



Safety and Operations Committee

Board Information Item III-A

Rail and Bus Restoration Plan

Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority
Board Action/Information Summary

Action Information

MEAD Number:
203404

Resolution:
 Yes No

TITLE:

Rail and Bus Service Update

PRESENTATION SUMMARY:

Summary of service restoration to rail and bus service post-pandemic and the return of the 7000-series fleet.

PURPOSE:

Inform the Board of Metro's plan to restore rail and bus service.

DESCRIPTION:

There are no Interested Parties in this matter.

Key Highlights:

- Rail service will improve as the 7000-series Return to Service Plan is implemented and capital projects open or re-open
- Bus service will improve as ridership increases

Background and History:

The 7000-series railcar fleet was removed from service in October 2021. Metrorail worked with the Washington Metrorail Safety Commission (WMSC) to incrementally reintroduce the fleet into passenger service, starting in June 2022. By September 2022, up to 16 7000-series trains ran in passenger service on Red, Green, and Yellow lines. Service improvements, such as opening Silver Line Phase 2 and reducing headways, require more than 16 7000-series trains in service.

Bus service was reduced during the pandemic but was returned to overall systemwide pre-pandemic levels by September 2021 when Metrobus introduced the 36 route Frequent Bus Network. These routes now run more service on middays and weekends than pre-COVID. Resources for the Frequent Bus Network were reallocated from former route variations that provided peak capacity to downtown offices. This allocation of service better reflects trip changes post-pandemic, such as reduced office riders and the need to support all day and seven-day travel markets.

As of November 2022, Metrobus is short 100 operators. This shortage causes missed trips, causing unreliable service for customers. Metro expects to reduce the operator shortage through strategies in recruitment and training.

Discussion:

Rail Service:

- On October 25, the Washington Metrorail Safety Commission approved a revised return to service plan that allows for gradual steps to add more trains into service.
- On November 6, South of National Airport will reopen. As Metro has more trains, they will be put into supplemental service to reduce crowding at peak periods and during events.
- Metro is now able to reliably open Silver Line Phase 2 on November 15, which was not possible before the return to service plan was approved.
- Throughout November, Metro will gain additional trains, and those also will be used in supplemental service to reduce crowding.
- Around December 5, Metro expects to improve peak headways to reduce crowding.
- Late December, Metro will implement a new labor pick, which will include staff that will enable increase peak headways on Red, Blue, Orange, and Silver lines.
- In May, Metro will then be able to run FY23 budgeted rail service after the Yellow Line reopens.

Bus Service:

- In December 2022, Metrobus will restore service frequencies on 70, L2, N2, N4, and S2. These routes were temporarily reduced in September 2022 due to operator shortages. These frequencies are:
 - 70: Restore weekday peak frequency to 12 minutes.
70: Restore weekday off-peak frequency to 20 minutes.
 - L2: Increase weekday peak frequency to 10 minutes
 - N2, N4: Increase weekday AM peak frequency to 10 minutes in the core.
 - S2: Increase weekday peak frequency to 10-minute service.

- Throughout the spring, Metro will improve service as operator availability increases.
- For the June 2023 labor pick, Metro will assess ridership and work to expand peak service capacity.

FUNDING IMPACT:

There is no new funding required for rail as the service has been budgeted. Funding may be needed for additional bus service, but this funding need has not yet been determined.	
Project Manager:	Brian P. Dwyer
Project Department/Office:	Chief Operating Officer

TIMELINE:

Previous Actions	September 2021 – Restoration of Metrobus Service October 2022 – Approval of the 7K Return to Service Plan by WMSC
Anticipated actions after presentation	November 2022 – Open Silver Line Phase 2 December 2022 – Implement labor picks for Rail and Bus May 2023 – Implement labor pick for Rail, open Yellow Line June 2023 – Implement labor pick for Bus

Rail and Bus Service Update

Safety and Operations Committee
November 3, 2022



Rail Service Restoration Lookahead

Date	Service Delivery Details
Nov 6	South of National Airport reopens with Blue and Blue+ Service; Use available additional trains for supplemental service to reduce crowding
Nov 15	Silver Line Phase 2 opens
Nov 21	Use available additional trains for supplemental service to reduce crowding
Dec 5 (approx.)	Improve Red Line all-day headways to 8 minutes to reduce crowding Note: Assumes 7K Return to Service Plan Step 2 implemented (No limit on 7K cars in service)
Dec 27	Improve peak headways on Red (6 minutes), Blue, Orange, Silver (12 minutes) Note: Assumes 7K Return to Service Plan Step 3 implemented (7-day interval)
May	Yellow Line reopens; Metro runs FY 23 budgeted service Note: Assumes 7K Return to Service Plan Step 3 implemented (7-day interval)



Bus Service Restoration Lookahead

Date	Service Delivery Details
Dec 18, 2022	Restore service frequencies: 70: Restore weekday peak frequency to 12 minutes. 70: Restore weekday off-peak frequency to 20 minutes. L2: Increase weekday peak frequency to 10 minutes N2, N4: Increase weekday AM peak frequency to 10 minutes in the core. S2: Increase weekday peak frequency to 10-minute service.
Spring 2023	Improve service through increased operator availability
Jun 2023	Peak service capacity expansions

- Current deficit of **100 operators**
 - Attrition rate of 25 operators a month
 - 71 operators drawn for rail operations every two months
 - Expect to recruit 475 operators over next year
- Operator recruitment strategies include reducing education requirements, offering signing bonuses, bringing back retirees
- Training improvement strategies include increasing training staff and providing additional driving time

