

# Lessons Learned from SafeTrack WMATA's Accelerated Maintenance Program



## **Laura Mason**

*Chief, Maintenance of Way Eng.  
Washington Metropolitan Area  
Transit Authority  
Washington, DC*

## **William Baker**

*Senior Associate - Rail  
Mott MacDonald  
San Jose, CA*



2018 Rail Conference

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# Key Presentation Take-Aways

## Lessons Learned

- Recognize when drastic action is required and **TAKE IT!**
- Maximize utility of track time
- Engage local communities and media to communicate
  - the **why** as well as the **what**,
  - **before, during** and **after** the project



# Washington Metro Facts

- Rail Service began 1976
- Unique as it serves three jurisdictions with 4 bosses
- 2nd largest Rail System in U.S. with approximately 12,000 employees.
- Metro delivers 1.1 million passenger trips per day (Bus, Rail & Metro Access service)

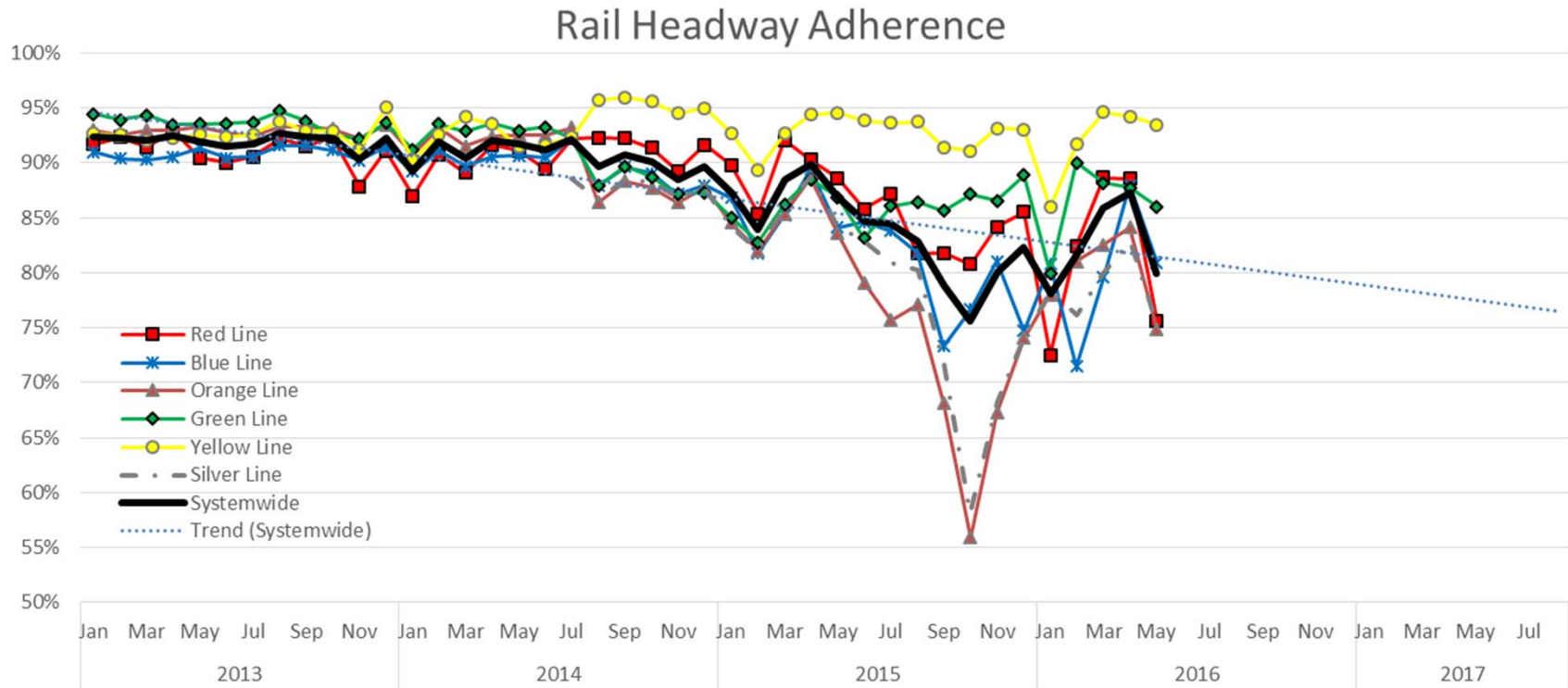


## Recent History (2000-2015)

- Deteriorating infrastructure
- Series of high profile incidents
- Eroding public confidence
- Failing morale



