



Section 305 Next Generation Corridor Equipment Pool Committee (NGEC)

Monthly Activities Report: December 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 December, 2015, the Executive Board met once –via conference call - on the 7th. Key decisions and action items from the month of December, 2015 included:

- Mid-West States – Section 6 progress report: the group continues to work on cost and ownership sharing. They are close to having a final draft. Expectations were that the final draft would be ready during the week of 12-14-15, and the agreement could be executed by all participating states by mid to late January (2016).
- The Finance and Administrative subcommittee (FASC) activities as of the end of December, 2015: On 12-7-15 the NGEC Executive Board accepted the FASC report and recommendations and directed the FASC to initiate the next steps as described in those recommendations. Subsequently, the FASC met on 12-14-15 and began executing the next steps.

- The “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: As of December 7, 2015, the 514 subcommittee had begun work on its By-Laws and procedures for inclusion in the NGENC By-Laws document. The subcommittee also continued to work with the SAIPRC to clarify roles.
- Bi-Level Car Procurement status as of December 7, 2015:

Nippon Sharyo is finalizing a model car shell to demonstrate and address the compression test failures. It is anticipated that the model will be finalized in mid-January 2016 with counter measures completed by April.

The company continues to look at the work force and is likely to reduce it by 50 more, along with a 4-week holiday shutdown during the redesign and correction of the product. They are trying to retain the core of skilled employees and keep them engaged at all times.

- Diesel-electric Locomotive Procurement status as of December, 2015: The multi-state locomotive procurement continues to progress well and on time.
- GAO Study: Members of a GAO project team have begun to conduct interviews with members of the Technical subcommittee working group team leaders and industry participants.

The team has continued to participate on Technical subcommittee calls (on a monthly basis) to listen and to provide periodic updates on as the project progresses. On 12-17-15, the team provided its most recent update and is scheduled to give its next update on 1-14-16.

- Adoption of the Dual Mode Locomotive (DC 3rd Rail) specification – status as of 12-31-15: Larry Salci reported on 12-7-15 that he was about 50% complete in his review of the Dual Mode (DC 3rd Rail) Locomotive specification. Due to schedule conflicts, the report will not be before the Review Panel until sometime in January, 2016, with Board approval to follow shortly thereafter.
- 2016 NGENC Annual Meeting: The NGENC’s 2016 Annual Meeting will take place on 2-19-16 at the Hyatt Regency Washington Capitol Hill. Steve Hewitt sent an appointment notice to all NGENC members to hold the date. The meeting will be held in conjunction with the AASHTO SCORT Washington DC meeting taking place on 2-17-18-2016.

All members have received the room block information and were advised to reserve a room at the Hyatt asap. (cut-off date is mid-January, 2016)

In December, Steve Hewitt also sent out the “formal” invite letter to all NGENC states and participating members to assist in obtaining travel approval.

Eric Curtit and Steve Hewitt developed and distributed (to all NGENC members) a draft agenda for the meeting and on the next Board call, scheduled for 1-6-16, the agenda will be reviewed and discussed.

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 December, 2015, the Technical subcommittee met twice, via conference calls on the 3rd and 17th. Key decisions and action items for the month of December, 2015 included:

- RVAAC: RVAAC presented its recommendations for improved access on rail vehicles to the Access Board on July 29, 2015. On October 8, 2015, Melissa Shurland, FRA, reported that she has learned that because the report was produced by an advisory committee, the Access Board is not bound by its recommendations and will probably not be making any statement about approving or disapproving the report. The next step is for the Access Board to review the report and then decide how to proceed. There is a backlog in rulemaking

projects, and so it was not decided how and when to proceed with those recommendations. Melissa will keep the subcommittee apprised.

