



*Our Vision: The NGEC will provide national leadership in standardization, acquisition, and management of passenger rail equipment.*

## NGEC Technical Subcommittee

MINUTES

JANUARY 18, 2024 3:00PM EASTERN

CONFERENCE CALL

<b>FACILITATOR</b>	<i>George Hull Chair, NGEC Technical Subcommittee</i>
<b>ATTENDEES</b>	<b>Core Team Members:</b> <i>George Hull, Melissa Shurland, Curtis McDowell, Ray Hessinger, Ed Engle, Art Peterson, Matt Hensley, Curt Massie, Marci Petterson, Mike Jenkins, Dan Ruppert, Joe Paul, Jennifer Bastian, Kevin Myles, Tarek Omar, Brian Marquis, Dave Warner, Larry Salci, Steve Hewitt, Industry Members:</i> <i>Rich Stegner, Paul Jamieson, Jack Madden, Steve Ojalvo, Frank Pazcazio, Allen Meeks, Bill Saddler, Peter Klauser, Joanna Hallisey, Kevin Sudano, Ryan Edgecomb, Stuart Trout, Josh Coran, Rich Bowie, Drew Gordon, Marie LaPosta, Darrell Smith, Ed Golitko, Marcin Tarazkiewicz</i>
<b>ABSENTEES</b>	<i>Ryan Sharpe, Matthew Simmons, Troy Hughes, Blair Slaughter, Barley Fields,</i>

### DISCUSSION/DECISIONS MADE

**1.**

Technical subcommittee Chair George Hull, Amtrak, called the meeting to order and asked Steve Hewitt to call the roll of core team members.

After calling the roll, Steve Hewitt confirmed the presence of a quorum.

**As always, industry participants are asked to email a notification of their attendance to Steve Hewitt at [shewitt109@aol.com](mailto:shewitt109@aol.com).**

**2.**

**Review Action Items – Steve Hewitt, NGEC Program Manager:**

**2023 NGEC Backgrounder educational document:**

The 2023 NGEC two-pager is available in hard copy by request of Steve Hewitt at [shewitt109@aol.com](mailto:shewitt109@aol.com).

To date 368 copies have been distributed.

Steve Hewitt has provided MODOT graphic arts with the proposed changes and it is anticipated that a draft will be ready for the next Executive Board meeting 1-23-24.

**Maintaining Industry Participation List:**

There are currently around 200 industry participants.

**Any updates or changes to this list should be sent to Steve Hewitt at [shewitt109@aol.com](mailto:shewitt109@aol.com).**

**CtDOT Rail car Procurement:**

On 1-4-24, Marci Petterson, CtDOT reported that they in the pre Preliminary Design Review (PDR) stage reviewing Alstom's offered solutions for the specification.

**Next Update: 2-2-24 –Marci Petterson or the Program Manager will give a presentation – Virtually.**

**University of Nebraska/FRA High Speed Wireless Study as of 11-9-23:**

Hamid Sharif, University of Nebraska, provided an update on the High-Speed Wireless Study. He gave a brief background/overview of the study and the progress thus far in its current phase:

The University of Nebraska Advanced Telecommunications Engineering Lab has been studying the sub-giga-Hertz frequencies for rail applications to ease the current spectrum saturation for railroads, under the direction of FRA. We have studied the 160 MHz frequency as an example of these sub-giga Hertz bands. Theoretical and computer models were designed to represent a typical Transmitter, a Receiver, and a channel model for this frequency band. Then, different applications and rail scenarios were simulated, and performance data were collected.

After conducting modeling and simulation testing, they began to conduct field testing. Up to now the data from the field testing is close to the modeling and simulations.

They will continue on this phase through the end of December and will look to FRA for funding to continue the study in different areas.

Additionally, as they plan for the next phase of this project, they are interested in hearing any suggestions for implementing any other sub-giga frequencies or any specific rail application utilizing the 160 MHz.

**Next Update – 2-2-24 NGEC Annual Meeting**

**Hamid Kashani will give a presentation virtually as a new contract with FRA has not yet been approved.**

**3. Approval of the Minutes from 12-7-23 and 1-4-24:**

On a motion by Ed Engle, Iowa DOT, and a second by Art Peterson, IDOT, the minutes from 12-7-23 and 1-4-24 were approved as presented.

**4. Document Control Update- Tammy Krause:**

Tammy Krause provided the following update for inclusion in today's meeting minutes:

*Document control is quiet right now. I am waiting on DCRs for proposed changes to the single level specification.*

*The Weight group is finishing up their work and, once approved, we will work on incorporating their recommendations in to the specifications. Dave Warner will lead an update/discussion on this Draft Spec (agenda item 5).*

**5. Specification for Rolling Stock Weight – Dave Warner:**

Dave Warner provided a background on when the Draft specification proposed by the weight working group was provided to Technical Subcommittee (TSC) members and what the plan forward should be.

"The NGEC Rolling Stock Vehicle Weights specification was sent to the entire TSC on 12-20-23 to provide ample review opportunity in advance of the 1-4-24." TSC meeting. The intent was to consider approval of the proposed specification on 1-4-24, but due to the lack of a quorum, consideration was tabled until the 1-18-24 meeting.

