

SECTION 305 TECH SUB COMM

MINUTES

OCTOBER 12,
2023

3:00PM EASTERN

CONFERENCE CALL

FACILITATOR	<i>George Hull, Chair, NGENC Technical Subcommittee</i>
ATTENDEES	Core Team Members: <i>George Hull, Jeff Gordon, Jodi Lehmkuhl, Curtis McDowell, Ray Hessinger, Ed Engle, Marci Petterson, Art Peterson, Curt Massie, Dave Warner, Jennifer Bastian, Larry Salci, Tammy Krause, Steve Hewitt</i> Industry Members: <i>Ed Golitko, Rich Bowie, Rich Stegner, Jack Madden, Paul Jamieson, William Luebke, Kevin Myles, Darrell Smith, Allen Meeks, Marcin Taraskiewicz</i>
ABSENTEES	<i>Matthew Simmons, Mike Jenkins, Troy Hughes, Ryan Sharpe, Mike Murray, Tarek Omar, Melissa Shurland, Joe Paul, 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.

2.
Review Action Items – Steve Hewitt, NGENC Program Manager:

2023 NGENC Backgrounder educational document:

 The 2023 NGENC two-pager is available in hard copy by request of Steve Hewitt at shewitt109@aol.com.

 To date 352 copies have been distributed.

Update – 10-12-23:

 The NGENC FASC has begun the process of reviewing and updating the NGENC two-pager for 2024. Some recommendations were made on 10-11-23 during the FASC meeting and further discussions will take place during the November meeting.

Maintaining Industry Participation List:

 There are currently 206 industry participants.

Any updates or changes to this list should be sent to Steve Hewitt at shewitt109@aol.com.

Next Update: As Appropriate

Working Group on Vehicle Weight Issues:

 On 3-30-23, Jeff Gordon, FRA reported that he intends to update the document based on working group feedback rather than schedule a meeting. He will then ask for input from the members via email. His issue is that he has been called for Jury duty and if enpaneled could be serving for 3 months and he would not be able to hold a working group meeting. If he is not enpaneled, this may change, but for now he intends to begin updating the document based on feedback received to date.

 Steve Hewitt asked Jeff to let him know when he is ready to present an update to the technical subcommittee and he will add it to the agenda at that time.

Next Update: As Appropriate

CtDOT Rail car Procurement:

Marci Petterson, CtDOT, provided the following update for inclusion in the 8-17-23 meeting minutes:

CTDOT's contract was awarded to Alstom on 8/3/23. Base order is for sixty cars – 19 cabs and forty-one trailers. There are options for up to an additional 272 cars. We are expecting a prototype 4-car consist in mid-2026. The delivery rate is four cars per month. Manufacturing is in Sahagun, Mexico.

Update – 10-12-23:

Marci reported that the kick-off meeting was held and they have begun pre-design meetings.

Next Update: As Appropriate

University of Nebraska/FRA High Speed Wireless Study as of 8-31-23:

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. We have been doing field tests this summer to verify our lab data. We plan to publish our results this Fall. Any interested parties, please feel free to contact me for more information.

Additionally, as we plan for the next phase of this project, we are interested to hear any suggestions for implementing any other sub-giga frequencies or any specific rail application utilizing the 160 MHz. Please feel free to contact me to discuss any utilization of our current work or suggestions and ideas for the next phase of this project. Thank you.

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

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

Next Update – As Appropriate

3. Approval of the Minutes from 8-31-23 and 9-14-23:

On a motion by Art Peterson for IDOT, and a second by Ray Hessinger, NYSDOT, the minutes from the 8-31-23 and 9-14-23 meetings were approved as presented.