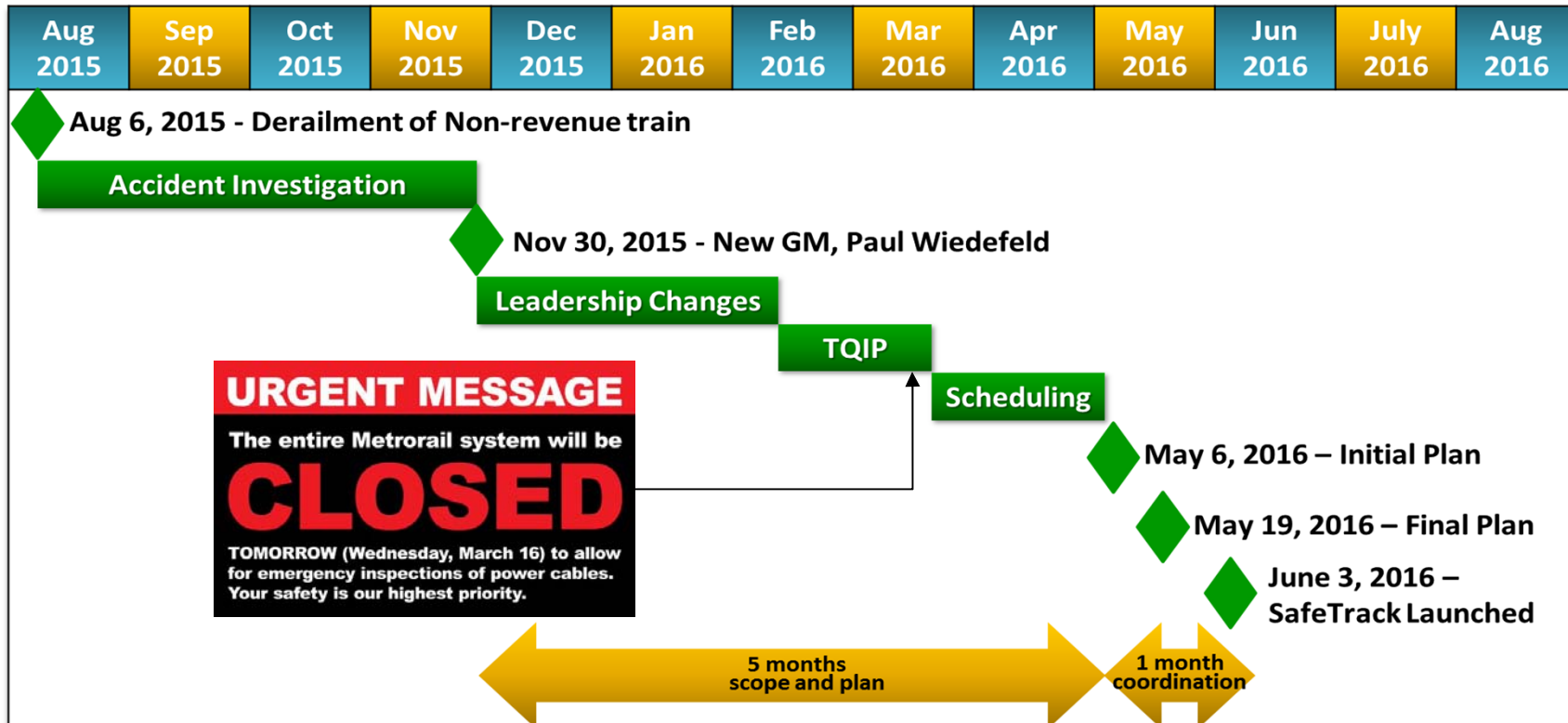
# Bad Infrastructure = Bad Performance



*"We're talking about a systemic service meltdown condition... It's a death spiral."*

