



Customer Service, Operations and Security Committee

Information Item III-A

June 9, 2016

SafeTrack Communications and Outreach

Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

Board Action/Information Summary

☐ Action ☒ Information

MEAD Number:
201754

Resolution:
☐ Yes ☒ No

TITLE:

SafeTrack Communications and Outreach

PRESENTATION SUMMARY:

Brief the Board on communications and outreach underway to inform riders, jurisdictional partners and other stakeholders about the SafeTrack program.

PURPOSE:

- Provide overview of stakeholder outreach and jurisdictional partnerships
- Discuss roll-out of overall SafeTrack plan and individual Safety Surges
- Review planned ongoing communications to customers throughout SafeTrack

DESCRIPTION:

Key Highlights:

- The final SafeTrack plan was released to the public on May 19, 2016. Final plan includes a schedule for 15 “Safety Surges” to be completed over the next year.
- WMATA is coordinating with federal and local jurisdictions, including the Department of Transportation and Public Information Officers, as well as business and other stakeholder groups.
- WMATA is using a mix of earned media, paid media, social media, customer outreach and system signage to communicate the plan to riders and focus attention on the major impacts to service.
- An initial band of communications went out immediately following release of the final SafeTrack plan, and additional communications will be pushed out throughout the coming year as each Surge approaches and work begins.

Background and History:

A draft SafeTrack plan was released to WMATA’s jurisdictional partners and the public on May 6, 2016. Information was shared with the public and customers through numerous channels, videos were released to employees and the public, and WMATA staff followed up with local and national television, radio and print interviews.

In the days following the release of the draft plan, WMATA coordinated with the jurisdictions and federal partners to discuss the track work plan, and begin to develop alternate travel options and traffic mitigation strategies. The following are some of the agencies and organizations that WMATA is coordinating with:

- Federal Transit Administration (FTA)
- Department of Transportation (DOT) agencies in the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia
- Regional law enforcement agencies
- Office of Personnel Management (OPM)
- Department of Homeland Security (DHS)
- General Services Administration (GSA)
- Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority (MWAA)•Arlington County
- Fairfax County
- City of Alexandria
- Montgomery County
- Prince George's County
- D.C. Council and Mayor's Office
- Greater Washington Board of Trade
- Regional Metro Chambers of Commerce
- Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
- Commuter Connections

Discussion:

These are major track work projects that will lead to continuous single tracking or complete shutdowns of certain line segments. The Safety Surges will severely impact service, including during rush hours, and many riders will need to find travel alternatives. In addition, SafeTrack increases the amount of track work conducted during nights and weekends. And beginning June 3, and continuing throughout the duration of SafeTrack, Metrorail will close at midnight, seven days a week. These major service changes and disruptions require extensive outreach to communicate effectively with the public.

WMATA staff immediately began finalizing communications and outreach materials, preparing outreach tactics, and coordinating with the jurisdictions and other stakeholders to ensure service information and mitigation strategies are shared and communicated to the public.

The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) is helping to coordinate public information officers (PIOs) from across the region to facilitate the sharing of information. On Wednesday, May 18, the first COG SafeTrack PIO conference call was held with more than 50 participants. These included PIO's from COG's 22 member jurisdictions, COG staff, emergency management agencies and Department of Transportation in DC and the two states, some local transportation departments, PIOs from the US Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and General Services Administration (GSA), and representatives from the Pentagon and business community.

Through its Commuter Connections group, the COG is also helping to coordinate the planning of travel mitigation strategies, including options for riders to use commuter rail, regional bus providers, alternate parking, carpool and ridershare services. The COG has offered its commuterconnections.org website as one place where riders can turn for travel alternatives.

On June 10, the Washington Business Journal is launching an online and print SafeTrack resource directory that will be updated throughout the duration of the program. In addition, the Washington Business Journal will run SafeTrack advertisements.

On May 19, WMATA released the final SafeTrack plan to the public through the following channels:

- Press release
- Facebook, Twitter, YouTube
- Launched wmata.com/safetrack – an informational web page that includes details about the overall plan and links to individual pages for each Surge
- Released video explaining Surge #1 – additional videos will be produced as Surges progress
- Sent information via MetroAlerts

The plan has garnered extensive regional coverage, including the following:

Print:

Washington Post
TIME
Reuters
Baltimore Sun
Bethesda Magazine
Virginia Business Magazine
Washington Times
Roll Call
Politico
Washington Business Journal

TV:

NBC4
ABC7
FOX5
WUSA9
DCW50
Univision
Telemundo
CNBC
Bloomberg
CTV
CBS News

Radio:

WTOP
WMAL
WAMU
WERA
Voice of America

Web:
Montgomery County Sentinel

On Monday, May 23, the first paid advertisement for SafeTrack ran in the Express newspaper. This newspaper is distributed at most Metrorail stations as well as to bus riders, and reaches approximately 286,000 readers each day. The center 2-page spread of the newspaper was used to communicate the updated SafeTrack work plan with a calendar of Safety Surges and to highlight the two Surges scheduled to begin in June. The inside advertisement was promoted on the cover and inside cover of the newspaper.