- Accessibility Working Group Update: Progress continues on the restroom drawings. On 12-17-15, Melissa Shurland reported that the Accessibility Working Group had a meeting during the week with participants from Amtrak, FRA, manufacturers and the Access Board, to review Oregon State University's (OSU) preliminary work on accessibility restrooms. Good feedback was received and OSU will go back and incorporate the comments received accordingly. Melissa will provide a status report at the NGEN Annual Meeting on 2-19-16.
- The PRIIA Dual Mode (DC 3rd Rail) Passenger Locomotive Technical Specification adoption: Larry Salci is in the process of reviewing the specification against the requirements document and preparing a Review Panel report with recommendations. Timeline for NGEN Executive Board approval is as of yet undetermined pending completion of the Review.
- 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 DEF working group met with Amtrak on 12-8-15 and came to consensus agreement on fuel range. They are working now on fuel locations and what is needed. The next meeting will take place on 1-11-16.
- Diesel- Electric Locomotive procurement update as of 12-17-15 (provided by IDOT):
 - “ . The invoice for milestone E (Invoice #10), associated with FDR is being processed by IDOT.
 - The FAI for the Diesel Exhaust after treatment and Diesel Engine cooling tower was held the week of December 7th.
 - The FAI for the electrical panels and lockers was held December 15 & 16, 2015, at Siemens Sacramento factory.
 - The kick-off for monthly QA reviews was held in Sacramento on 11/18/15 and the next meeting is planned for January 13th in Sacramento.
 - A planning meeting to review the compression test process was held on 12/1 in Sacramento.
 - We are reviewing two draft DCRs and will process them, just after the holidays. The total will be Seventeen draft DCRs, and are being prepared and Rich Stegner has contacted Tammy Krause, to send a list re-capping the DCRs and will begin drafting DCRs. Camren Cordell will assist.
 - Follow up Technical Advisory Groups (TAG) continue working on an on-going basis for the action items from the AAR Standard vehicle qualification testing and acceptance. AAR's David Cackovic is the facilitator.
 - The Diesel Exhaust Fluid (DEF) planning team is reviewing logistics for fueling locations. A meeting was held with Amtrak to review details on December 8th.
 - The locomotive weight was reported last month at 271,684 lbs (+/-), due to actual component weights coming in a bit better than expected. The calculated P2 force is within specified limits. Weight is being closely monitored, each month.”
- Bi-Level Car Procurement Update provided by Caltrans, as of December 17, 2015:
 - “FAI - The follow up Air Brake Components FAI took place on 12/3 at Wabtec (Duncan, SC) to resolve the open reservoir issues, and it was successful. Electrical Panels and ATR/UTR Toilet Room FAIs are scheduled in January.

Design Review - 22 items remain open for the final design review, (majority of them are carbody related items, due to the re-design effort).

Carshell Re-Design Effort - NS continues to make progress in refining the model. They had an internal Carshell design review meeting in Toyokawa Japan, and continue to make progress. Caltrans/IDOT will have a meeting with NS on 12/21, and they will share the progress with the customer team.

Schedule - Unfortunately it continues to slip due to the very time consuming model refinement process. Caltrans continues to work with SCOA/NS, IDOT, and FRA to ensure that project will get back on track to deliver as many cars as possible.

Misc. – Truck Fatigue test started on Monday this week at Columbus Casting. Caltrans' subject matter expert is on site to witness the progress of the testing. Representatives from Caltrans (Bruce), SCOA/NS (TBD) will be presenting project status updates at the February annual NGEC meeting in Washington DC. “

- AAR Committee Update: 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.

On December 3rd, Jeff Gordon, FRA, provided a status update on the AAR committee efforts:

A draft specification has been developed by the six subgroups assembled at the outset of the committee activities. The draft is “rough”, as expected for a first draft, but the idea is to get the information assembled and work through it.

The plan was to have a working draft by the end of 2015, and, while it is not perfect, it is a milestone that has been reached.

The intent is to apply the standards to future equipment, not retroactive to the current equipment being manufactured (Bi-Level cars and Diesel-electric Locomotives).

However, as this equipment is introduced into service it can serve as a guinea pig for the standard to see how it would or could apply, and to determine just how good the standard is.

One of the key areas of concern is interoperability with regard to getting the new equipment from where it is manufactured to where it will be used, and what freight equipment will be used to get it there.

- GAO/NGEC project: A questionnaire was sent to key industry members of the technical working groups. Responses have been coming in and are appreciated. The next GAO update to the Technical subcommittee is due on 1-14-16.