"At the 1-4-24 meeting, an industry member brought up some concerns he had with certain aspects of the document. He was asked to send those concerns to me, the Acting Team Leader of the Vehicle Weight Working Group. I received those comments, and requested he reach out to any of the members of the working group to discuss the concerns." Working group members should be able to provide the "insight, and background as to the reasons the document reads as it does. Further, he was requested to submit DCRs if he still contended items needed to be changed."

"During this week I have been contacted by two additional individuals who disagree with various aspects of the document." In reviewing the concerns brought up by multiple industry members, Dave concluded that they "do need to be looked at by the Vehicle Weight Working Group".

"Therefore, I recommend, Mr. Chairman, that we do not move forward today with approval of the Rolling Stock Vehicle Weights specification."

"I have already told the industry members who have approached me to submit their concerns to Tammy Krause in the form of DCRs. While normally only used for approved documents, DCRs serve a valuable purpose to require the author to specifically identify both the language to be changed and provide the suggested replacement language. Having DCRs will enable the Vehicle Weight Working Group to focus the discussion at the next meeting."

"The end of January (2024) is a reasonable deadline for the submission of DCRs. In the meantime, I will 'go to the doodle poll' to find time in early February (2024) for the Vehicle Weight Working Group to reconvene. I'm counting on the participation of the persons' submitting the DCRs, as well as the current members of the Working Group who have already put in a significant effort to bring the document to a vote."

"Finally, as an industry member, I can't make a motion on which the TSC can vote, but I can recommend a motion. So, in keeping what I said a bit earlier, Mr. Chairman, I recommend you make a motion 'to send the Rolling Stock Vehicle Weights specification back to the Vehicle Weights Working Group to provide an opportunity for resolving the concerns recently presented by industry members'."

**6. Technical Subcommittee Consideration of approval of the Specification for Rolling Stock Weight - George Hull:**

While agreeing with Dave's recommendation, George Hull noted that he would give members the opportunity to offer either a motion to send the spec back to the working group for further discussion, or a motion to consider the specification for approval as presented.

At this point, Art Peterson, IDOT, offered a motion to send the Rolling Stock Vehicle Weight Specification back to the working group for further discussion to resolve the concerns that have been raised. Ed Engle, Iowa DOT, seconded the motion.

George Hull asked if there was any further discussion or any objections to the motion. Hearing none, George Hull determined that consensus had been achieved and the motion is approved.

**7. NGEC Annual Meeting – Steve Hewitt:**

Review of DRAFT agenda:

Steve Hewitt provided a brief overview of the current DRAFT agenda and noted that he will be sending it out again along with today's minutes. The agenda is pretty well set with the final actions being to confirm speakers. Hopefully that will occur on the next Executive Board meeting on 1-23-24.

Setting timelines for registering to attend: **1-19-24**

In order to have name badges made by AASHTO, Steve Hewitt must send the list of in-person attendees by Friday 1-19-24.

Set timeline for presentations to be submitted:

Speaker presentations need to be sent to Steve Hewitt by **1-29-24** so they can all be loaded on a thumb drive and brought to the meeting by Steve and Dave Warner – who has graciously agreed to be Mr. PowerPoint once again at the meeting – Thank you Dave!

A new/revised NGEC PowerPoint template has been finalized by AASHTO and Steve Hewitt sent it to Dave Warner and all speakers.

**8. Other/Adjourn – George Hull, Amtrak:**

Steve Hewitt recommended that the next 2 meetings of the subcommittee (2-1-24 and 2-15-24) be canceled due to the Annual meeting taking place on 2-2-24. It has long been a policy to cancel a meeting that immediately follows the Annual Meeting as there is not a lot to discuss.

George Hull agreed and cancellation notices will go out. The next meeting of the subcommittee will take place on 2-29-24.

With no other business forthcoming, George Hull adjourned today's meeting at 3:35pm.

**Next Tech Subcommittee meeting – 2-29-24**

**Decisions and Ongoing Action Items**

**2023 NGEC Backgrounder educational document:**

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**Maintaining Industry Participation List:**

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**Update: Multi-State Railcar Procurement as of 1-4-24:**

*The remaining Cab Car FDR items are in the final closure stage. The Cab Car MCAT simulation report has been approved by the states and the FRA. IDOT Café Car system level FDR reviews are complete, and the requested Café Car MCAT simulations have also been approved by FRA.*

*The Cab Car Complete FAI and FRA sample car inspections have occurred with final open items in review and closure.*

*137 cars are in production or have been produced at Siemens Sacramento Facility. IDOT coaches are currently in revenue service. The first Caltrans trainset is now in service on the Amtrak San Joaquins.*

**Next Update: 2-2-24 NGEC Annual Meeting**

**Document Control as of 1-4-24:**

Reviewing and updating the Single Level Rail Car specification:

*I have received 1 DCR for the single level specification.*

Updating the Technical Working Groups member lists:

*I received some changes from Ken Martin of the communications group. The VTI and Propulsion Groups really could use some additional volunteers.*

**Next Update: 2-2-24 NGEC Annual Meeting**

**Working Group on Weight Issues:**

See discussion under agenda items 5 and 6.

