



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

## NGEC Technical Subcommittee

MINUTES

MAY 9, 2024

3:00PM EASTERN

TEAMS MEETING

<b>FACILITATOR</b>	<i>Dan Ruppert, Chair, NGEC Technical Subcommittee</i>
<b>ATTENDEES</b>	<b>Core Team Members:</b> <i>Dan Ruppert, Melissa Shurland, Curtis McDowell, Ray Hessinger, Ed Engle, Curt Massie, Art Peterson, Mike Jenkins, Jodi Lehmkuhl for Ryan Sharpe, Jennifer Bastian, Larry Salci, Kevin Myles, Steve Hewitt, <b>Industry Members:</b> Rich Stegner, Paul Jamieson, Ed Golitko, Norman Forde, Josh Coran, Frank Pazcazio, John Graham, Kevin Sudano, Jonathan Michel, Guido Vogel, Bill Luebke, James Campbell, Stephen Mark</i>
<b>ABSENTEES</b>	<i>Joe Paul, Ryan Sharpe, Matthew Simmons, Marci Petterson, Matt Hensley, Troy Hughes, Tarek Omar, Barley Fields, Blair Slaughter, Tammy Krause</i>

### DISCUSSION/DECISIONS MADE

**1.**

Technical subcommittee Chair Dan Ruppert, 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).**

During roll call, Ed Engle, Iowa DOT, announced that he would be retiring from state service at the end of the month. Ed has long been a member of the NGEC Technical Subcommittee and will be missed. We wish Ed all the best what-ever the future holds and we thank him for his interest and involvement in the work of the NGEC. Congratulations!

**2.**

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

**2024 NGEC Backgrounder educational document:**

The 2024 NGEC two-pager is now available in hard copy by request of Steve Hewitt at [shewitt109@aol.com](mailto:shewitt109@aol.com).

To date 461 copies have been distributed.

Steve Hewitt also noted that there had been a cyber issue at AASHTO and the NGEC website which they maintain for the organization, went down and AASHTO was able to recapture a snapshot dating to 2022. It is now in the process of updating the site to bring it back to being current.

**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 as of 4-25-24:**

*PDRs are continuing. The project team and Transportation representatives from CTDOT's service providers, Amtrak and TASI, are in Montreal this week at Alstom's Prototype center to review the Low Fidelity Cab Mock Up and provide comments as to layout and design assumptions.*

**Next Update: 5-23-24**

**Metro-North Dual Mode Locomotive Procurement as of 4-25-24:**

Ray Hessinger provided a brief summary of the March report he had received from Metro-North:

Locomotive 301 completed factory testing and will complete FAIs on Locomotive 301 by the end of the month. They are working on the FAI for 3<sup>rd</sup> Rail assembly in Germany.

Completing final assembly of Locomotive 302.

The procurement is moving along well and they should have the Dual Mode Locomotive out of Siemens for testing in the near future.

**Next Update: 5-23-24**

**Update: Amtrak Vehicle Procurements as of 4-25-24:**

On the Acela:

Amtrak is working with FRA on QP2 testing – trying to move to the final steps. They are having multiple daily calls/updates with the OEM and FRA. This procurement is heading in the right direction. Trainsets are being delivered to various locations as reported previously with #12 moving to Penn Coach yard. The remaining units will be stored at Alstom until they are placed into service. Work force training is taking place with Alstom at two of three sites – with training at the third site - Sunnyside yard - starting soon.

On the Airo trainset:

This procurement is moving full speed ahead. They are closing out design efforts. Working on FAIs and wrapping up work on various systems. 40 vehicles are in production – 4 Locomotives and the rest (36) are coaches.

The first will go on the Pacific Northwest for testing – and 12 months later into service.

They are building out a commissioning facility for Airo and others.

Overall, this procurement is progressing “pretty well”.

On the ALC 42:

Work on this equipment is progressing steadily with 50+ units in service. The total to be purchased is 125. Performance has steadily improved – Amtrak's working with the OEM has been successful.

On the Long-Distance Fleet:

This is an active procurement. Amtrak continues to respond to questions from the carbuilders within the RFP process.

**Next Update: 5-23-24**

**3. Approval of the Minutes from 4-25-24:**

On a motion by Art Peterson for IDOT, and a second by Ed Engle, Iowa DOT, the minutes from 4-25-24 were approved as presented.

**4. Update: Multi-State Venture Car procurement –Jodi Lehmkuhl, Caltrans:**

Jodi Lehmkuhl, Caltrans, provided the following update for inclusion in today's (5-9-24) minutes:

*The Cab Car FDR is approved and closed, and all coach-type FDR stages are complete. The Cab Car and Café Car MCAT simulation reports have been approved by the states and the FRA.*

*The Cab Car Complete FAI and FRA sample car inspections are complete. The Cab Car 238.111(b) test plan has been submitted to FRA and the first two cab cars have been shipped to Stockton in preparation for testing. 238.111 testing is planned for May-June pending execution of agreements between all parties.*

*All 137 cars are in production or have been produced at Siemens Sacramento Facility. IDOT coaches and Caltrans trainsets are currently in revenue service and additional cars are being added as they are commissioned and accepted.*

## **5.**

### **Document Control Update- Tammy Krause:**

Tammy Krause was unavailable for the meeting and did not provide a written update for the record. Therefore, this item was tabled until the next call (5-23-24).

## **6.**

### **Overview – FRA Rolling Stock Research – Melissa Shurland, FRA:**

Dan Ruppert opened this discussion by noting that he and Steve Hewitt met with several members of FRA R&D (including Melissa Shurland, Kevin Myles and Michele Geary) and had an interesting conversation about how the NGEC can help and/or “integrate what we or FRA do”. Following the conversation, Melissa Shurland agreed to provide an overview of their efforts on technology transfer and related efforts that could be of interest to the NGEC and provide feedback to the FRA.