Former General Manager & CEO, Richard A. White, April 2004

# Time for Decisive Action



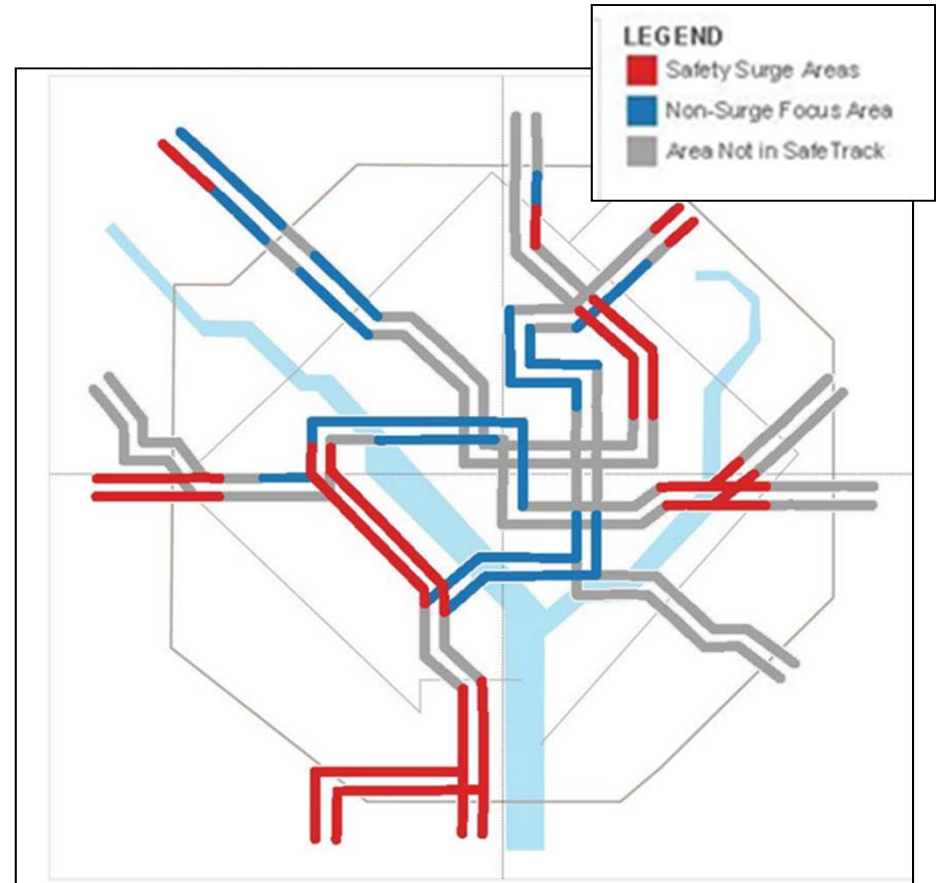
*“This plan is going to take some sacrifice from all of us. But it is clear that the current approach is not working, more aggressive action is necessary.”*

*– GM Wiedefeld, May 6, 2016*



# What was SafeTrack?

- 16 Safety Surges
  - Single Tracking or Shut-downs
  - 24/7 work for 1-6 weeks
- 14 Focus Areas
  - Early Outs, Daytime & Weekend Single Tracking



500 people ~ 386 Days ~ 93 miles



# Safety Surge Scope

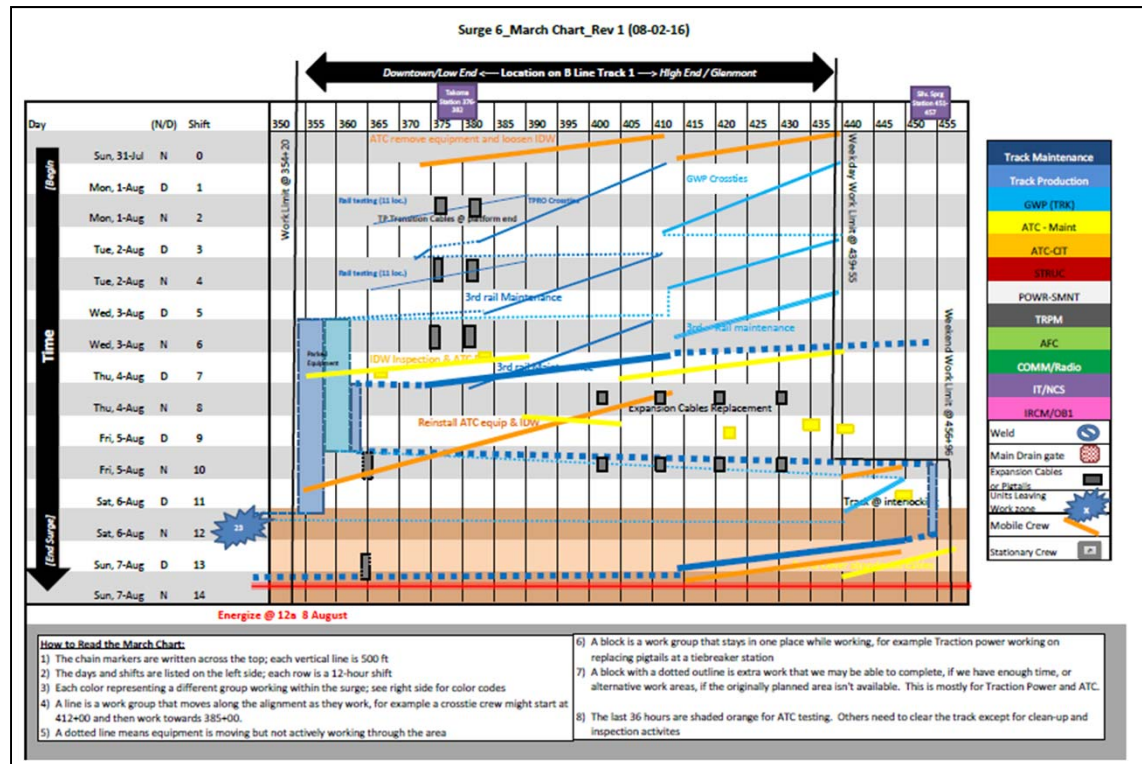
- Prioritizes tasks requiring most track/mobilization time
  - Switch Replacement
  - Crossties
  - Grout Pads
- Maximize work, where **safe** and **efficient**
  - Fastener & Rail Replacement
  - Traction Power Cable Replacement





