



*Our Vision: The NGEC will provide national leadership in standardization, acquisition, and management of passenger rail equipment.*

### Section 305 Next Generation Corridor Equipment Pool Committee (NGEC)

**Monthly Activities Report: October 31, 2019**

**Submitted By: Steven J Hewitt, Program Manager, S305 NGEC**

**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: Charles King, Amtrak**

**Secretary: Ray Hessinger, NYSDOT**

**Treasurer: Tim Ziethen, Amtrak**

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

During the month of October 2019, the Executive Board met two times, via conference call, on the 8<sup>th</sup> and the 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Highlights, decisions, and action items from the month of October 2019 include:

- Equipment Procurement Updates:
- Status Update - Multi-State Rail Car Procurement as of 10-31-19 - provided by Caltrans:

All FDR System Level and related submittal approvals for the standard coach are at a Conditional Approval level or greater. Cab Car PDR action items are addressed, and approval is in process.

The Café Galley Mock-Up was held in Roseville, Michigan on October 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup>. The Complete Coach FAI is scheduled for November 13 – 14 in Sacramento.

The first 34 carshells are in production at Siemens Sacramento Facility. Cars 1 and 2 have shipped to Pueblo for testing at TTCI and are being prepared for the various procedures. EMI testing is scheduled for week of November 4. Car #3 has been shipped to the environmental testing facility in Ottawa. Carshell #4 has completed static testing and is in preparation for First Car FAI. The remaining carshells are in various stages of component installation, welding, integration, painting or storage.

The FAI process continues and most system-level FAIs for standard coach are complete. Cab Car Structure IDR documents have been submitted and are in review. The IDR meeting is scheduled for December 11 – 12.

- Status Update: Metro North Dual Mode Locomotive Procurement as of 10-31-19:

Metro-North continues to negotiate to come up with a conforming specification to allow vendors to submit bid proposals.

- Amtrak Locomotive Procurement as of 10-31-19:

On the Acela:

Continues to move forward – progressing well with a power car moving at Hornell using its own power on the catenary.

It is expected to depart in January for TTCI.

Non-passenger cars (no interiors) – moving along well.

On the Locomotives:

Progressing nicely with the OEM – Amtrak will soon be going to FRA to request a waiver for testing since the state locomotives were tested and there is not much difference between these locomotives and those.

On the Trainset (cars):

This continues forward with bids due in a November timeframe.

- METRA Equipment Procurement status:

As of 4-9-19, an RFP was on the street for 200-400 bi-level cars. They are going through the process now. Interested parties must respond by August 2019.

METRA has the NGEC specification, but John does not know if the plan to use it or if they will be in contact with the NGEC or not.

There will be future updates as appropriate. Nothing new reported in October 2019.

- Document Control Update – 10-31-19:

The PRIIA Single Level Trainset Specification 305-007 Revision B was adopted by the Executive Board on 10-22-19. Document Control Manager Tammy Krause is in the process of formatting the changes and compiling them for inclusion into the specification as Revision B.

- VIA Rail Equipment Procurement – status as of 10-31-19:

On 10-8-19, Robert Becker, VIA Rail, reported to the Executive Board that things are going well – with several mock-ups taking place currently and over the next several months. Overall things are moving forward on schedule and in good shape so far.

The next update is scheduled for December 12, 2019.

- The Equipment Acquisition and Ownership Working Group activities as of 10-31-19:

The Equipment Acquisition and Ownership Working Group last met on 10-31-19.

3 of 4 Revised/updated sections have been submitted and were distributed to working group members. The Planning section update, led by IDOT, is being completed. Jennifer Bastian will provide Chairman Eric Curtit with an ETA on completion. Eric asked if anyone had anything to add or comment on with regard to the updated sections received thus far. No comments were offered.

Eric reported that his thinking going forward is to check on the availability, and willingness, of Cameron Cordell, to potentially take on the assignment of meshing the 4 sections into one voice and one DRAFT reference document. The thought is that if she is available and the fact that she is already under contract with the NGEN as its specification technical writer, with a remaining budget balance, this may be the easiest path forward.

The goal remains to have a complete DRAFT ready for the NGEN Annual Meeting in February 2020. Once a complete DRAFT has been assembled, working group members will be provided with it and with time to review and comment on it.

Actions as determined on 10-31-19:

Jennifer Bastian will let Eric Curtit and Steve Hewitt know her ETA for completion of the updated Section 1 (Planning).

