Lessons Learned from SafeTrack
WMATA’s Accelerated Maintenance Program

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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
“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

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

- SafeTrack
- Rail Car Get Well Program
- Improved Track Inspections
- Rail Schedule Changes
Lessons Learned:

Courage – Deliver Bad News Directly
Commitment – Dedicated Personnel
Coordination – Internal & External
Communication – Before, During & After

Complacency – For all work & all events