# Focused Planning & Coordination

- Increased field coordination
- Detailed execution planning to improve:
  - Safety
  - Quality
  - Productivity



# Streamlined Program Delivery

- Small team supplemented existing organization
  - 2 WMATA hires
  - 4 consultant staff augmentation
- Weekly, face-to-face meeting with key department heads
  - “Inside the workzone” – Track, ATC, Power, etc
  - “Outside the workzone” – Planning, Bus, Media, etc
- Focus on iterative learning



# Extensive Community Engagement

- Local jurisdictional coord.
- Multi-prong customer awareness efforts
  - Media engagement in multiple languages
  - Station outreach teams
- Counter-intuitive “stay away” & published diversion rates

SafeTrack: Days When Service Reduced 20%+



*5,800 of 7,000 service hours affected*



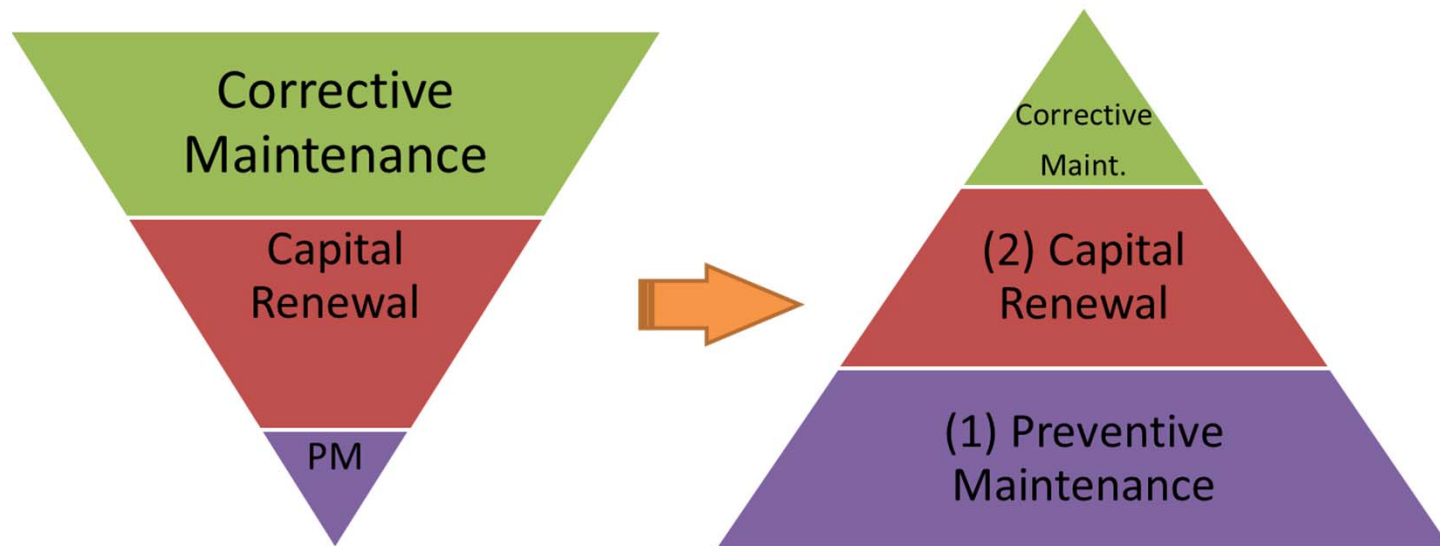
# Targeted Communication & Coordination

- Transparency with Stakeholders:
  - GAO & FTA oversight
  - Riders and local jurisdictions
- Culture Change
  - Delivering Reliable Service vs Maximizing Planned Service
- Amplify - community of 3,400 “super users”

