



Contact the Editor

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CONFIDENTIAL CLOSE CALL

KEEP REPORTING... WE ARE LISTENING!

December 2019

Metro, ATU Local 689, and IBT Local 922 take close calls seriously. Metro has approved the safety actions below to address concerns from employees who have made confidential reports directly to the Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS). These action items are tracked internally to ensure completion and ongoing compliance.



Employee Concern: Accessible Parking at Greenbelt Rail Yard

Employees have reported concerns with the location of accessible handicap parking at the Greenbelt Rail Yard. Due to the location of accessible parking spaces, employees with disabilities are required to travel far distances for direct building access.

Actions: Office of Americans with Disabilities Act Policy and Planning (ADAP) will perform a comprehensive evaluation of designated accessible parking spaces and unmarked parking spaces to assess location, placement, and possible additions. This effort is starting with Greenbelt and will expand to other facilities.

Responsible party: Christiaan Blake, ADAP

Completion date: TBD- will provide updates as action progresses



Resolved: Smell at NoMa Station Kiosk

Employees working in the NoMa Station kiosks have experienced a smell that was reported to the Safety Hotline and Close Call Reporting. After inspection of the concrete floor, the source of the smell was determined to be a dead rodent and an unsecured drain line. PLNT cleared and secured the condensation line to the drain to prevent leakage. They also removed the rodent and debris and performed treatments to the floor beneath the kiosk.

Since this work was performed station managers and supervisors at NoMa no longer experienced the smell.

Responsible party: Leroy Jones, PLNT

Completed: 07/23/19

Update: Inter-car barriers on 7000-series railcars

Rail operations personnel responsible for removing the inter-car barriers (ICB) have reported safety hazards while removing them. Railcar engineering is exploring a new pantograph design to eliminate the hazard.

Actions: RTRA has reissued a memo providing procedures for attaching, detaching, and storing ICBs. Anyone unable to safely connect or disconnect the 7000-series spring ICB should contact the interlocking operator for CMNT assistance immediately.

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July 2019

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Employee Concern: Oil Leak at Carmen Turner Facility (CTF) Bus Garage

Employees reported oil leaking from the ceiling pipes at the CTF truck bays. PLNT found that the lube room is cold during the winter season because it has an open vent to the outside and no heat supply. The cold temperature thickens the oil, making it difficult to pump. To overcome this issue, mechanics were increasing the pressure on the pumps which caused premature failures and leaks.

Actions: PLNT performed an inspection of the oil dispenser system and all line connections to identify leaks. All leaks were repaired, and the system's pressure was set to the appropriate PSI level. After reinspection on 6/21/2019, no leaks were found. To address the oil thickness during the winter months, electric heaters will be installed in the lube room.

Responsible party: Leroy Jones, PLNT

Completion Date: 12/1/19

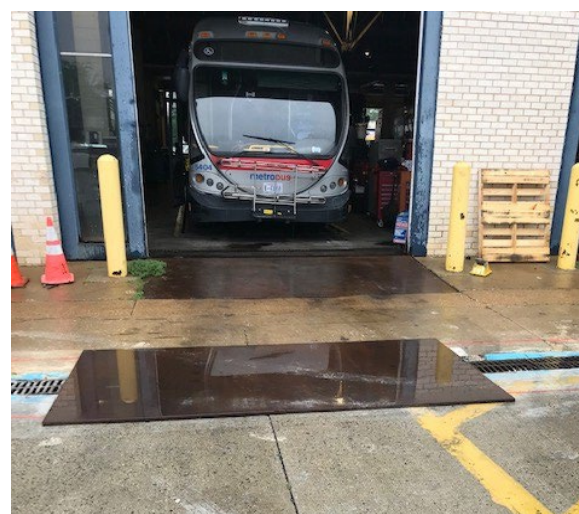
Employee Concern: Deteriorating concrete around metal grates at Bladensburg Bus Division

Employees reported hazards associated with concrete deteriorating around the metal grates at Bladensburg Division. PLNT evaluated the concrete and determined that the type of concrete used was not suitable for the location due to the weight of the buses traveling over the area.

Actions: PLNT is currently fabricating parts and materials required to replace the damaged grating. In the interim, PLNT has installed a metal plate over area to mitigate the hazard.