Similar advertisements are planned for the Washington Business Journal and El Tiempo, Washington Hispanic, Afro, Doi Nay, Korea Times, Zethiopia, and Epoch Times. Riders will hear advertisements beginning May 23 on WTOP radio.

WMATA is creating materials and coordinating tactics that will inform the region about the SafeTrack plan as a whole, and communicating specific Safety Surge impacts for targeted locations and ridership groups.

In addition to continuing to update and utilize the communications channels mentioned above (website, social media, videos, MetroAlerts), the following are being employed as we approach the first Safety Surge beginning on June 4 (13 days of single tracking between Ballston and East Falls Church, reducing service at all OR and SV stations):

- Press conference in final days leading up to beginning of Surge
- Escorting reporters through work zone to describe work underway
- Customer informational brochures (English/Spanish)
- Surge-specific take one cards at impacted stations (English/Spanish)
- Station entrance and platform signage (English/Spanish)
- Station announcements (English/Spanish)
- Train operator announcements
- Station kiosk screens
- Email notifications sent to registered SmarTrip® users, businesses, community groups, and jurisdictional partners
- Call center messaging
- Customer newsletter in Express
- Paid radio, print advertisements
- Spanish media outreach

Metro will conduct in-person outreach at key stations prior to the beginning of a Surge to remind customers of the impending work, and will have bilingual outreach teams located at stations that have been closed for the duration of each shutdown. Outreach teams will provide customer information to include additional bus service, free shuttle buses and general assistance to travel around the trackwork for those who cannot find alternate transportation.

Throughout SafeTrack, Metro will keep customers informed about service

delays/disruptions planned as part of the Surges and unplanned. Planned service changes are posted on wmata.com , with detailed service plans and schedules approximately one week ahead of time. Planned service change announcements appear in-station with audio announcements and Passenger Information Display notifications within this week too. Future information regarding all SafeTrack surge projects are online at wmata.com/safetrack ; all planned track work (outside of SafeTrack) continuously updated at wmata.com/trackwork .

For unplanned events, the Rail Operations Information Center (ROIC), with its partnership with CSCM, will provide targeted information directly from the Rail Operations Control Center (ROCC) to customers currently in the system through public address system announcements, communications to Station Managers and our Passenger Information Displays. Train Operators will also be guided through ROCC to communicate changing service conditions on-board the train. Our website, wmata.com , serves as the primary source for all planned and unplanned service changes. MetroAlerts will be issued via web/email/text/kiosk information displays for changes in service, which also are broadcast on twitter. Weekday twitter engagement from the social team will supplement service alerts and offer additional travel information as necessary.

As this is a year-long plan with 15 separate major service impacts, we will continuously monitor the success of communications tactics being used and the response from customers, and tailor our communications to meet the demands of our riders whenever possible.

An initial survey was sent to Metro's Amplify Customer Community on Monday, May 23, to gauge message penetration of the initial SafeTrack plan and find out more about the information sources riders will use to keep informed of the Safetrack service changes?

The survey found Metro customers will rely on wmata.com, and newspaper and television news primarily for SafeTrack information.

FUNDING IMPACT:

There is no impact on funding	
Project Manager:	Lynn Bowersox
Project Department/Office:	CSCM

TIMELINE:

Previous Actions	May 19, 2016 – Final SafeTrack plan released
Anticipated actions after presentation	June 2016-March 2017 – Additional customer outreach for each of the 15 major "Safety Surge" projects

RECOMMENDATION:

This is an information item; no recommendations.



Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

SafeTrack

Communications and Outreach

Customer Service, Operations and Security Committee

June 9, 2016



Regional Coordination





metrobus



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Safety Surge #1

OR **SV** **June 4 – 16** (13 days)

Continuous single tracking between East Falls Church and Ballston-MU

- OR trains between Vienna and New Carrollton every 18 minutes
- Additional OR trains between Ballston and New Carrollton only every 6 minutes during rush and every 10 minutes during midday and evening
- SV trains every 18 minutes
- At 10 p.m. all trains will operate every 20 minutes

CUSTOMERS: Expect extreme crowding and delays especially during rush hours. Seek alternative travel options.