Once the Planning Section has been updated it will be distributed to all working group members.

Cameron Cordell, technical writer, will be asked if she is willing and available to do the technical writing.

- Update: States and Amtrak – Charger Locomotive Experience (last update 7-30-19):

Mid-West States Experience:

The Charger locomotives have been running for 2-years and are working well with all of the locomotives in service and only the normal “teething” issues occurring and being worked through.

One area that they are striving for improvement and are making improvements on is parts availability and field service. These issues are challenging but being worked out and improving.

There have been several vehicle strikes and debris strikes in the Mid-West, but the good news is that the Crash Energy Management (CEM) performed very well. The engineers were very satisfied with the safety of the cabs.

Overall, they are very pleased with the performance of the locomotives.

California Experience:

Caltrans reported on the average number of miles and engine hours for the locomotives in the various sections of the state where they are being used and noted that they are performing well.

There have been several debris strikes and Siemens and Amtrak are working on repairs.

Caltrans has exercised its option for continuing technical support with Siemens after the warranty has expired.

There have been some instances of ice build-up on the HVAC and they are working on determining the root cause.

Overall, the locomotives are performing very well.

Washington State Experience:

No report provided

Amtrak Experience:

Amtrak has held several meetings with Siemens on parts availability as “we continue to support the states” as our partners.

Amtrak is leasing a state unit to test in Long Distance service. Rolling Stock Engineers are on board to see how the locomotives perform in the hot days and high altitudes. The locomotive is in the trail, not lead, position on this test.

So far it has performed extremely well.

The intent is to also conduct a test in the winter weather to see how it fares. And they are working on resolving the snow ingestion issues that occurred last winter.

Next update: NGEC Annual Meeting February 2-20

- 2019 NGEC two-pager educational document:

The 2019 NGEC two-page educational document was formally released on 2-22-19 at the NGEC Annual Meeting (distributed to all attendees).

As of 10-31-19 the NGEC program Manager, Steve Hewitt, has distributed 265 hard copies and 355 electronic copies.

Additional copies can be obtained by contacting Steve Hewitt at [shewitt109@aol.com](mailto:shewitt109@aol.com)

The NGEC Executive Board is planning to update the document in advance of the Annual Meeting. Steve Hewitt and Chairman Curtit will present recommendations for changes to the Board in November 2019.

- FASC update and Treasurer’s Report as of 10-31-19:

Treasurer’s Report:

Amount Spent: \$ 472,593.10  
 Total Initial Grant Amount: \$1,250,000.  
 Balance remaining: \$ 777,406.90  
 Spend Rate per month: \$ 13,899.80

At this rate there is enough funding for several years. The grant period (as extended) runs through 9-30-2020. FRA has given verbal approval to apply for, and hopefully approve, another no-cost extension to be requested and the intent was to begin the request process in the Spring 2020.

Establishing timeline and next steps for another no-cost Grant Agreement extension:

Steve Hewitt suggested during the 10-16-19 FASC call that the NGEC process for making the extension request should begin earlier in order for the Executive Board to formalize its request by the NGEC Annual Meeting – thus providing Amtrak and FRA grants offices with ample time to complete their process.

NGEC Annual By-Laws Review:

On the 10-16-19 FASC call, Steve Hewitt and Ray Hessinger were tasked with conducting the Annual Review of the By-Laws. They will then present any recommended changes at the November or December meeting of the FASC. Following FASC approval of any changes, the updated By-Laws with the changes noted will be submitted in writing to all Executive Board members 30 days prior to a vote in consideration of adoption.

- Developing proposed NGEC Re-authorization Language – scope and funding:

This task is complete. Language, scope and funding have been provided to Amtrak, AASHTO and states for their use.

- TRB session – NGEC 10 years of Progress:

The session has been scheduled for 1-14-20 at 10:15am.