The working group will consider concerns that have been raised during a meeting to be held in February and will then come back to the subcommittee with a revised specification once the group has completed its work and resolved concerns.

**Next Update; As Appropriate**

**University of Nebraska/FRA High Speed Wireless Study:**

Hamid Sharif, University of Nebraska, provided an update on the High-Speed Wireless Study. He gave a brief background/overview of the study and the progress thus far in its current phase:

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After conducting modeling and simulation testing, they began to conduct field testing. Up to now the data from the field testing is close to the modeling and simulations.

They will continue on this phase through the end of December and will look to FRA for funding to continue the study in different areas.

Additionally, as they plan for the next phase of this project, they are interested in hearing any suggestions for implementing any other sub-giga frequencies or any specific rail application utilizing the 160 MHz.

Hamid also noted that he has been invited by Steve Hewitt to give a presentation on the study during the Annual Meeting of the NGECC in Washington, DC on 2-2-24.

*Hamid Sharif  
Advanced Telecommunications Engineering Lab  
University of Nebraska-Lincoln*

*Phone: 402-917-6363  
Email: HSHARIF@UNL.EDU*

**Next Update – 2-2-24 NGECC Annual Meeting – Virtual Presentation**

**Metro North Dual Mode Locomotive Procurement:**

Steve Hewitt read into the record the most recent update provided by Metro-North to NYSDOT:

Metro-North (MNR) has picked up options for 8 additional locomotives (Base is 19), CTDOT picked up options for an additional 6 locomotives.

Metro-North (MNR) and Siemens conducted the FAI for the truck completely assembled (with pre-series Schunk current collector installed) in the Siemens factory in Sacramento on 11-29-23.

On 11-29-23, Siemens and Metro-North performed the data maintenance demonstration of truck and collector assemblies.

MNR Locomotive #301 completed low voltage cable tray installation and is progressing towards machine room complete and ready for install.

MNR Locomotive #302 completed car shell painted and ready for final assembly and is progressing according to schedule in sub-assembly.

MNR, LIRR and Siemens started technical design clarification meetings and agreed on a monthly meeting going forward.

**Next Update: 2-2-24 Annual Meeting**

**Connecticut DOT Rail Car Procurement:**

On 1-4-24, Marci Petterson, CtDOT reported that they in the pre Preliminary Design Review (PDR) stage reviewing Alstom's offered solutions for the specification.

**Next Update: 2-2-24 – Marci Petterson or the Program Manager will give a presentation – Virtually.**

**Amtrak Vehicle Procurements:**

On the Charger Locomotive:

59 of the state units (SC 44) are in active service. 39 ACL 42's are active. (these numbers are being confirmed by George and he will follow-up)

On the Airo Trainset:

There are 24 vehicles in production – 22 railcars and 2 locomotives - and it is on track.

On the Acela:

Waiting on FRA to finish review of Test Plan – expecting to begin re-testing next week.

On the Long Distance Fleet:

The release of the RFP is expected to occur shortly (from 12-8-23 update).

**Next Update: 2-2-24 Annual Meeting**

**NGEC 2024 Annual Meeting:**

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Re-affirmed timelines for registering to attend: **1-19-24**

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Re-affirmed timeline for presentations to be submitted:

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**NGEC Annual Meeting Kamasha Hendrickson, CMP, CGMP**

Senior Meeting Planner

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Washington, DC 20004

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E-mail: [khendrickson@aaashto.org](mailto:khendrickson@aaashto.org)

**Status – Changing from WebEx to Teams – Steve Hewitt:**

A Teams Link for the Annual Meeting has been sent out to all members. The Executive Board will meet via Teams on 1-23-24. Thereafter NGEC Meetings will take place via Teams.

**Next Technical Subcommittee Meeting – 2-29-24**

**ATTACHMENTS**



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**PRIIA Section 305 Tech Sub Committee Meeting**  
**3:00PM Eastern**

**Web Ex video/audio information:**

By Computer: <https://stephenhewitthewittconsulting.my.webex.com/meet/shewitt109>

by phone: 1-415-655-0001

Access code: 126-073-1531

**Agenda**

**1-18-24**

- |  |                   |
|--|-------------------|
| 1. Roll Call   | Steve Hewitt      |
| 2. Review Action Items   | Steve Hewitt      |
| 3. Approve Minutes from 12-7-23 and 1-4-24   | George Hull       |
| 4. Document Control Update   | Tammy Krause      |
| 5. Review – Specification for Rolling Stock Weight   | Tammy/Dave Warner |
| 6. Consideration of Approval of the Specification for Rolling Stock Weight Initial Release | George Hull       |
| 7. Annual Meeting 2024   | Steve Hewitt      |
| 8. Adjourn   | George Hull       |

**Next Tech Subcommittee Meeting**  
**2-29-24**