarding enhancements for cell phone connectivity

Metrorail Communications Study Tasks

- Analysis/testing/monitoring of underground communication systems (fire, cell)
- Assess emergency power supply for communications equipment
- Business policy issues and viability of interim plans
- Review best practices in U.S./internationally
- Review WMATA “2021” RFP
- Video access inside of system and regional sharing

- Timing: April 15 – June 30, 2015

Metrorail Communications Study – Preliminary DRAFT Findings – Radio Communications

- WMATA 2021 Upgrade is appropriate solution for reliable fire radio communications
- Current system reliability has been improved through enhanced radio testing and corrective action protocol
- Additional investment in replacing elements of existing infrastructure could yield marginal improvements but existing system age and architecture are limiting
- Backup alternatives to current system are essential to protect public safety – portable bi-directional amplifiers/repeaters, human relay system
- Accelerating 2021 upgrades largely depend on tunnel access time and managing multiple access priorities

Questions?