

Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

Board Action/Information Summary

☒ Action ☐ Information

MEAD Number:
201821

Resolution:
☐ Yes ☒ No

TITLE:

Update on Roadway Worker Protection Program

PRESENTATION SUMMARY:

The Department of Safety & Environmental Management (SAFE) will update the Board on the Roadway Worker Protection (RWP) program, which is critical in providing protection to individuals occupying the right-of-way.

PURPOSE:

The Board Safety Committee will receive an update on the RWP program, steps implemented to ensure continued RWP compliance, and actions being implemented to enhance roadway worker safety. The committee presentation provides transparency to our stakeholders, employees, and public in the Washington metropolitan area community.

DESCRIPTION:

The Authority continues to work and is committed to identifying and mitigating hazards that pose a safety risk to our employees, contractors, and customers. A comprehensive RWP program is part of the safety defenses designed to keep all roadway workers from harm while on the right-of-way. The criticality of effectively performing this function was underscored by the recent near miss incident at Reagan National Airport on October 20, 2016.

Key Highlights:

- The Office of Operations and Management Services (OPMS) developed and deployed a curriculum specific to RWP Level IV Escorts (i.e., those individuals that provide contractors access to the roadway to perform activities) to ensure these individuals understand their roles and responsibilities. The RWP Level IV Classification is the highest level in the RWP Program. Training began on November 4, 2016.
- SAFE initiated a Safety Stand-Down and training that encompasses all train operators and RWP card holders. The Stand-Down began on November 8, 2016.

- SAFE is pursuing a pilot for an advance warning system technology to add another layer of protection for roadway workers.
- SAFE and OPMS have provided FTA inspectors/contractors an opportunity to attend RWP Level IV training.
- SAFE is developing a RWP pocket guide to assist roadway workers, which will contain critical RWP information in a condensed format.

SAFE and Rail Operations plan on enlisting a vendor to survey the system and identify a uniform methodology for establishing RWP protection at specific locations.

Background and History:

Over five years ago, the Authority redeveloped the RWP program utilizing industry best practices from the Federal Railroad Administration, American Public Transportation Association, as well as other transit properties. More recently, a finding (FTA Rail 2-15-D) from the Federal Transit Administration's Safety Management Inspection (SMI) confirmed lapses in maintaining RWP certification. In response to this finding, all individuals required to be trained were brought back into compliance by June of 2016. Additionally, the RWP Standard Operating Procedure was revised to ensure card holders stay in compliance with the program requirements by clearly defined processes and strict enforcement (i.e., out of compliance badges are destroyed, those without badges are not permitted on the roadway, and testing procedures were modified to reflect stricter consequences of failing). There is also a NTSB recommendation (NTSB R-08-004) to enhance roadway worker protection through the use of technology to provide another layer of protection.

Discussion:

The Authority continues to take the necessary actions to ensure roadway workers' safety while working on the right-of-way. A recent near miss incident that occurred at Reagan National Airport on October 20, 2016 led to several immediate actions, including issuance of Safety Alert #16-10b to reinforce procedures while traversing right-of-way "Hot Spots" and the distribution of Permanent Order T-16-07 Rev. 1 to train operators clarifying train speed while roadway workers are present. A "Hot Spot" is a location on the right-of-way where additional roadway worker protection is required because of various conditions (e.g., no clearance areas, curves with limited visibility, etc.).

To ensure all operators and RWP card holders are informed and knowledgeable of the procedures, a Safety Stand-Down has been implemented. The Stand-Down reviews the recent near miss incident, RWP rules, the proper use of the Good Faith Challenge, the recent safety alert and permanent order, and the USDOT near miss and confidential close-call reporting programs. The Stand-Down provides an opportunity to clearly

communicate the process and procedures in place to ensure roadway worker safety and provides a forum for employees to ask questions. Currently, all required personnel (RWP card holders and train operators) are attending this Safety Stand-down. The Authority has also developed a familiarization training course for RWP Level IV Escorts (i.e., those that provide contractors access to the roadway to perform activities); this course reviews and ensures that qualified personnel understand their responsibilities and required procedures. Both the Stand-Down and refresher course are ongoing and expected to be completed by November 30, 2016.

Although the Authority has reviewed and documented all known “Hot Spots” in the system earlier this year, a scope of work is being developed for a more systematic examination of the entire system. This will include not only the identification of “Hot Spots” but define the form of RWP protection required while working in these specific areas. A RWP pocket guide is also under development; the guide will be a condensed reference of vital information regarding “Hot Spots”, location-specific RWP protection, relevant reference material, and important phone numbers for roadway workers to have in their possession.