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 December, 2015, the Finance and Administrative Subcommittee (FASC) held its monthly meeting on the 16th:

- On December 16th the FASC members reviewed the next steps associated with its approved (by the Board on 12-7-15) memo and recommendations on funding options.

- Membership Fee recommendation/outreach to SAIPRC: Darrell Smith agreed to reach out to David Kutrosky, Chair of SAIPRC, to schedule a call to discuss the FASC proposed 209 like membership fee for NGENC States. Participating on the proposed call will be Darrell, David K and Eric Curtit.
- Website review: Darrell Smith and Eric Curtit agreed to begin a review of the NGENC website and ultimately recommend changes/updates. Shayne Gill will ask Bryan Hong to arrange a call with Eric Curtit, Darrell Smith and Steve Hewitt to walk through the website and discuss ways to refresh or update it.
- NGENC Bylaws review: Ray Hessinger is leading an effort to review and proposed changes to the NGENC By-Laws and Operating Procedures. The 514 subcommittee will be providing its bylaws to Ray (and Steve Hewitt) for inclusion in the NGENC Bylaws; In late December, Steve Hewitt provided Ray Hessinger with a Word version of the current Bylaws with track changes in areas where Steve is recommending that changes/updates be made. Ray reviewed the changes and added several additional edits. This draft update will be discussed on the next FASC call – 1-13-16.

Note: Executive Board Members must receive written copies of By-Laws changes 30 days prior to consideration of adoption. The goal is to adopt a revised set of Bylaws at the 2016 NGENC Annual Meeting – 2-19-16.

- Specification User Fee Task Force –A task force was established to flesh out mechanics of a potential specification use fee. The newly established task force will work through the mechanics associated with assessing and collecting specification user fees under the current NGENC structure. Darrell Smith will chair the task force. Steve Hewitt will work with Darrell to schedule the first conference call sometime around January 12, 2016.
- Legislative Outreach Task Force – is charged with developing a strategy and implementation plan to obtain future federal funds for the NGENC: Steve Hewitt will work with Eric Curtit to schedule the next Legislative Outreach task force call after the first of the year. The task force members will also be asked to look into the FAST Act in regard to funding eligibility and potential opportunities for the NGENC.
- Interpreting NGENC related provisions contained in the FAST Act: Jeff Gordon will ask FRA staff to review the NGENC related FAST Act provisions and provide its interpretation of its impacts and implementation. Darrell Smith, Amtrak will ask Amtrak legal for an interpretation as well. This will be carried as an action item with a status update scheduled for the next FASC call (1-13-16)

The 514 Subcommittee:

Chair: Ron Pate, Washington State DOT

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

On December 7, 2015, the following subcommittee progress report was provided to the Executive Board:

A mid-November Amtrak user meeting was held. Amtrak, during the meeting, provided a presentation on Life extension and development initiatives.

The next 514 meeting was scheduled for 12-14-15, and the meetings, from then on, will be scheduled on a monthly basis rather than every two weeks.

A memo is being drafted to go from Chairman Ron Pate to the SAIPRC describing the CIP approval process and the flow down through the NGENC with policy issues being within the purview of the SAIPRC.

In late December, the memo was sent to Eric Curtit and Steve Hewitt as an FYI. In it Ron Pate identified work flow and policies.

The subcommittee is developing its by-laws and modeling them after that of the Technical subcommittee. Once complete it will be sent to Steve Hewitt for his review and input to ensure consistency with the NGENC By-Laws.

When asked, Steve Hewitt, explained the process for approving the subcommittee's procedures and incorporating them into the NGEC By-Laws and Operating Procedures. The FASC is the body that oversees such changes and would need to approve them first (Ray Hessinger heads up a By-Law review effort for the FASC) Once the FASC has approved the changes – they must be submitted in writing to the Executive Board one month prior to consideration. The intent is to approve any NGEC By-Law changes at the Annual Meeting on 2-19-16.

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 December, 2015, the NGEC Review Panels did not meet, but Review Panel Consultant, Larry Salci, continues his review of the Dual Mode (DC 3rd Rail) Locomotive Technical specification, and a Review Panel meeting to consider the report with recommendation, is expected to be held in early to mid-January, 2016.