



Customer Service and Operations Committee

Board Action Item III-A

October 11, 2012

Rail Service Standards

**Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority
Board Action/Information Summary**

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Action <input type="checkbox"/> Information	MEAD Number: 102977	Resolution: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
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TITLE Metrorail Service Standards

PRESENTATION SUMMARY

The Board wants to adopt and review key performance standards to provide policy guidance regarding the quantity and quality of transit service. This is a key policy role for the Board and required under the new Board bylaws. At the Customer Service and Operations (CSO) Committee on July 12, 2012, staff recommended Board action to approve a policy on three basic service standards already in use by staff. The Committee expressed concern about the train frequency parameters being proposed and asked staff to obtain further input from the Riders Advisory Council (RAC), Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC), Jurisdictional Coordinating Committee (JCC) and the general public. Based on CSO Committee input, staff revised the standards and conducted outreach, sharing information with these groups on why standards are important to customers, the standards that are currently in use by staff today, how other transit agencies employ standards, resource considerations, and finally the three proposed standards for Board policy adoption: Hours of Service, Rush Service Frequency, and Rush Service Passengers per Car.

PURPOSE

To report back to the Customer Service and Operations Committee feedback received on the proposed standards and to seek the Committee's, and Board of Directors approval of three Metrorail service standards in accordance with Board bylaws.

DESCRIPTION

Key Highlights

- New Board Bylaws require adoption and review of key performance standards to provide policy guidance regarding the quantity and quality of service (Article II.C.4).
- Standards guide staff on how to deploy service today, how to plan for the future, inform capital investment and operating resource needs, and provide accountability to the public.
- Formal service standards exist for bus, but not rail.
- Three basic, key standards are being proposed initially: hours of service, train frequency, and passengers per car.
- Additional service quality standards may be adopted in the future based on Board and public input.

BACKGROUND AND HISTORY

The Board of Directors desires to put in place policies to guide the organization, now and in the future. One of the Board's key activities at the moment is creating a Strategic Plan for Metro. A goal includes "Meet or exceed customer expectations by consistently delivering quality service." While the Strategic Plan will provide a broad roadmap for what the Board and WMATA need to accomplish to achieve their vision and mission, specific detail is needed to help staff manage service today and plan for it in the future.

Standards are not a new concept. Board policy already exists for Metrobus service. Resolution #1998-27 defines regional and non-regional route standards and #2000-10 defines crowding, running time and non-rush ridership standards.

For Metrorail, current Board policy isn't comprehensive. As an example, Board policy exists giving guidance on what to do for after-hours special events (e.g. when concerts or sporting events run late). But no policy exists defining regular, normal hours. Questions arise such as can the General Manager/Chief Executive Officer (GM) decide to stay open late every day? Does the GM have to seek Board permission to change the time Metrorail service begins on weekdays? Metrorail hours of operation are clearly published. But it's not clear who has authority to change them for normal service. Without formally adopted standards the customers can have expectations Metro can't meet.

As noted, Metrorail service standards are already in use by staff to manage today and plan for the future. This action will formalize the standards.

DISCUSSION

At the request of the CSO Committee, staff conducted an outreach effort in September seeking input and comments from our various stakeholder groups including the: Rider's Advisory Council, the Accessibility Advisory Committee and the Jurisdictional Coordinating Committee. Public input has been sought through Metro's blog on PlanItMetro which can be found on the Planning & Development page at WMATA.com.

While the RAC and AAC provided some comments, the members indicated that they would pass more along at a later date. However, of all the comments received, most people were appreciative of the effort to establish rail service standards. There were not many comments related to hours of service. With respect to passenger per car standards, the comments tended to focus on individuals' experiences and stations. Train frequency drew the greatest number of comments which included suggestions for establishing frequency standards for non-rush and special events service, along with specific directions on what the wait times should be. Members of the RAC encouraged transparency in posting of the performance, and they also suggested that additional standards be developed for escalator availability, platform crowding and other rail operations factors. The RAC will be working with the AAC to discuss additional criteria that the groups would like to see incorporated into the rail service standards as they are refined and expanded.

Staff is now prepared to advance this proposal to the Board of Directors to adopt an initial set of basic service standards for Metrorail. This action should be viewed as phase-one of a multi-phased effort to develop and adopt a complete set of service standards designed to help our customers know what to expect as they choose to travel on the Metrorail system.

The intended progression is to start simple with these three basic, key standards. Building upon this foundation, the Board can add more standards in the future (e.g., non-rush headways and capacity, track work impact, station platform crowding, etc.) Ultimately these standards may be used to establish future capital investment needs [core capacity, fleet size, train length, etc.].

Management will monitor these service standards, report trends and recommend actions accordingly.

ALTERNATIVES

Do not adopt the rail service standards and continue the past practice of allowing staff to informally plan and monitor Metrorail service.

FUNDING IMPACT

The policy is budget-neutral so long as Metrorail service is operated in conformity with these standards.

