



Section 305 Next Generation Corridor Equipment Pool Committee (NGEC)

Monthly Activities Report: August 31, 2015

Submitted by: Steven J Hewitt, Manager, S305 NGEC Support Services

Public law 110-432 required Amtrak to:

...establish a Next Generation Corridor Equipment Pool Committee, comprised of representatives of Amtrak, the Federal Railroad Administration, host freight railroad companies, passenger railroad equipment manufacturers, interested States, and, as appropriate, other passenger railroad operators.

"The purpose of the Committee shall be to design, develop specifications for, and procure standardized next-generation corridor equipment.

(b) Functions – the Committee may –

1) Determine the number of different types of equipment required, taking into account variations in operational needs and corridor infrastructure.

2) Establish a pool of equipment to be used on corridor routes funded by participating states; and

3) Subject agreements between Amtrak and States, utilize services provided by Amtrak to design, maintain and remanufacture equipment."

Executive Board

Chair: Eric Curtit, Missouri DOT

Vice Chair: Mario Bergeron, Amtrak

Secretary: Ray Hessinger, NYSDOT

Treasurer: Darrell Smith, Amtrak

The Executive Board holds bi-weekly conference calls – Tuesday's at 11:30am Eastern

During the month of August, 2015, the Executive Board met once –via conference call - on the 4th. Key decisions and action items from the month of August, 2015 included:

- Mid-west States – Section 6 progress report: Progress is being made on the issue of governance and ownership – a draft ownership document is under review by the states' general counsels. The RFP for a Fleet manager should be released shortly – final steps are being taken by IDOT to make that happen.
- Host Railroad Blessing of NGEC equipment: AAR has created a committee to address potential issues related to the introduction into service of NGEC equipment from the AAR side. Jeff Gordo, FRA, has coordinated the effort on behalf of the NGEC, and representatives from Amtrak, FRA and Washington State, Illinois and Caltrans will participate. Jeff will provide updates on the progress through the Technical subcommittee on its calls on a monthly basis. (ongoing)

- The Finance and Administrative subcommittee continues to look at potential funding options and organizational structures to carry out those options. The subcommittee will make its recommendations to the Executive Board for its consideration in October, 2015.

In August, the Finance and Administrative Subcommittee' newly formed Legislative Outreach Task Force met (August 13th) to begin developing the message and a strategy for educating the "Hill" on the NGEC. The Task Force is chaired by Eric Curtit with members coming from the legislative/governmental affairs offices from Vermont, Maryland, Washington, California and Missouri and Amtrak.

- The updated "backgrounder" educational document remains available upon request. Please contact Steve Hewitt at shwitt109@aol.com with the number of copies requested and a mailing address.
- 514 Subcommittee update: The end of the fiscal year is approaching. Revised Minor update, based on comments/input provided by the states, was issued on August 7th. (Ongoing)
- Diesel-Electric Locomotive Procurement update as of August 4th:

Final Design Review (FDR) follow-up action items are being processed for closure. Less than 20 items remain open and are expected to be closed out within the next two weeks.

Three First Article Inspections (FAI) took place last week (Last week in July) – with only a few minor open items to close out.

Manufacturing for the first locomotive carbody has begun.

Fourteen draft Document Revision Changes (DCRs) are being prepared and Rich Stegner has contacted Tammy Krause (Amtrak) to coordinate processing and will send a list in the next two weeks.

Follow up teams are working on an on-going basis for the action items from the AAR Standard vehicle qualification testing and acceptance.

The last meeting of the Diesel Exhaust Fluid (DEF) review and application team was held on 7-13-15 and the team is working with Amtrak to identify storage locations and storage needs. The next meeting was tentatively scheduled for August 31st.

The locomotive weight is 271,000 lbs (+/-) and the calculated P2 force is still within specified limits. Weight is being closely monitored."

- Bi-level car procurement update as of August 4th:

During the last week of July, 2 First Article Inspections (FAI's) took place – 2 were successful with only a few minor open items yet to be closed out.