4. Update: Multi-State Venture Rail Car Procurement as of 10-12-23 – Jodi Lehmkuhl, Caltrans:

Jodi Lehmkuhl, Caltrans, provided the following update for inclusion in today's minutes:

- *The remaining Cab Car FDR submittals are in the final closure stage with all subsystems approved and final submittals are in process. 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 submitted to the FRA for review.*
- *The Cab Car Collision and Corner Post Appendix F test reports are approved. The Cab Car Complete FAI and FRA sample car inspection occurred in July with open items in review.*
- *137 cars are in production or have been produced at Siemens Sacramento Facility. IDOT coaches are currently in revenue service and Caltrans is targeting shakedown testing and revenue start in October pending completion of final open items.*

Next Update 10-26-23

5. Metro-North Dual Mode Locomotive Procurement:

Ray Hessinger presented the following update for inclusion in today's meeting minutes:

Metro North and Siemens conducted a First Article Inspection for the energy storage cubicle, the switchgear-and 3rd rail cubicle, the battery rack and 4 delta FAIs for changed cabinets on-site in Sacramento.

Metro North and Siemens agreed upon test values for a shock & vibration test for the 3rd rail current collector shoe mechanism.

MNR locomotive #301 is ready for low voltage cable tray installation (Q23) and is progressing in Final Assembly and MNR locomotive #302 is progressing per the DCS.

The FAI for the MNR traction converter was performed and the component was dispositioned as allowed to ship with minor open items.

Next Update: 11-9-23

6. Amtrak Vehicle Procurements:

On 10-12-23 George Hull provided the following update:

On the new Acela – Continue to work on qualification issues.

On the Charger Locomotives – 36 units are in service and progress continues to be on track.

On the Airo Trainset – Final Design Review is complete and progress is on track.

Next Update: 11-9-23

7. Document Control – Tammy Krause:

Tammy Krause provided the following update and draft work plan for inclusion in the minutes of today's meeting:

The revised sub spec 305-901, PA/Intercom Systems has been updated and should be posted on the website soon.

The Communications Working Group met last week and have finalized their changes to the DTL Section of the Single Level Specification. The Working Group decided to create the section for the Single Level and it will be applied to other specifications. They have submitted a DCR with all of the changes.

The Materials Working Group has not met and there is no update for them.

Future plans for Document Control:

Every year we update one of the equipment specifications. Typically, we work on updating the oldest one and it takes a whole year. In this case that would be the Next Generation Dual Mode Passenger Locomotive 305-011, which is from 2/2/2016. This would be a good specification to update next because there is a procurement for this equipment underway by Metro North. This effort will be done by the Propulsion Group. The remaining WGs would not be involved. This year we could also work on updating the Single Level Car Specification 305-003 which is from 2/12/29 and will require involvement from the remaining WGs.

305-001	D	Feb 21, 2023,	Next Generation Bi-Level Passenger Car
305-003	B.2	Feb 12, 2019,	Next Generation Single Level Car
305-005	B	Jun 20, 2017,	Next Generation Diesel-Electric Locomotive
305-007	B	Oct 22, 2019,	Next Generation Trainset
305-009	A	Jan. 11, 2022,	Next Generation Diesel Multiple Units
305-011	IR	Feb 2, 2016,	Next Generation Dual Mode Passenger Locomotive

An on-going effort that will be worked on by myself and the Technical Writer will be the continued de-Amtrakking of the PRIIA support specifications. As we have seen from all the changes made to the PA/Intercom Specification, this is not a quick process and will take us all year.

If these plans are agreeable to the Technical Subcommittee, I can work on a schedule to accomplish these tasks.

Steve Hewitt asked if these activities would be completed within the approved budget. Tammy said that they would.

George Hull recommended that Tammy formally present the proposed work plan for consideration by the subcommittee on the next call (10-26-23). If approved, it will be presented to the Executive Board during its November meeting.

8.

CRISI Grant NOT Awarded – next steps - George/Steve:

Closing out prior grant:

Balance/Spend Rate Through August 2023 (preliminary) per Tim Ziethen, NGEC Treasurer 10-11-23:

Total Initial Grant Amount: \$1,250,000.