Session Title: “The NGEC – 10 Years of Progress”

Panelists:

Presentation Title: “NGEC Goals and Policies”

Eric J. Curtit, Chair - NGEC Executive Board  
Administrator of Railroads  
Missouri Department of Transportation  
105 West Capitol Avenue  
Jefferson City, MO 65102  
C: 573.291.5394  
[eric.curtit@modot.mo.gov](mailto:eric.curtit@modot.mo.gov)

Presentation Title: “NGEC Technical Subcommittee and Specification Development”

Charlie King, Vice Chair - NGEC Executive Board – Chair - NGEC Technical subcommittee  
VP Mechanical and Chief Mechanical Officer  
National Railroad Passenger Corp. Amtrak  
4001 Vandever Ave. Building 12, Room 202  
Wilmington, DE 19802  
C: 904 378-6095  
[Charles.King@amtrak.com](mailto:Charles.King@amtrak.com)

Presentation Title: “The States’ Role”

John Oimoen  
Deputy Director of Railroads  
Illinois Department of Transportation  
69 W Washington Suite 2100  
Chicago, Il. 60602.  
312 793-4222  
[John.Oimoen@illinois.gov](mailto:John.Oimoen@illinois.gov)

Presentation Title: “The Federal Role”

Jeffrey Gordon  
Federal Railroad Administration  
55 Broadway, Room 935  
Cambridge, MA 02142  
617 494-2303  
[Jeffrey.gordon@dot.gov](mailto:Jeffrey.gordon@dot.gov)

Presentation Title: “The Industry Role”

Larry Salci  
*SalciConsult*  
Management Consultant - Transportation  
C:314 705-0546  
[larry@salciconsult.com](mailto:larry@salciconsult.com)

Support for the panelists:

Stephen J Hewitt  
NGEC Program Manager  
*Hewitt Consulting*

6647 Breezewood Blvd.  
 Myrtle Beach, SC 29588  
 C: 845 616-3076  
[Shewitt109@aol.com](mailto:Shewitt109@aol.com)

- Preparing for the 10<sup>th</sup> NGECE Annual Meeting 2-21-20:

Sending out announcement to all NGECE members -timeline:

Steve Hewitt will formally send a notice, including hotel information to all NGECE members – states, Amtrak, FRA and the industry by late this week, or early next week:

The hotel is the Hyatt Regency Capitol Hill Washington, DC. The link for reserving a room is below:

<https://www.hyatt.com/en-US/group-booking/WASRW/G-APT5>

The rate is \$149 per night. Currently this is for double bedded rooms only; anyone wanting a King will need to contact the hotel directly to see if this is a possibility. However, additional cost may be incurred.

Preparing a DRAFT agenda – Steve and Eric have begun to develop a DRAFT agenda for the meeting and at this point the intent is to begin the meeting with registration at 8:00am with the meeting concluding around 1:00pm. Steve and Eric will provide the first DRAFT agenda to Board members in advance of the next call (11-5-19).

Appointing a nominating Committee – for Election of Executive Board Members and NGECE officers – Since this is an election year – all state members of the Executive Board will need to be nominated to serve another two-year term. (Amtrak retains two slots on Board and FRA retains one slot). A nominating committee should be appointed to ascertain who on the current Board are willing to continue to serve and provide the names to the full Committee (including candidates to fill vacancies if there are any). The nominating committee reports out at the Annual Meeting and the state Board member nominees are then voted on. Following the election, the states caucus and name their officers. Per the NGECE precedent, Amtrak's CMO retains the Vice Chair seat and Amtrak retains the Treasurer's seat. The states elect the Chair and Vice Chair.

NGECE two pager – Revise/ Update – Eric and Steve will take a first look at updating the NGECE two-pager and present their recommendations in November.

#### **Technical Subcommittee:**

**Chair: Charles King, Amtrak**

**Vice Chair: George Hull, Amtrak**

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

During the month of October 2019, the Technical subcommittee met three times, via conference call, on the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup>.

Key decisions and action item updates from the month of October 2019, included:

- Status of the activities to update ECP Standards: This is an ongoing item which the Technical subcommittee is tracking:

#### ***ECP Project:***

*The test committee met on May 29, 2019 with some minor edits requested to the final FRA report. The report will be submitted by APTA under docket no. FRA-2015-0078. The report will be made available to the NGECE after APTA submittal. The revenue service demonstration resulted in 1,039,740 ECP fleet miles and 2,126,747 Emulation (BP operation) fleet miles. The total mileage for ECP and emulation was 3,166,541 fleet miles. A total of five incidents were reported the revenue service demonstration. Two incidents were related to electronic hardware, there were no software incidents and three incidents related to training which*

*occurred early in the ECP revenue service demonstration. The hardware incidents have been properly investigated and resolved. The APTA PRESS standards for the emulation 26C configuration and ECP configuration were approved and will be available on the APTA standard website. The equipment provided by New York Air Brake (Knorr) and Wabtec were approved under this project. Draft regulatory language has been prepared and provided to the FRA.*

*Amtrak will continue the revenue service demonstration.*

On 7-11-19, Paul Jamieson reported that all reviews are done, and the report is in the hands of APTA to package the report. Paul has requested that APTA let him know the anticipated date of completion. Once the report is made available, Paul will provide it to Steve Hewitt for distribution to the NGEC members.