MEAD AMOUNT

\$0

TIMELINE

<p>Previous Actions</p>	<p>July 12, 2012-- the Customer Service and Operations Committee was requested to approve a set of three rail service standards.</p> <p>March 8, 2012 - the Customer Service and Operations Committee received a presentation on the benefits of rail service standards, how they are used by staff and peer agencies, and next steps.</p> <p>July 21, 2011 - Board approves Bylaws and Procedures.</p>
<p>Anticipated actions after presentation</p>	<p>October 25, 2012 -- Board approval of three rail service standards.</p> <p>2013 -- Outreach to stakeholder groups to determine phase two standards for consideration.</p>

RECOMMENDATION

Approve the following three initial rail service standards:

Hours of service: normal Metrorail service shall begin each Monday through Friday at 5:00AM and begin each Saturday and Sunday at 7:00AM; and end at 12:00AM Monday through Thursday, and to continue Friday service to 3:00AM on Saturday and continue Saturday service to 3:00AM on Sunday.

Rush service frequency: on core interlined segments of the system headways will range from 2.5 to 3 minutes, on all other segments except Arlington Cemetery the headways will range from 4 to 6 minutes, and headways at Arlington Cemetery will be up to 12 minutes.

Rush service passengers per car: maintain a desirable level of crowding below an average of 100 passengers per car, in the peak direction, at the maximum load points inside a range such passengers per car shall not exceed 120 nor fall below 80 during the peak hour of the rush periods.

ELECTRONIC ATTACHMENTS

Summary of comments on Service Standards for Metrorail

Presentation: Service Standards for Metrorail

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS ON SERVICE STANDARDS FOR METRORAIL

Staff conducted an outreach effort in September 2012 seeking input and comments from our various stakeholder groups including the: Rider's Advisory Council, the Accessibility Advisory Committee and the Jurisdictional Coordinating Committee. Public input was sought through Metro's blog on PlanItMetro at WMATA.com. The following summarizes the comments received:

- **Most people were appreciative of the effort to establish rail service standards, including:**
 - This is a very good start to setting policies, and I am very happy that you are giving us a chance to provide feedback in a way that accommodates the very busy lives of everyone who takes Metro.
 - The presentation is a great improvement on the information that was provided to the Customer Service Committee in the summer.

- **There were not many comments related to hours of service.**

- **With respect to passenger per car standards, the comments tended to focus on individuals' experiences and stations, including:**
 - The rush hour jam in the Red Line is severe and consistent
 - Need to consider the impact of the much longer "Rush+" headways through Arlington Cemetery

- **Train frequency drew the greatest number of comments, focusing on:**
 - **Metro should establish frequency standards for non-rush and special events service. Example comments included:**
 - People would be more interested in off-peak headways. Metro is essentially rendered useless by lengthy headways and track work on the weekends.
 - Metro should have standards to deal with special events.
 - **Customers want specific directions on what wait times should be.**

- **Comments encouraged transparency in posting of performance, including:**
 - Will Metro be measuring and tracking whether the standards were met?
 - Will this information be available publically?

- **Suggestions for additional standards included:**
 - Escalator availability
 - Platform crowding
 - Other standards (e.g., station dwell time, access to stations)



Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

Service Standards for Metrorail

Customer Service and Operations Committee
October 11, 2012



Purpose

- Seek Board approval of Metrorail Service Standards





Service Delivery Today

- When?
 - Hours of Service
- How often?
 - Train Frequency
- How crowded?
 - Passengers per Car





Today: Hours of Service



Open

5 am Weekdays
7 am Weekends



Closed

12 am Sun-Thur
3 am Fri-Sat

Why? Historical practice, resources budgeted, need to maintain the system

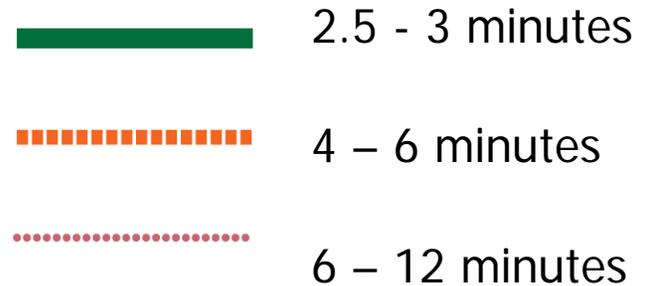
Board Policy #1997-02: When to open early or run late for special events



Today: Train Frequency



Combined Frequency During Weekday Rush Service (Time Between Trains)