Expenses Incurred through August 2023: \$1,249,836.37.

Balance remaining: \$163.63.

Estimated spending, at current rate, for balance of the Grant: \$15,058.27

Current Spend Rate per month (as info and used in calculating): \$15,058.27.

Estimated Balance at the end of the Grant Period: (\$14,894.64) over target.

Status – 6 month no-cost current grant agreement extension:

Tim Ziethen, as of 10-11-23, had not received confirmation from the Amtrak Grants office that this extension has been finalized and executed.

Mike Murray, FRA, reported to the Finance and Administrative sub-committee (FASC) that his understanding several weeks ago was that it was accepted by Amtrak in Grants Solutions.

Tim Ziethen will check with the Grants office and added that he is certain it will be executed if it has not been already.

Steve Hewitt noted that AASHTO will still need to be told that they are ok to pay invoices coming in from sub-contractors for work performed in September 2023.

Tim Ziethen will inform AASHTO that it is ok to pay.

Next Steps/Close Out Documents required for grant agreement ending on 9-30-23:

On 10-11-23, Steve Hewitt asked Tim Ziethen if he had determined what close-out documents would be required. Tim stated that he is still waiting to hear from the Amtrak Grants office on this. He added that his assumption is that as long as the 6-month no-cost extension is in place, the quarterly reports should be provided for the prior grant. He will get confirmation from the Grants office on what else needs to be done to close out the grant.

Requesting a Debrief with FRA:

On the 10-3-23 NGEC Executive Board call, Chairman Ray Hessinger asked that Amtrak request a debrief with FRA on the CRISI Grant on what worked, what didn't, and that he and NGEC Secretary John Oimoen, IDOT be invited to participate.

Begin -NGEC 12-month Interim funding provided by Amtrak:

On the 10-11-23 FASC call Treasurer Tim Ziethen told members that the Amtrak Board had approved the NGEC 123-month interim funding plan and budget (\$260,000) as a line item in the AOP.

Steve Hewitt asked about the status of authorizing AASHTO to extend the contracts of the sub-contractors.

Tim specifically asked Steve to "**put it in the (FASC) minutes that it is authorized and approved – AASHTO can extend the sub-contractors contracts for another year**".

Steve agreed to put it in the minutes (and has) but added that since no one from AASHTO was on the call on 10-11-23, it is still necessary to send the authorization directly to AASHTO (Strat Cavros).

Tim agreed and will be sure that authorization is provided. The only language caveat that is still being worked out with

Amtrak Legal is related to the fact that Amtrak is still operating under a Continuing Resolution (CR) and the final appropriation for 2024 has not yet been enacted. This will only create an issue if Congress's action has a major negative impact in the ultimate budget.

Tim concluded the discussion on this topic emphasizing that it has been confirmed internally within Amtrak.

On 10-12-23, George Hull confirmed that this was his understanding as well.

Exploring Long-Term Funding Options:

The Executive Board is beginning to look at potential long-term funding options – one being applying for a CRISI grant in the next round. The debrief should help considerably in that endeavor. The Board and Amtrak are also looking for other potential funding sources, including a reauthorization of the NGEN, with funding, through the federal annual appropriations.

9. Scheduling Meetings – Steve Hewitt:

Steve Hewitt reported that he has rescheduled all NGEN meetings through Outlook Calendar appointments for the next 12 months. The Technical Subcommittee calls remain bi-weekly with George Hull and Steve Hewitt being given the responsibility of determining whether to hold or cancel a given call based on the proposed agenda. If it is deemed to be light, the meeting will be canceled.

Jeff Gordon, FRA, asked Steve Hewitt to send an update to the calendars with a termination date for the 2023 meetings so they come off the calendars. Steve stated that he had done so but was not sure why they had not come off calendars.

On the FASC call on 10-11-23, the FRA raised the issue of changing the service provider for web-conference meetings from WebEx to TEAMS. The FASC members recommended that this issue be brought to the Executive Board, AASHTO and the Technical Subcommittee to get a sense of preference.