Surge #1 – Travel Alternatives



RAIL OPTION: If you're driving on I-66 from west of Vienna, consider taking the Virginia Railway Express (VRE) Manassas Line (via Burke Centre) to Crystal City, L'Enfant Plaza or Union Station



BUS OPTIONS:

- Additional weekday rush hour service on Metrobus 2A, 38B, 3Y, 5A (Herndon to Rosslyn) and Fairfax Connector 599
- Free shuttle bus service during weekday rush hour between impacted stations
- Fairfax Connector special weekday rush hour express shuttle bus service between Vienna station and the Pentagon



PARKING OPTIONS: If you park and ride from Vienna, Dunn Loring, West Falls Church, East Falls Church or Wiehle-Reston East station, consider other county Park & Ride facilities or parking on the Yellow/Blue Line



Safety Surge #2

OR **SV** **BL** **June 18 – July 3** (16 days)

Line segment shutdown between Eastern Market & Minnesota Ave/Benning Rd

- Two stations CLOSED: Stadium-Armory & Potomac Ave
- OR trains every 10 minutes outside shutdown zone
- SV trains every 10 minutes outside shutdown zone
- BL trains every 12 minutes btw Franconia & Arlington Cemetery only
- YL Rush+ runs all day, use YL for service between VA & DC
- At 10 p.m. all trains will run every 20 minutes
- No rail or bus service between Arlington Cemetery and Rosslyn; travel via L'Enfant Plaza instead

CUSTOMERS: Expect extreme crowding and delays especially during rush hours. Seek alternative travel options.⁶



Surge #2 – Travel Alternatives



RAIL OPTION: If you're on I-95 or the BW Parkway from points northeast of DC, consider taking the MARC Penn Line (via New Carrollton) or MARC Camden Line (via Greenbelt) downtown



BUS OPTIONS:

- Free shuttle bus service between impacted stations
- Additional Metrobus routes 97, T18 and Fairfax Connector 599 service during weekday rush hour
- Additional Metrobus Route X9 service throughout the day
- Fairfax Connector special weekday rush hour express shuttle bus between Vienna station and the Pentagon



PARKING OPTIONS: If you park and ride from New Carrollton, Landover or Cheverly station, consider using Green Line Park & Ride facilities at Greenbelt, College Park-U of Md or Prince George's Plaza station



Launch of Final Plan

wmata.com/safetrack





Launch of Final Plan

TODAY'S PAPER INSIDE
express
Just what you need: News, Lifestyle, Entertainment, Sports

Prepare for SafeTrack
Plan now for disruptions during expanded Metro track work.

Get updated information on station closures and track work for Metro's work plan.
Schedule and search alerts.

**Safety first.
Second.
And third.**



Metro is dedicated to rider safety. SafeTrack allows us to complete needed safety improvements faster and more efficiently. To help riders prepare, we are providing detailed plan information and regular updates as the work progresses.

For more information, see the schedule in this issue of Express, and visit wmata.com/safetrack.

M SafeTrack

M SafeTrack Updated Work Plan and June Safety Surges

What is SafeTrack?

SafeTrack is a yearlong plan to improve safety and reliability on the Metrolink system. The plan puts safety first by completing more track work and prioritizing the most needed repairs. In addition, 15 planned "Safety Surges" throughout the year will cause segments of rail lines to be shut down or experience continuous single tracking for extended periods. While we know many riders will be affected, this is the only way to complete the work in a timely manner that maximizes safety. We thank you for your patience.

For real-time updates, sign up for MetroAlerts at wmata.com/metroalerts



Project Details

- The 15 Safety Surges (listed below) are major track work projects that will lead to continuous single tracking or complete shutdowns of certain line segments. This will severely impact both casual riders and regular commuters on these lines.
- There will be increased track work on nights, weekends and during some rush hours. Always check wmata.com and sign up for MetroAlerts to "know before you go."
- Beginning June 3, and throughout the duration of SafeTrack, Metrolink will close at midnight, 7 days a week. The last train may depart your station before midnight, so check wmata.com/stations for information.

These are major service disruptions that will cause crowding and delays. Although some shuttle bus service will be provided during shutdowns, you should consider alternate travel options during Safety Surges that affect your line.