Design Review: there are 13 open hot item issues remaining.

Schedule information (additional detail) has been provided by the manufacturer and will be discussed in a meeting in Rochelle, Illinois on August 19, 2015. Caltrans, IDOT, FRA and Nippon Sharyo will attend.

9 RFCs remain open.

On August 20-12-2015 there will be a compression test of the car shell.

A meeting including Nippon Sharyo and FRA's Office of Safety on safety issues was held and it was reported to be successful.

Technical Subcommittee:

Chair: Mario Bergeron, Amtrak

Vice Chair: Dale Engelhardt, Amtrak

The Technical subcommittee holds bi-weekly conference calls on Thursday's at 3:00pm Eastern

During the month of August, 2015, the Technical subcommittee met twice, once via conference call, on the 13th and once face to face in Albany, NY on August 19th for the purposes of approving the Dual Mode (DC3rd Rail) Locomotive Specification. Key decisions and action items for the month of August, 2015 included:

- RVAAC: RVAAC presented its recommendations for improved access on rail vehicles to the Access Board on July 29, 2015. Melissa Shurland, FRA, reported on August 13th that she had not yet received information back from the Access Board.
- Accessibility Working Group Update: Oregon State University and Amtrak finalized and executed the NDA for drawings. Work will now begin on the study of the drawings.
- Backgrounder educational document: The 2015 version of the "Backgrounder" remains available upon request. Please contact Steve Hewitt at shewitt109@aol.com if you want to receive "Backgrounders".
- DEF Working Group: The working group continues to meet regularly. A project schedule is still being finalized and, upon completion will be sent to Mario Bergeron and Steve Hewitt who will distribute it to the Technical subcommittee members. On August 19th, Chairman Bergeron emphasized the importance of getting a project schedule and noted that time is of the essence
- The PRIIA Dual Mode (DC 3rd Rail) Passenger Locomotive Technical Specification – On August 19th the DRAFT Revision2 was approved by the Technical subcommittee in Albany, NY, at the face to face meeting of the subcommittee. It will be put in final form with changes as noted during today's meeting, by Tammy Krause. Once in final form, Steve Hewitt will transmit it to Eric Curtit on behalf of Mario Bergeron and the Technical subcommittee and request that the Board begin the process for formally adopting the specification.
- The Technical subcommittee on 8-19-15, voted to recommend that the Executive Board make a change to the Dual Mode (DC 3rd Rail) Passenger Locomotive Requirements Document Revision A to reduce HEP from 1000kw to 800kw in Section 2.6 Electrical. Tammy Krause will provide Steve Hewitt with the recommended language to be submitted to the Executive Board.
- Specification 305-912 reference document changes: The subcommittee on 8-19-15 agreed to a series of updates/revisions to the 305-912 document. Tammy Krause will capture those changes and revise the document accordingly. A draft revised document will be distributed to the full Technical subcommittee by COB 9-3-15 for its consideration on 9-10-15.
- Bi-Level Car Procurement Update as of August 19th:

On August 19, 2015, Larry Salci, Consultant to the FRA on the Bi-Level Specification, provided a brief high level update on the status of the bi-level car procurement.

FAIs are ongoing.

There are no option cars being added to the order – it was thought there might be, but it did not happen.

The big picture challenge is to meet the HSIPR ARRA deadline for expending the federal funds by 9/30/17.

Some of the money is state money which does not have the same deadline, but the effort is underway to make sure that the ARRA funds are spent and the deadline is met.

- Diesel-Electric Locomotive Procurement update as of August 19th:

On August 19, 2015, Jeff Gordon, FRA, provided a brief update on the D/E locomotive procurement:

- The procurement is proceeding well.

There are options for additional locomotives. The initial order was for 38 and is now at 47.

The Mid-West states are working on establishing ownership/governance and maintenance responsibilities compliant with Section 6 requirements.

