

**Minutes**  
**Customer Service, Operations and Safety Committee**  
**October 11, 2007**  
**9 a.m.**

The meeting was called to order at 9:24 a.m. by Committee Chair, Mr. Benjamin.  
Present were:

**Committee Members**

Mr. Peter Benjamin, Chair  
Mrs. Catherine Hudgins, Vice Chair  
Ms. Elizabeth Hewlett  
Mr. Chris Zimmerman  
Mr. Jim Graham  
Mr. Dana Kauffman

Mr. Emeka Moneme  
Mr. Marcell Solomon  
Mr. William Euille  
Mr. Anthony Giancola

**Approval of Agenda**

The agenda was approved.

**Approval of Minutes**

The minutes from the September 13, 2007 meeting were approved as submitted.

**Information Items**

**A. Safety Improvement Program Update**

Mr. Francis and Ms. Hanson briefed the Committee on the progress of the Safety Improvement Program. WMATA has completed the Assessment Phase which involved visiting over 27 work sites. As a result, WMATA discovered a complete review of all rules and procedures is warranted, along with employee training and implementation of zero tolerance.

Mr. Moneme inquired if the Unions were involved with the initiative. Mr. Francis confirmed the Unions will be involved in the entire process from training to briefings and strategy sessions on the best way to implement safety with our employees.

On a go forward basis, WMATA will be developing better business practices in order to achieve the 50% reduction in injuries/incidents in five years and launching local safety committees.

Mr. Benjamin requested that the Committee be provided progress updates on the program in the future.

## **B. Communication Initiative**

Mr. Francis and Mr. Feldman provided the Committee an overview of how WMATA plans to improve communication with our customers and employees during major delays. During unplanned service interruptions WMATA's focus is on investigating and recovering from the incident not communicating the "why", "how", and "what" is taking place to our customers.

The Deputy General Manager has established a matrix team of employees, riders, non-riders and the Riders Advisory Council (RAC) to focus on implementing ways to provide clear, consistent, and honest communication to our customers. One initiative already implemented is "we stop, we tell" so that customers are aware of what is happening and can make informed decisions. Mr. Benjamin agreed letting passengers know what is happening empowers them. However, WMATA's ability to immediately solve problems is unrealistic. Hopefully, customers understand buses cannot accommodate all the rail customers stuck in an emergency.

Board Committee members believe it is a great program, but were skeptical stating that they had heard similar initiatives in the past that were never brought to fruition. Mr. Graham stated he has been through this so much he passed a Board resolution on Elevator/Escalator out of service signage. Ms. Hudgins conveyed customers should be responded to before Board members have to get involved. Mr. Euille believes WMATA employees need training and culture change to ensure customers are treated like humans. Mr. Catoe committed to implementing a culture change at WMATA.

Mr. Zimmerman stated he wants to see results very soon. Management should put a system in place to assess the new initiative so there is feedback to implement for the next event. Mr. Francis responded that the evaluation process started when he came onboard and is continuous. It will take a little time to implement the focus change throughout WMATA, but it will be done. Debrief sessions are conducted after every event and a system will be put in place that has the RAC and customers evaluating WMATA as we move forward.

Mr. Benjamin adjourned the meeting at 10:02 a.m.