Surge	Date	Lines Affected	Stations Affected	Type of Surge	Duration
1	6/4 - 6/16	OR SV	Ballston to East Falls Church	Single Tracking	13 Days
2	6/18 - 7/3	OR SV BL	Eastern Market to Minnesota Ave/Benning Rd	Shutdown	16 Days
3	7/5 - 7/11 (Starts 8pm 7/5)	YL BL	Reagan National Airport to Braddock Rd	Shutdown	7 Days
4	7/12 - 7/18	YL BL	Reagan National Airport to Pentagon City	Shutdown	7 Days
5	7/20 - 7/31	OR SV	Ballston to East Falls Church	Single Tracking	12 Days
6	8/1 - 8/7	RD	Takoma to Silver Spring	Single Tracking	7 Days
7	8/9 - 8/18	RD	Shady Grove to Twinbrook	Single Tracking	10 Days
8	8/20 - 9/3	YL BL	Franconia-Springfield to Van Dorn St	Single Tracking	17 Days
9	9/9 - 10/20	OR	Vienna to West Falls Church	Single Tracking	42 Days
10	10/10 - 11/1	RD	Fort Totten to NoMa-Gallaudet	Shutdown	23 Days
11	11/3 - 11/11 (Starts 8pm 11/2)	OR SV	East Falls Church to West Falls Church	Single Tracking	9 Days
12	11/12 - 12/6	GR YL	Greenbelt to College Park	Single Tracking	26 Days
13	12/7 - 12/24 (Except 12/17 morning)	BL	Rosslyn to Pentagon	Shutdown	18 Days
14	1/2 - 1/13 and 1/23 - 2/5* (Starts 10pm 1/22)	YL BL	Braddock Rd to Huntington/Van Dorn St	Single Tracking	24 Days
15	3/6 - 3/19	OR SV	East Falls Church to West Falls Church	Single Tracking	14 Days

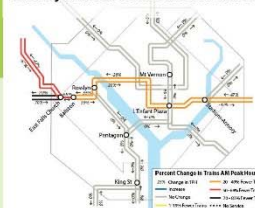
*Note: No track work during inauguration week (January 15-21, 2017)

DETAILS ON SURGE 1

June 4 to June 16, 2016 (13 days)

Continuous Single Tracking between Ballston and East Falls Church

Reduced service at all OR SV stations. Severely reduced service west of Ballston.



- Major impact to 73,000 weekday trips
- Orange Line runs **every 18 minutes** to/from Vienna-Ballston
- Additional Orange Line trains run between Ballston-New Carrollton only
- Silver Line trains run **every 18 minutes** at all times
- Orange and Silver Line customers encouraged to consider alternate travel options and avoid traveling during rush hour if possible; expect rush hour trains to be very crowded
- Orange/Silver customers in Virginia may consider using Ballston for more frequent service
- Additional Metrolink trips on selected regular-route services

DETAILS ON SURGE 2

June 18 to July 3, 2016 (16 days)

Line Shutdown between Eastern Market and Minnesota Ave/Benning Rd

Reduced service at all OR SV BL stations. Stadium-Armory and Potomac Ave stations closed.



- Major impact to 61,000 weekday trips
- Blue, Orange and Silver Line customers encouraged to consider alternate travel options and avoid traveling during rush hour if possible; expect rush hour trains to be very crowded
- No rail or bus service between Arlington Cemetery and Rosslyn; travel via L'Enfant Plaza instead**
- Free shuttle buses run between Eastern Market and Minnesota Ave/Benning Rd with stops at Stadium-Armory and Potomac Ave
- Orange Line runs **every 10 minutes** outside shutdown zone
- Silver Line runs **every 10 minutes** outside shutdown zone
- Blue Line runs **every 12 minutes** between Franconia-Springfield and Arlington Cemetery only; Yellow Rush+ runs all day, use Yellow Line for service between VA and DC

For more information, visit wmata.com/safetrack.



Communications Tactics

- wmata.com 1.3 million visitors/month
- *Express* ad 286,000 daily readership
- Twitter 215,000 followers
- MetroAlerts 130,000 subscribers
- SafeTrack brochure 75,000 distributed
- Facebook 10,500 followers
- System signage 4,200 signs (stations, kiosks, railcars, buses, MetroAccess)
- Kiosk Screens 118 kiosks
- COG-PIO group 50 participants



Rider Notification & Customer Service



- Metrobus
- SHUTTLE





Amplify Survey

Which media sources will you use to keep informed of the SafeTrack service changes (select two)?

wmata.com	52%	Radio	12%
Newspaper	26%	Word of mouth	10%
TV	20%	App	9%
Other website	17%	WMATA Facebook	1%
WMATA Twitter	16%	Other	15%
WMATA press releases	12%		



Going Forward

- Continue aggressive communications and outreach plan over next 12 months
- Begin station outreach 1-2 weeks before each Surge; issue customer advisories and press releases days before
- News conferences in the field
- Print and radio advertisements for Surges
- Provide updates on work accomplished
- All information at wmata.com/safetrack