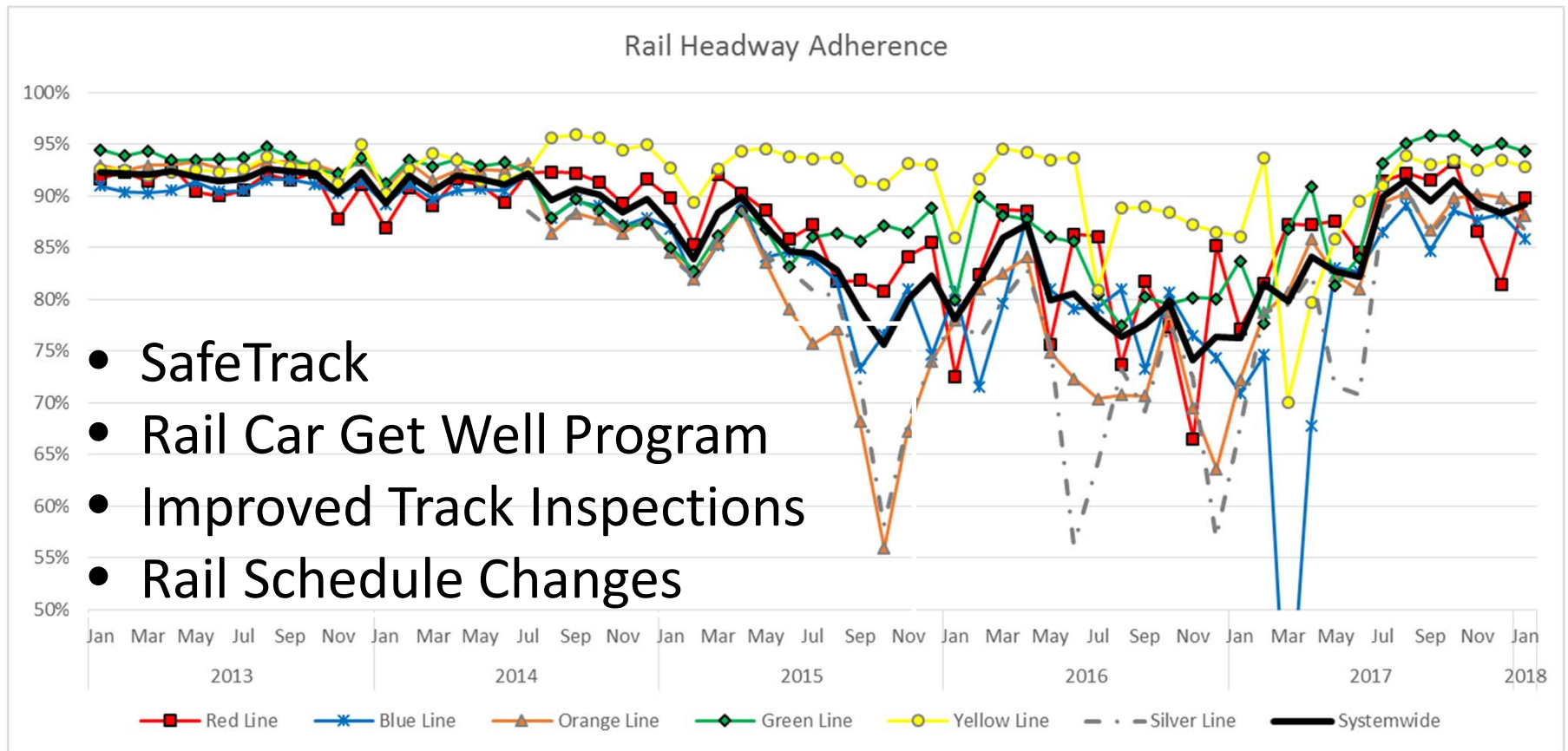


# Demonstrated Return on Investment

- Time Invested = Time Saved
  - Share results in Customer-centric ways
- Paradigm shift from Reactive to Proactive



# Turning the Corner



## Lessons Learned:

Courage – Deliver Bad News Directly

Commitment – Dedicated Personnel

Coordination – Internal & External

Communication – Before, During & After

~~Complacency~~ – For all work & all events