Responsible party: Leroy Jones, PLNT

Completion Date: 08/1/19





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April 2019

On April 18, 2019, the Close Call team hosted a shop steward training with ATU Local 689 and IBT Local 922 at Local 689's Union Hall. This training was very instrumental in helping to raise awareness of the program and providing shop stewards the tools to become program ambassadors by sharing the information with fellow union members.



Questions Corner

Here are some key Questions and Answers discussed during the training:

Q: How is the program funded?

A: Funding for the Close Call program is provided by Metro. After the 2009 Red Line accident near Fort Totten, the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) recommended that Metro establish a confidential, non-punitive reporting program. As a result, Metro, Local 689, and Local 922 partnered with the Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS) as a third party to collect employees' reports.

Q: How does the program work?

A: The program is a non-punitive, confidential approach to improving safety at Metro. Here are the steps:

- 1) An employee experiences a close call or observe an unsafe condition. Within 24 hours, the employee completes a report online (www.closecall.bts.gov) or calls 1-888-568-2377.*
- 2) BTS performs confidential interview with employee.*
- 3) Peer Review Team (Metro, L689, L922 appointees) meets to review the case summary for root cause and makes recommendations to prevent the incident from recurring. The summary **does not** contain any of the reporter's identifying information.*
- 4) Once the recommendation is approved it is implemented by a Chief Operating Officer's (COO) designated responsible party and monitored until completion.*

Q: Is the Peer Review Team composed of members who are friends?

A: No. Peer Review Team are appointed by the partner that the team member represents. This means anyone who represents Local 689 or Local 922 is appointed by Local 689 or Local 922 leadership. The same goes for Metro representatives.

Q: Does reporting once protect you from discipline every time you encounter a close call?

A: No. There is no blanket protection from discipline. Every time you experience a close call that you could potentially be disciplined for, you must report each time. Please make sure you keep your confirmation code in a safe place.

Q: How does the reporting employee know what happened with their report, or whether the situation has been resolved?

A: Each time you submit a Close Call Report, BTS will ask if you would like feedback. Always say "Yes" to BTS. Metro is unable to reach out to reporting employees because their identities are unknown to Metro.

BTS will contact you and inform you of actions taken as a result of your report. The other method of communicating results is the Close Call newsletter, which is disseminated to your Metro email, Union email blasts, attached to manifests, and posted on BTS's website and Metroweb.

Q: What department(s) can you affect?

A: Close Call reports received by BTS have the potential to affect any department within Metro that could be responsible for resolving the issue. Some approved preventive actions require multiple departments to work together to resolve the employee's concern.





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Q: How will I be protected from retaliation if I have already reported an issue to management and I report it to Close Call because it is not being fixed?

A: BTS protects your information with a federal law, Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act (CIPSEA), which means that your information cannot be disclosed. Any willful disclosure results in up to \$250,000 fine and five years imprisonment. Metro's executive leadership supports no retaliation for Close Call Reports. If you feel that you are being retaliated against for any Close Call Report that you submitted, please contact the Program Manager Adrianne Harley at 202-962-2278 or BTS at 1-888-568-2377.

Q: When I submitted a Close Call report, why was I contacted by a Safety Officer for investigation?

*A: There is a difference between the Safety Hotline and Close Call Reporting. When you report through Close Call, you will be reporting directly to BTS via their online form at www.closecall.bts.gov or by phone 1-888-568-2377. **A BTS agent will be the only person contacting you.** There have been several instances when employees did not use Close Call, but they actually used the Safety Hotline. Please double check that you are using the Close Call Reporting number prior to submitting a report.*

- Notice to Operators (NTO) when changes are made
- Station Manager's Direct to notify when newsletters are published
- Postings on all bulletin boards
- Use as safety contact for tool box meetings

GOING FORWARD

As an ongoing effort to promote Close Call Reporting amongst fellow members Local 689 and Local 922 leadership and respective shop stewards will:

- Continue to distribute Close Call newsletter through email blasts and post on website.
- Distribute brochures and information about the program to members in their various departments.
- Request additional promotional materials as needed.



We appreciate your suggestions. Here are a few that we will be implementing:

- Station Manager kiosks magnets and/or stickers
- Laminated Close Call Information sheet in MOC log books
- More frequent Close Call newsletters

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