Next update as appropriate – nothing new to report in October 2019

- Backgrounder educational document:

On 2-22-19, at the NGEC Annual Meeting, the updated two-page educational document was officially released. Hard copies were provided to all meeting attendees and are available by request through Steve Hewitt – [shewitt109@aol.com](mailto:shewitt109@aol.com)

As of 10-31-19, 265 hard copies have been distributed along with 355 electronic versions.

As noted in the Executive Board section of this report, the executive Board will be updating the document in advance of the NGEC annual Meeting in February 2020.

- AWG/RVACC:

Background:

At the 2018 annual meeting, Melissa Shurland, FRA, provided an update on the activities of the Accessibility Working Group and on the RVACC effort. The presentation is available on line on the NGEC website at [www.ngec305.org](http://www.ngec305.org).

The last update provided to the Technical subcommittee was on 10-4-18 when Melissa Shurland reported that there still has been no word from the RVACC on the possible release of a rule for accessibility on Rail Vehicles.

As of 10-31- 2019, no further updates have been provided.

- Document Control Update:

See the update provided in the Executive Board section of this report.

Procurement Updates:

- Multi-State Car Procurement - Caltrans (Lead State): Progress reports from the lead state on the PRIIA multi-state car procurement is provided on each Technical subcommittee call and each Executive Board call.

See the update provided in the Executive Board section of this report.

- Metro North Dual Mode Locomotive Procurement:

See the update provided in the Executive Board section of this report.

- Amtrak Equipment Procurement Updates: Progress reports are provided by AMTRAK CMO and NGEC Vice Chair, Charlie King on a regular basis.

See the update provided in the Executive Board section of this report.

- METRA Equipment Procurement:

See the update provided in the Executive Board section of this report

- AAR Update on the TAG Committee on LED Headlights as of 10-31-19:

On 10-31-19, on behalf of Dr. Tarek Omar, FRA – Eric Sherrock, Ensco, provided the following update:

*The test plan has been developed in cooperation with FRA and the AAR Locomotive Committee LED Standard Development TAG. Phase III testing, which will focus on the performance of selected light fixtures on moving locomotives, will be started during the week of November 11 at the Transportation Technology Center. We will offer additional updates as information is available.*

*If you need any additional information, please contact Sean Woods ([woods.sean@ensco.com](mailto:woods.sean@ensco.com)).*

- University of Nebraska study on High Speed wireless technology as of 10-31-19:

On 10-31-19, Hamid Sharif-Kashani reported good progress in the testing of high- speed wireless system and it is his intent to have full details for the next update.

For further details please contact Hamid via email at: [hamidsharif@unl.edu](mailto:hamidsharif@unl.edu)

Next update – 12-12-19

- Update: Electronics on Trains Working Group as of 10-31-19:

The Electronics working group had a call on Tuesday, October 29th. David Brabb reported that he and his colleagues at Sharma are using the group's feedback and Sharma recommendations to develop a Revision A to the PRIIA 305-919 hardware spec. They are also going to complete a first draft of a spec for WIDTL in the next month or so. At that time, they plan to submit these docs to the subcommittee for review and comment and work with the subcommittee to get these two documents completed within the next few months.

Next update: 12-12-19

#### **The Finance and Administrative Subcommittee**

**Chair: Tim Ziethen, Amtrak**

**Vice Chair: Brent Thompson, Washington State DOT**

**Vice Chair: Ray Hessinger, New York State DOT**

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

During the Month of October 2019, the Finance and Administrative Subcommittee met on the 16<sup>th</sup>.

Key decisions and action item updates from the month of October 2019, included:

- The Treasurer's report as of 10-16-19 is as follows:

Amount Spent: \$ 472,593.10  
 Total Initial Grant Amount: \$1,250,000.  
 Balance remaining: \$ 777,406.90  
 Spend Rate per month: \$ 13,899.80

At this rate there is enough funding for several years. The grant period (as extended) runs through 9-30-2020. Tim reminded FASC members that FRA has given verbal approval for another no-cost extension to be requested. The process for making the extension request should begin in Spring of 2020.



Steve Hewitt suggested that the NGEC process for making the extension request begin earlier in order for the Executive Board to formalize its request by the NGEC Annual Meeting – thus providing Amtrak and FRA grants offices with ample time to complete their process.

