



U.S. Department  
of Transportation

**Federal Transit  
Administration**

Headquarters

1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

**SENT VIA EMAIL**

July 17, 2023

Mr. Phillip Eng  
General Manager  
Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority  
10 Park Plaza  
Boston, MA 02116

**Subject: Response to Closeout Request for FTA-TRA-22-003 (Orange Line Curve)**

Dear Mr. Eng:

On June 21, 2023, the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) submitted a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) closeout request for FTA-TRA-22-003 (Orange Line Curve between Tufts Medical Center and Back Bay Stations). The MBTA developed this CAP as part of its response to interim findings issued in Special Directive (SD) 22-4: Track Maintenance from the Safety Management Inspection (SMI) initiated by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) in April 2022.

**Closeout Approval for FTA-TRA-22-003 (Orange Line Curve between Tufts Medical Center and Back Bay Stations)**

MBTA's CAP for FTA-TRA-22-003 includes five (5) action items, approved by FTA on August 10, 2022, to address the following SD 22-4 finding and required action:

- **Finding 3:** The curved track section on the Orange Line between the Tufts Medical Center and Back Bay Stations (both north- and south-bound) has been under speed restriction for an extended period dating back to 2019 due to excessive wear and defects.
- **Required Action (FTA-TRA-22-003):** MBTA must correct the track defects between Tufts Medical Center and Back Bay Stations on both north- and south-bound tracks.

To implement this CAP, between August 3, 2022 and June 21, 2023, MBTA submitted the following documentation demonstrating completion of the CAP action items:

- Diversion scheduling and work plans documenting access and preparations for the replacement of the 132#/115# low-side guardrail and for follow-on work to be conducted in the curve;
- Diversion scheduling and work plans documenting access and preparations for welded stringers and drilled holes and assemblies to execute the major guardrail installations and additional non-revenue days to install high-side 115# rail and final re-gauging as necessary in the curve;

- Diversion scheduling and work plans documenting the outage scheduled for 7/10/22 to replace low-side southbound 115#/132# curve at Back Bay;
- Orange Line Surge Management Plan, including scheduled work on the Tufts curve, dated August 2022;
- Initial speed restriction report and initial MBTA Southwest Corridor Tufts Curve Repairs and Speed Restrictions Report, dated October 2022;
- Final speed restriction report and final MBTA Southwest Corridor Tufts Curve Repairs and Speed Restrictions Report, dated June 2023;
- Memorandum documenting lifting of speed restriction TK-OL-SB-523446 on the Orange Line Southbound, including definition of mitigations;
- Speed restriction lifting memorandum attachments, including reports showing change in status of speed restriction and other additional information on Cologne egg replacements and concrete repair;
- Cologne egg replacement map; and
- FTA-TRA-22-003 CAP closeout verification memo.

FTA carefully evaluated this documentation and reviewed specific submissions with MBTA during biweekly meetings on SD 22-4 between October 2022 and June 2023. FTA conducted multiple on-site verifications regarding work on the curve, with an initial verification inspection conducted on October 19, 2022 and final verification inspections conducted on April 27, 2023 and June 21, 2023. These verifications confirmed the work completed to correct the track defects required to lift the speed restrictions between Tufts Medical Center and Back Bay Stations on both north- and south-bound tracks.

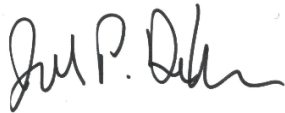
On June 29, 2023, MBTA provided follow-up documentation verifying the status of all Cologne eggs in the curve with as-built drawings from field notes. This information will support detailed inspection and monitoring efforts between the Tufts Medical Center and Back Bay Stations that MBTA plans to conduct on a quarterly basis. These efforts are still in development but are planned to include assessment of rail performance and wear, the condition of the previously existing serviceable Cologne eggs, and Cologne egg bolt torque for the hold down bolts.

**Based on review of these submissions and the results of verification activity, FTA finds that these completed action items satisfy the requirements of CAP FTA-TRA-22-003 and this CAP is now closed.** FTA will continue to monitor the performance of this segment of track (including MBTA track inspections and monitoring activities), and, prior to closing SD 22-4, FTA may conduct a final verification of the condition of this section of track.

## **Conclusion**

This CAP closure represents a tremendous amount of work, and FTA greatly appreciates your efforts. Please contact our SMI Coordinator, Erin Powell, by phone at (771) 200-8016 or by email at [Erin.Powell@dot.gov](mailto:Erin.Powell@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  
Jeff Gonneville, Deputy General Manager, MBTA  
Erik Stoothoff, Acting Chief Operating Officer, MBTA  
Joe Cheever, Chief, Engineering and Maintenance, MBTA  
Ron Ester, Chief Safety Officer, MBTA  
Meredith Sandberg, Acting Chief of Quality, Compliance, and Oversight, MBTA  
Jamie Van Nostrand, Chair, Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities (DPU)  
Robert Hanson, Rail Safety Director, DPU