Members of the tech subcommittee (including industry members) are asked to send any thoughts or comments or preferences to Steve Hewitt and George Hull.

Comments will help inform the discussion with the Executive Board on its November meeting.

10. NGEN Annual Meeting – Steve Hewitt:

Steve Hewitt reminded members that the NGEN Annual meeting will be held on 2-2-24 at the Hyatt Regency Capitol Hill Washington, DC. A DRAFT agenda is being developed and will be discussed on the November meeting of the Executive Board.

AASHTO has provided the Hotel Link for the Rail meetings to be held during that week. As always, the NGEN is a part of a several meetings held in conjunction with AASHTO's Council on Rail Transportation.

Below is the link for the 2024 Winter Rail Meeting provided by Kamasha Hendrickson, AASHTO Senior Meeting Planner:

Room Rate: \$193 per night plus tax

Hotel Link: [AASHTO 2024 Council on Rail Transportation Legislative Meeting \(hyatt.com\)](https://www.hyatt.com/en/US/hotels/hyatt-regency-capitol-hill-washington-dc)

Cut-Off Date: January 5, 2024

Kamasha Hendrickson, CMP, CGMP

Senior Meeting Planner

American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO)

555 12th St, NW, Suite 1000

Washington, DC 20004

Tel: 202-624-5403

E-mail: khendrickson@aaashto.org

10. Adjourn – George Hull, Amtrak:

With no other business forthcoming, George Hull adjourned today's meeting at 3:34pm.

Next meeting – 10-26-23

Decisions and Ongoing Action Items

2023 NGEC Backgrounder educational document:

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To date 354 copies have been distributed.

It is also posted on the NGEC website – www.ngec.org

The FASC is beginning its review of the 2023 version and preparing to update it for 2024. It is anticipated that the 2024 version will be ready for distribution at the NGEC Annual Meeting on 2-2-24.

Maintaining Industry Participation List:

There are two hundred and six industry participants.

Any updates or changes to this list should be sent to Steve Hewitt at shewitt109@aol.com.

Update: Multi-State Railcar Procurement as of 10-12-23:

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CRISI Grant Awards Timeline:

Awards announced week of 9-25-23 – NGEC did not receive a CRISI Grant

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Scheduling Meetings/changing Web/conference providers:

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Cut-Off Date: January 5, 2024

Kamasha Hendrickson, CMP, CGMP

Senior Meeting Planner

American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO)

555 12th St, NW, Suite 1000

Washington, DC 20004

Tel: 202-624-5403

E-mail: khendrickson@aaashto.org

Next Meeting – 10-26-23

ATTACHMENTS



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

PRIIA Section 305 Tech Sub Committee Meeting

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

10-12-23

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|---|---------------|
| 1. Roll Call | Steve Hewitt |
| 2. Review Action Items | Steve Hewitt |
| 3. Approve Minutes from 8-31-23 and 9-14-23 | George Hull |
| 4. Update: Multi-State Venture Rail Car Procurement | Ryan Sharpe |
| 5. Update: Metro-North Dual Mode Locomotive Procurement | Ray Hessinger |
| 6. Update: Amtrak Vehicle Procurements | George Hull |
| 7. Document Control Update | Tammy Krause |
| - Status – Communications on Rail Cars Working Group Activities | |
| - Status – Carbody Materials Working Group Activities | |
| - Status – 305-901 – tech writing | |
| - Next steps – work plan for 2023-24 | |
| 8. CRISI Grant NOT Awarded – next steps: | George/Steve |
| - Closing out prior grant | |
| - Requesting a Debrief with FRA | |
| - Begin 12-month interim funding provided by Amtrak. | |
| - Exploring long-term funding options | |
| 9. Scheduling meetings | Steve |
| 10. Annual Meeting | Steve |

11. Adjourn

George Hull

Next Meeting
10-26-23