Tim Ziethen agreed that this makes sense and Steve will discuss it with Chairman Curtit and request that the process at the NGEC level be started.

- NGEC – Looking Ahead:

The Reauthorization language – scope and funding – was approved by the Executive Board and has been made available to states, Amtrak and AASHTO for their use.

- Discussion: NGEC Equipment Acquisition and Ownership Best Practices Working Group:

Status update – Developing a Reference Document

The NGEC Equipment Acquisition and Ownership Working Group has developed 4 DRAFT sections: Planning, Implementation, Revenue Service, and Sustainability. The 4 sections were reviewed by working group members and comments were received and a process for going forward was agreed to on the last call of the working group held on 10-3-19.

Each section leader was asked to revise their section incorporating the suggested comments/changes as deemed appropriate and to provide the revised draft of their section to Eric Curtit and Steve Hewitt by COB on 10-18-19. Steve will then send out, to the full working group, the 4 revised draft sections. This will give each member a full set of the report/reference document to review.

The working group will then meet again on 10-31-19 to discuss the latest drafts of the 4 sections. The intent is to follow that up with the procurement of a professional technical writer to synthesize the 4 sections – remove duplications and convert the complete document into one voice and under one format.

The intent is to complete this effort in time for the next NGEC Annual Meeting – February 21, 2020.

Discussion: Procuring professional assistance to compile and complete “report”:

As noted, the working group agreed that a technical writer should be procured to complete the report – removing duplications or redundancies and writing it in one voice under one format.

Having discussed this last week with Eric Curtit, it was thought that it may be a good use of Cameron Cordell who is already contracted to do the technical specification writing for the NGEC on a case by case basis. Her contract is, we believe, with Jacobs and AASHTO manages it in the same manner as it does Larry Salci’s. Cameron would need to submit a scope and budget for the effort and Tim Ziethen and Eric Curtit would be asked to approve it before AASHTO executes the contract modification.

Is this doable? Is it agreeable? would it simplify the process? We look for FASC and AASHTO guidance.

Strat Cavros, AASHTO noted that Casamar is already under contract for technical writing under the current scope and budget agreement and there is about \$44,000 unexpended to date. There would be no contract modification needed since there is already a contract in place.

Steve asked if it would be appropriate to provide Strat with a scope and budget for this particular assignment and Strat said it would be helpful so that he would be aware of what was coming.

Tim Ziethen agreed that this suggestion makes sense and asked what the next steps are – especially since there is no quorum today.

Steve said he would report back to Eric Curtit that this is a potential way forward and easily doable within the current contract between AASHTO and Casamar. On 10-31-19, the NGEC Equipment Acquisition and Ownership working group met and discuss next steps. As noted in the Executive Board section of this

report, the working group agreed with this plan forward. The next step is to ascertain the availability and willingness to of the technical writer to take on this task.

- Preparation of the Quarterly Grant Progress Report – Due to FRA – 10-31-19:

The progress report for the period ending September 30, 2019, was submitted to FRA, as required, by October 31, 2019.

Next report (period ending 12-31-19) is due to FRA by 1-31-20

- Annual NGEC By-Laws Review:

On 10-16-19, Steve Hewitt reminded FASC members that one of the subcommittee's responsibilities is to conduct an annual By-Laws review and, if there are recommended changes – the FASC must approve them first and then submit them in writing 30 days in advance of a vote on adoption by the Executive Board. Steve suggested that the process be kicked off this month.

In the past, the FASC Chair has asked the Co- Vice Chair – Ray Hessinger and NGEC Program Manager Steve Hewitt to conduct the review and to make recommendations to the full FASC. Steve recommends this process be followed and that the action be assigned today with a timeline of presenting the recommendations on either the November 13<sup>th</sup> or the December 11<sup>th</sup> FASC call)

Tim Ziethen agreed with the process as described by Steve Hewitt and directed Steve to contact Ray Hessinger to begin the review and establish a timeline for completion.

#### **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 specification, is re-convened by the Executive Board chair.**

The Trainset Specification Review Panel met on October 17<sup>th</sup> and approved the Trainset Specification 305-007 Revision B Review Panel Report and recommendations as presented by consultant Larry Salci. On 10-22-19, the NGEC Executive Board accepted the Review Panel's Report and Recommendation and formally adopted PRIIA Single Level Trainset Specification 305-007 Revision B.