- AAR Committee Update: On August 19th Jeff Gordon, FRA, provided a brief overview of the AAR Committee:

The committee was formed to establish standards (by 12/31/15) to address the new passenger equipment that will coming on line in the near future. The committee will develop a list of standards most of which are related to VTI and shunting. The standards will not apply to the PRIIA procurements but will be used as a comparison against them as they are underway to see if they work.

The Finance and Administrative Subcommittee

Chair: Darrell Smith, Amtrak CFO

Vice Chair: Brent Thompson, Washington State DOT

Vice Chair: Ray Hessinger, New York State DOT

The Finance and Administrative subcommittee holds a conference call every four weeks on Wednesdays at 3:00pm Eastern.

During the Month of August, 2015, the Finance and Administrative Subcommittee held its monthly meeting on the 17th:

- Legislative Outreach Task Force: As noted in the Executive Board section of this report, the FASC has established a Legislative Outreach Task Force which held its first conference call on August 13th. Eric Curtit is the Chair of the task force. It is comprised of members of 5 states; Amtrak and AASHTO, and the NGEC Support Manager.
- Obtaining data in regard to potential/future acquisition needs: FRA has prepared “a back of the envelope” look at “the best sense of what the needs might be”. It was emphasized that this is not a well vetted body of work. The information was provided by Beth Nachreiner and distributed to FASC members for discussion on the July 1, 2015 FASC call.

Nico Lindenau and Brent Thompson have agreed to add more detail to the concept and provide a report on the next subcommittee call to be held on September 16th.

- Eric Curtit has developed a draft “white paper/memo” for FASC review. It takes a closer look at the concept proposal for establishing the NGEC as a subsidiary of Amtrak for matters related to Fleets. Subcommittee members were asked to review the document and provide comments to Eric in advance of the September FASC call. After first review, the FASC members were of the view that the draft could be used as the basis for its report to the Executive Board due at the end of October, 2015.
- Proposal to assess a membership fee: Darrell Smith developed a spreadsheet for a potential NGEC/209 membership fee and sent it to all FASC members on 8-17-15. Darrell will revise the spreadsheet to include units used and send out to FASC members before the next call. All members, in the meantime, are asked to review and comment on the DRAFT.
- Assessing Specification use fees: On August 17th, Shayne Gill reported that he met with the AASHTO publications department and learned that it would be doable to have the NGEC specifications available for purchase in the AASHTO online bookstore as a potential source of revenue. Members of the FASC are asked to go online to the AASHTO Bookstore to get a sense of what it looks like and what the prices for AASHTO publications are. AASHTO would need to know how much to charge and how many documents there would be.

The 514 Subcommittee:

Chair: Ron Pate, Washington State DOT

The 514 Subcommittee holds bi-weekly conference calls on Mondays at 4:00PM Eastern.

During the month of August, 2015, the following update was provided to the Executive Board:

- The end of the fiscal year is approaching. Revised Minor update, based on comments/input provided by the states, will be issued this Friday.
- The next subcommittee meeting is scheduled for 8-17-15.
- Jeremy Jewkes, WSDOT, reported that “we are coming near the end of the process” – if there is anything any member wants to be considered, please contact Ron Pate or Jeremy Jewkes.
- Ron Pate, WSDOT, and Chair of the 514 subcommittee, had sent a letter/survey to the states in regard to high level issues. Responses have come in and Ron is beginning follow ups with the states on their responses.

NGEC Specification Review Panel(s):

For each PRIIA NGEC specification a Review Panel has been established to compare the specification (as developed by the Technical subcommittee) against a requirements document previously adopted by the Executive Board. As the Review Panel completes its work, it prepares a report with recommendations. This report is submitted to the Executive Board for its consideration. Once accepted by the Board, the specification is subsequently formally adopted by the Executive Board. As part of the Document Control process, any proposed revisions to a PRIIA NGEC specification must go through the Review Panel process as well. At such times, the Review Panel previously established for a particular specification is re-convened by the Executive Board chair.

In August, 2015, the NGEC Review Panels did not meet.