



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**Federal Transit
Administration**

Headquarters

1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

SENT VIA EMAIL

November 18, 2024

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

Subject: Response to Closeout Request for FTA-22-MBTA-CAT4-7 (Radio Weak Spots)

Dear Mr. Eng:

The Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) submitted a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) closeout request for FTA-22-MBTA-CAT4-7 (Radio Weak Spots). MBTA developed this CAP as part of its response to findings issued in Special Directive (SD) 22-12: Operating Conditions and Policies, Procedures, and Training from the Safety Management Inspection (SMI) of MBTA initiated by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) in April 2022.

Closeout Approval for FTA-22-MBTA-CAT4-7 (Radio Weak Spots)

MBTA's CAP for FTA-22-12-MBTA-CAT4-7A. and 7B. includes two required actions and 10 action items, approved by FTA on January 13, 2023, to address the following SD 22-12 finding and required actions:

- **Finding 7:** Radio quality is deficient in several key locations and does not support adequate communications between OCC and field employees to ensure the safety of MBTA operations and maintenance.
- **Required Action 7A:** MBTA must confirm radio dead spots with frontline motorpersons and maintenance workers.
- **Required Action 7B:** MBTA must improve the performance of its radio system in these dead spots.

To implement this CAP, between October 6, 2022, and October 30, 2024, MBTA undertook the following CAP action items and submitted documentation regarding their completion:

- Established a radio advisory group and compiled a plan of action.
- Established biweekly meetings between MBTA's System Wide Radio Department (SWR), Operations Control Center (OCC), and Maintenance Control Center (MCC).

- Reviewed the list of weak spots reported with the radio work group.
- Surveyed the 18 weak spot sites and reported needed equipment to complete repairs.
- Repaired the identified weak spots.
- Prepared after-action reports (AARs), complete with a description of work.
- Prepared an AAR to establish a baseline record.
- Re-tested the 18 sites quarterly to verify repaired weak spot areas were performing as expected.

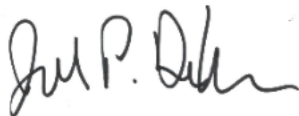
FTA carefully evaluated the submitted documentation and reviewed submissions with MBTA during biweekly meetings on SD 22-12 between October 2022 and October 2024. FTA also attended MBTA's biweekly SWR, OCC, and MCC meetings for one year and verified that MBTA's quarterly weak spot testing was being conducted through October 30, 2024, the date specified in the CAP for completion of 2024 quarterly testing. In addition, FTA verified that weak spots were repaired and observed these quarterly weak spot tests in the field through on-site verification. FTA also confirmed that MBTA adhered to their newly developed master SOP for radio documentation.

Based on review of these submissions and the results of verification activity, FTA finds that these completed action items adequately satisfy the requirements of FTA-22-MBTA-CAT4-7 and this CAP may now be closed.

Conclusion

This CAP closure represents a tremendous amount of work, and FTA greatly appreciates your efforts. Please contact our SMI Coordinator, Christian Hernandez, by phone at (213) 552-3494 or by email at Christian.hernandez@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
Ryan Coholan, Chief Operating Officer, MBTA
Tim Lesniak, Chief Safety Officer, MBTA
Meredith Sandberg, Chief of Quality, Compliance, and Oversight, MBTA
Pat Lavin, Chief Safety Officer, Massachusetts Department of Transportation
Jamie Van Nostrand, Chair, Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities (DPU)
Robert Hanson, Rail Safety Director, DPU