Melissa reported that they are focusing on rolling stock and occupant safety on rolling stock equipment and components. She added that they have previously provided “readouts” to the NGEC on accessibility and on-board wireless and have received feedback from the Committee members.

Melissa noted that there are areas where they believe the NGEC could provide feedback and/or would find value in the information. As an example, they are currently investigating safety related to alternative fuels and wayside monitoring systems. They are working with AAR as well as APTA on various component specs. Through their research they have been able to feed data to APTA for standardization.

FRA would like to present a variety of topics on a regular basis – possibly monthly – on such topics as requirements for railroads to use new propulsion technology. Possibly a presentation from FRA’s Office of Safety.

Melissa suggested that they would like to present research activities and get feedback from the NGEC.

They are continuing accessibility work as well and will provide feedback to the NGEC on that also.

Melissa added that Kevin Myles and others at FRA R&D will work with Melissa to put together a plan including a list of topics to present to the NGEC Technical Subcommittee. They will work with the subcommittee to determine the frequency – with the thought being possibly once a month.

Dan Ruppert asked for reactions, thoughts or comments.

Ray Hessinger, NYSDOT, (and NGEC Chairman) commented that he believes this is a good opportunity for the NGEC and he would like to see it move forward.

Dan Ruppert noted that how Melissa has outlined it is great. He added that as certain topics raise interest among the NGEC members a “deeper dive” may be “further inquired”.

Curtis McDowell, for NCDOT commented that what Melissa has proposed would be extremely helpful. NCDOT is one of the few states that owns equipment and they are looking to de-carbonize and would be very interested in the FRA research on battery propulsion.

Steve Hewitt added that what Melissa has outlined is exactly what “we” were looking for. He suggested that the presentations be scheduled for what he called “the off-week” which means Tech Subcommittee meetings where the monthly procurement updates are not on the agenda. It would build a stronger second monthly meeting agenda and provide new information on research being done and an opportunity for the NGEC to provide feedback.

Melissa and her team will put together a list of topics and send it to Steve Hewitt. If the subcommittee agrees. She proposed that

"we" schedule one or two at first and add more later.

**7.**

**NGEC Future Funding – Status: CRISI Grant Application – Steve Hewitt, NGEC:**

The NOFO for the next round of CRISI Grants came out at the end of March 2024. Amtrak intends to apply for a CRISI Grant for long-term funding for the NGEC in this round. CRISI applications are due to FRA by 5-28-24.

In the last round of CRISI Grants, Amtrak submitted the application for funding the NGEC. Although the application was well received, a grant for the NGEC was not awarded. In the debrief with FRA, Amtrak learned that there were no flaws in the application, it was compelling and well done. There simply was not enough money to fund all of the many requests received. Amtrak was encouraged to apply again on behalf of funding the NGEC and is doing so.

In the last round, one of the critical factors that carried a lot of weight was the strong support the NGEC received from the industry through letters of support. It is hoped that we are able to get that kind of support and more this time around. It will be critical for sure.

As was done in the previous round, Amtrak will send out a letter to industry members from Tim Ziethen requesting letters of support and providing information as to where to send the letters and other guidance.

Steve Hewitt reached out to Tim Ziethen this week to ascertain the status of the application and request for letters of support. He will follow-up again with Tim. Please watch for the Amtrak request letter and, if so inclined, please support the CRISI application for funding the NGEC.

The NGEC is currently being funded by Amtrak out of its AOP, but this was simply meant to be a 12-month interim plan to bridge the gap until long-term funding could be secured. It is critical that the NGEC be funded long-term in order to keep the standardized specification it has developed current and useful and to develop additional specs as need arises and/or new technology emerges. At this point, although other options have been looked at, the NGEC Executive Board determined that this is a federal responsibility and applying for a CRISI Grant seems to be the best vehicle. The Board, along with Amtrak continues to explore other options while moving forward with the CRISI application.

**8.**

**Other/Adjourn – Dan Ruppert, Amtrak:**

With no other business forthcoming, Dan Ruppert adjourned today's meeting at 3:29pm Eastern.

**Next Tech Subcommittee meeting – 5-23-24**

**Decisions and Ongoing Action Items**

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**Next Update: 5-23-24**

**Document Control as of 5-9-24:**

There was no report provided on 4-25-24 or 5-9-24.

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**Next Update: 5-23-24**

**Discussion: Potential future presentations:**

**See agenda item 6 for the discussion.**

Action: Melissa Shurland and her team will put together a topic list and provide it to Steve Hewitt. One or two topics will be scheuled as a starting point with more added later. The intent will be to have a presentation about once a month.

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**Next Update: 5-23-24**

**Next Technical Subcommittee Meeting – 5-23-24**

**ATTACHMENTS**



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

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## **Agenda**

**5-9-24**

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|--|------------------|
| 1. Roll Call                                     | Steve Hewitt     |
| 2. Review Action Items                           | Steve Hewitt     |
| 3. Approve Minutes from 4-25-24                  | Dan Ruppert      |
| 4. Update: Multi State Venture Car Procurement   | Ryan Sharpe      |
| 5. Document Control Update                       | Tammy Krause     |
| 6. Overview – FRA Rolling Stock Research         | Melissa Shurland |
| 7. NGEN future funding – CRISI Grant Application | Steve            |
| 8. Other   | All              |
| 9. Adjourn                                       | Dan Ruppert      |

**Next Tech Subcommittee Meeting  
5-23-24**