The Authority continues to explore technology and other means to supplement the protection of roadway workers, which will eventually meet the NTSB recommendation R-08-004, which states that the Authority must “implement appropriate technology to automatically alert wayside workers of oncoming trains and alert train operators the presence of wayside workers”. The Authority has applied for an FTA grant that would fund the investigation and testing of advance warning technologies to improve roadway worker safety. These technologies were reviewed at the July 28, 2016 Board Safety Committee Meeting. The Authority is moving forward with a pilot program of a two piece warning device for right-of-way areas with limited visibility. The detector unit is affixed to the web of the rail, and when triggered by either a passing train or flagman/watch out, it will alert all those wearing the personal armband warning devices via an audible and visual alarm to clear the track. Phase 2 of the pilot will include carborne equipment that will alert the train operator of the presence of workers on the right-of-way. In addition, SAFE and Rail Operations are considering low tech options, such as using lights and flags that will alert train operators of wayside workers.

FUNDING IMPACT:

No additional funding is necessary at this time.	
Project Manager:	Patrick Lavin
Project Department/Office:	Safety

TIMELINE:

Previous Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Briefing to the Board in July 2016 • Implemented corrective actions • Train and certify required employees
Anticipated actions after presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to implement all corrective actions • Continue to review advanced technology for roadway worker protection • Complete pilot test

RECOMMENDATION:

To inform the Board's Safety Committee of the status of RWP program and continuing steps to enhanced protection of our employees.



Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

Update on Roadway Worker Protection (RWP) Program

Safety Committee
November 17, 2016



RWP Previous Actions

- Closed corrective action regarding RWP card holders are not compliant (FTA Rail 2-15-D)
- Revised RWP SOP ensuring:
 - Out of Compliance badges are destroyed
 - Those without badges are NOT permitted on roadway
 - Testing procedures modified to reflect stricter consequences of failing
- Rail system “Hot Spots” were verified and updated to reflect need for additional protection in 2016
- Submitted FTA grant application for new technologies to improve safety



RWP Current Actions

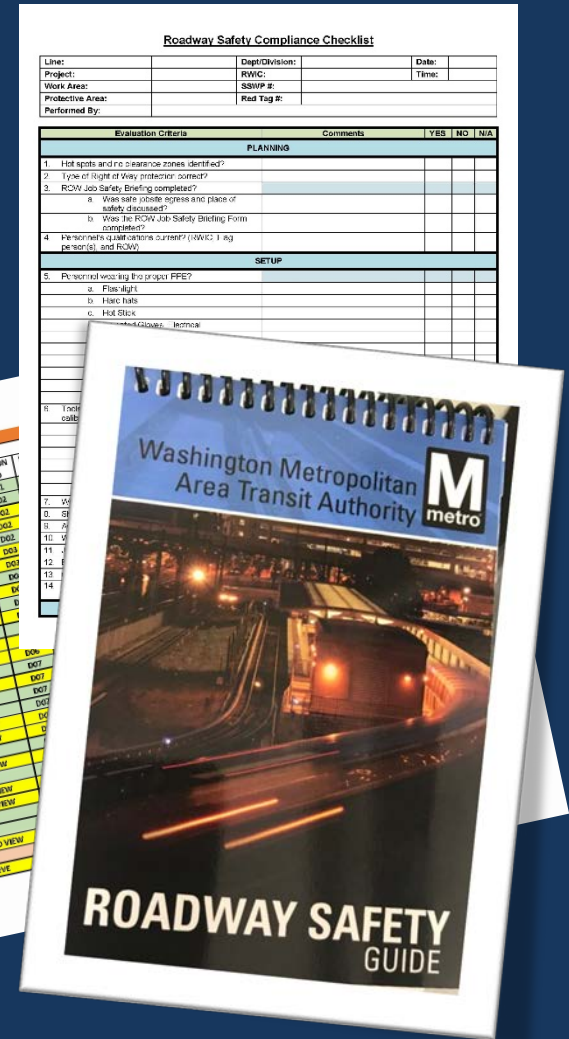
- Near miss occurred at National Airport
- Safety Stand-down under way
 - All train operators and RWP cardholders
 - Reviewing:
 - Incident
 - Relevant procedures
 - Good Faith Challenge
 - Operator speed rule
 - Near Miss/Close Call Reporting
 - Attendance documented
 - Estimated completion November 30th





RWP Current Actions

- RWP pocket guide in development
- Roadway Escort curriculum developed and training is underway
- RWP survey of system and level of protection needed in each area
- FTA Inspectors/Contractors offered Level 4 RWP training





RWP Enhanced Protection

- NTSB R-08-4 recommends implementing appropriate technology to automatically alert wayside workers of oncoming trains and alert train operators of the presence of wayside workers
- Examining viable options for short term and long term solutions
 - Reviewing the use of flashing amber lights / flag to provide advance warning to train operators of wayside workers
 - Currently assessing available technologies that would meet the NTSB Recommendation
 - Contacted similar properties that utilize similar existing advance technologies
 - Vendor brought on property for pilot program

RWP Pilot Program

- Portable Train Detector Warning System
- System adds another layer of safety
- Test will occur on outdoor S-curve and tunnel S-curve
- Detection Unit attaches to web of rail
- Flagger and track workers wear personal alert device on arm
- Detection of passing train signals personal alert device
- Pilot anticipated to occur before end of year