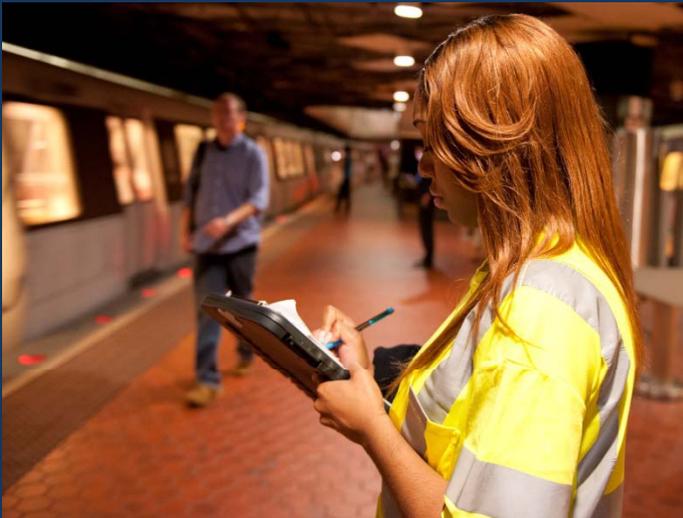
Why?

system design, equipment, tunnel throughput

More frequent service = lower avg. wait times for customers



Today: Passengers per Car



- Standard for planning = 100 passengers per car (Range of 80 to 120)
 - All seats taken plus half that many standing
 - Actual experience varies: time of day, station entered, which rail car

Why?

Capacity, train frequency, cars available



Standards on Other Subways

Agency	Headways/ Frequency	Span of Service	Passengers/ Car (PPC)	Service Delivery	Fare Recovery
WMATA	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	R	R
SEPTA (Philadelphia)	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	R	
CTA (Chicago)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	R	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
MBTA (Boston)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
MD MTA	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	R	R
NY MTA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	R	
LA Metro	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	R	
Muni (San Francisco)			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
NJ Transit			R	R	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sound Transit (WA)			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	



= Formal adopted rail service criteria



= Used in service planning, not formal



= Reported, not used in service planning

Considerations for Setting Standards

- Physical capacity constraints
 - Equipment
 - System design capacity
 - Tunnel throughput
- Resource constraints
 - No further budget identified to improve core capacity, buy railcars
- Addition of new line
 - Silver Line operating plan under construction





Public Input on Rail Service Standards

- Riders Advisory Council
- Accessibility Advisory Committee
- General Public via PlanItMetro Blog





Formalizing Rail Service Standards: Proposed for Board Policy Adoption

- **Hours of service**
 - Open: 5 am Weekdays, 7 am Weekends
 - Close: 12 am Sun-Thu, 3 am Fri-Sat
- **Rush service frequency**
 - 2.5 to 6 minutes is optimal
 - Arlington Cemetery is up to 12 minutes
- **Rush service passengers per car**
 - 100 is optimal (Range 80-120)
- Management will monitor these standards, report trends and recommend actions accordingly



SUBJECT: RAIL SERVICE STANDARDS

RESOLUTION
OF THE
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
OF THE
WASHINGTON METROPOLITAN AREA TRANSIT AUTHORITY

WHEREAS, The Board Bylaws require the Board of Directors to adopt and review key performance and service standards to provide policy and guidance regarding the quantity and quality of service in Article II.C.4; and

WHEREAS, The Board of Directors has enacted standards defining the scope of regional Metrobus operations in Board Resolution 1998-27; and

WHEREAS, The Board of Directors has enacted standards guiding the decision making process involving increasing or decreasing the amount of regional Metrobus service provided in Board Resolution 2000-10; and

WHEREAS, Metrorail is a regional transit system but no such similar standards have been enacted by the Board of Directors affecting Metrorail service; and

WHEREAS, The Board of Directors has reviewed three Metrorail service standards defining the Metrorail system hours of service, rush period train frequency known as headways, and rush period passengers per car; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Board of Directors approves hours of service as a Metrorail service standard, and establishes that normal Metrorail service shall begin each Monday through Friday at 5:00AM and begin each Saturday and Sunday at 7:00AM; and end at 12:00AM Monday through Thursday, and to continue Friday service to 3:00AM on Saturday and continue Saturday service to 3:00AM on Sunday; and be it further

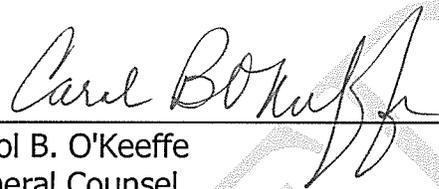
RESOLVED, That the Board of Directors approves rush period headway as a Metrorail service standard, and establishes that on core interlined segments of the system headways will range from 2.5 to 3 minutes, on all other segments except Arlington Cemetery, the headways will range from 4 to 6 minutes, and headways at Arlington Cemetery will be up to 12 minutes; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Board of Directors approves rush period passengers per car as a Metrorail service standard with a desirable level of crowding below an

average of 100 passengers per car, in the peak direction, at the maximum load points inside a range such passengers per car shall not exceed 120 nor fall below 80 during the peak hour of the rush periods; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That this Resolution shall be effective immediately.

Reviewed as to form and legal sufficiency,



Carol B. O'Keeffe
General Counsel

PROPOSED