



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Transit
Administration**

Headquarters

1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

SENT VIA EMAIL

August 12, 2022

Mr. Steve Poftak
General Manager
Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority
10 Park Plaza
Boston, MA 02116

Subject: Follow-up on Immediate Action Required to Address Safe Movement of Disabled Trains

Dear Mr. Poftak,

Thank you and your team for taking the action necessary to address the safety concerns identified in our Immediate Action Letter, dated July 28, 2022. This letter was sent in response to a continued failure at the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) to sufficiently prevent unintended and uncontrolled train movements by disabled trains and required a safety standdown and the development and implementation of checklists to direct actions taken rail transportation and vehicle maintenance personnel to safely move disabled trains. This letter describes the next steps for closing out the required immediate actions.

Since July 30, 2022, MBTA has completed the required safety standdown training for 100 percent of vehicle maintenance personnel and over 97 percent of rail transportation personnel, totaling over 1,500 employees. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) understands that MBTA adopted new approaches to accomplish this safety standdown, including using Supervisors to deliver the standdown training and lead discussions with rail transportation and vehicle maintenance personnel.

MBTA also has provided the required daily progress reports documenting the status of the standdown training. FTA understands that the rail transportation personnel who have not yet received the safety standdown training are on vacation or extended leave, and that MBTA will require all personnel who return to duty to receive the safety standdown training prior to being authorized to move disabled trains.

To reduce the reporting burden associated with this immediate action letter, FTA requests that MBTA provide written documentation to FTA regarding its approach to providing the standdown training to personnel on extended leave or vacation. MBTA should include a proposed bi-weekly schedule for reporting to FTA the progress in training the remaining personnel. Following FTA's receipt and approval MBTA may end its daily progress reporting and move to bi-weekly progress reports.

FTA also has reviewed and assessed:

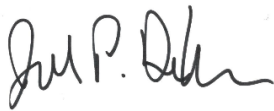
- The safety shutdown briefing package and supporting materials, including Operations Special Order #22-148, requiring that uncoupling heavy rail trains or vehicles only be performed in rail yards, and Operations Special Order # 22-150, requiring a safety inspection prior to coupling or uncoupling light rail trains.
- The heavy and light rail yard movement safety inspection checklists, which must be completed prior to moving any rail vehicle consist in the yard, and when uncoupling or coupling rail vehicles, and the light and heavy rail pre-trip inspection checklists, which must be completed prior to placing any rail transit vehicle into revenue service.

FTA will verify implementation of these special orders and checklists at the MBTA beginning in September through a series of field inspections. FTA also will follow-up on related actions underway to resolve issues with MBTA's pin hitch procedure, including the use of chains in the event the pins cannot be inserted into the coupler as specified in the procedure. Finally, FTA will continue to monitor MBTA's safety performance regarding the movement of disabled trains in rail yards.

We appreciate your efforts to implement these immediate actions and provide employees with additional information, tools, and resources to direct the movement of disabled trains.

We appreciate your efforts to enhance MBTA's safety performance, and we look forward to working with you and your team as the MBTA addresses these findings and required actions. Please contact our SMI Coordinator, Ms. Erin Powell, by phone at (771) 200-8016 or by email at Erin.Powell@dot.gov or our SMI CAP Manager, Mr. Cyrell McLemore, by phone at (312) 886-1625 or by email at Cyrell.McLemore@dot.gov with any questions.

Sincerely,



Joe DeLorenzo
Associate Administrator and
Chief Safety Officer
Office of Transit Safety and Oversight

cc: Peter Butler, Regional Administrator, FTA Region 1
Jeffrey Gonville, Deputy General Manager, MBTA
Ron Ester, Chief Safety Officer, MBTA
Steve Hicks, Chief Mechanical Officer
Dave Carney, Chief of Transit Services
Elizabeth Cellucci, Director, Transportation Oversight Division, Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities