



The NGEC will provide national leadership in standardization, acquisition, financing and management of passenger rail equipment.

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

**Monthly Activities Report: May 31, 2016**

**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 May 2016, the Executive Board met twice –via conference call - on the 10th, and on the 24<sup>th</sup>.

Key decisions and action item updates from the month of April, 2016 included:

- 514 Subcommittee update: As of 5-24-16, the CIP approval process is underway. The subcommittee put forth recommendations to the NGEC Executive Board for its consideration in appointing a Chair and Vice Chair. Brian Beeler II, NNEPRA for Maine DOT, was nominated by the subcommittee for Chair, and Jonathan Dees, NCDOT, was nominated for the position of Vice Chair.

On 5-24-16, the Executive Board, unanimously approved the recommendations and formally appointed Brian Beeler II (Chair) and Jonathan Dees (Vice Chair).

- Bi-Level Car Procurement status as of May 24, 2016: The Carshell redesign is in the works with the manufacturer having developed a side wall mock up for the new carshell design. In early June the expectation is that there will be an analysis and testing for the carshell with integrated CEM and forces from the push back coupler - a very comprehensive modeling. Currently the endurance test for door cycles is underway with no issues so far, and sub-component reviews are ongoing as well. IDOT and Caltrans continue to work with the vendor on funding options.
- Diesel-electric Locomotive Procurement status as of May 24, 2016: The multi-state locomotive procurement continues to progress well and, while there is some delay for the first 11 locomotives and a 6-day delay for the balance of the production, the overall schedule for delivery of the last locomotive is still within the ARRA funding window.
- GAO Study: On May 26, 2016, the GAO released its report to: *Rail Grant Oversight: Greater Adherence to Leading Practices Needed to Improve Grants Management*. On that day, Steve Hewitt distributed the link to members of the Executive Board and followed up with a distribution on May 27<sup>th</sup> to the members of the Technical subcommittee.

The following link should be used to obtain the product.

<http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-16-544> on the FRA's Grant Oversight.

- Executive Board approval of 305-912 Revision B: As of May 24, 2016: Revisions have been incorporated into the final document and it is now available from Steve Hewitt through the NGEC website process.
- Finance and Administrative subcommittee update: The Finance & Administrative Sub-committee (FASC) provided the Executive Board with a memo with recommendations after having explored future funding options for the NGEC. On May 24, 2016, the Executive Board accepted the memo and approved the recommendations (see below):

#### **FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE NGEC EXECUTIVE BOARD**

*Having completed its further examination of potential funding sources, and having come to the conclusion that it would be most effective and efficient for the NGEC to conduct its activities as currently organized the FASC recommends the following actions for the NGEC Executive Board's consideration:*

- *Re-evaluate actual NGEC spending at the conclusion of FY2016, being September 30, 2016, and consider filing a no-cost extension of the existing Federal Railroad Administration Section 305 Equipment Pool Committee Grant Agreement, currently estimated for three additional years through September 30, 2020, at the NGEC's 2017 Annual Meeting.*
  - *Recognize the national interest in maintaining a set of standard intercity passenger rail equipment specifications through the NGEC, therefore re-doubling the NGEC's education efforts with federal policymakers and Congress. In so doing, expand the membership of the FASC's Legislative Outreach Task Force, which in turn will provide, through the FASC, a quarterly progress report to the NGEC beginning June 30, 2016.*
- Mid-West States – Section 6 progress report: As of May 24, 2016, The letter of intent with Amtrak as the maintainer of the equipment has been signed. The RFP for a Fleet Manager is out and under review.
  - Two page educational/outreach document: As of May 24, 2016, the two pager is being finalized by the MODOT communications staff and graphic artist, to include the agreed upon revisions. Once complete, the final draft will be distributed to the Board members for final review. If no comments are noted, Steve Hewitt will contact AASHTO and ask that the document be printed. Steve will provide AASHTO with the number of copies to be made and where they should be sent.

- Review of the Bi-Level Car Specification C.4 proposed changes: On May 24, 2016, the Board approved a motion to reconvene the Bi-Level Car Specification Review Panel and to ask that Larry Salci begin a technical review of the Summary of Changes.
- Preparing a response to VIA Rail's request to use PRIIA Specifications: The FASC will take up the discussion of this request on its next call (6-1-16) and prepare a response for Board consideration.

### **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 May 2016, the Technical subcommittee met twice, once via conference call on the 19th. Key decisions and action item updates from the month of May 2016, included:

- RVAAC: RVAAC presented its recommendations for improved access on rail vehicles to the Access Board on July 29, 2015. On February 19, 2016, at the NGEC Annual Meeting, Melissa Shurland, FRA, provided an update presentation to NGEC members. The presentation can be found on the NGEC website. Melissa will continue to keep the Technical subcommittee apprised of the Access Board's progress on its review of the report.
- Accessibility Working Group Update: As of 5-19-16: Melissa Shurland, FRA, reported that she is working with Amtrak on finalizing the layouts and anticipates having an AWG web-conference call in early June.
- Backgrounder educational document: A new educational "two pager" has been developed by the Finance and Administrative subcommittee and has been approved, pending final review, by the NGEC Executive Board. Once finalized, it will be made available for NGEC members use.
- DEF Working Group: Progress continues and regular bi-weekly updates are provided to the subcommittee. The next call will take place on 6-13-16.
- Diesel- Electric Locomotive procurement update as of 5-19-16 (provided by IDOT):
  - All previous invoices for project milestones have been paid by IDOT. New invoices for Change Order #5 (Grab Handles) and Change Order #20 (Layer 3 Switch for XITCS) are being processed by IDOT.
  - JPEs received Siemens' revised schedule and conduct weekly conference calls. Although some delay for the first 11 locomotives and a 6-day delay for the balance of the production, the overall schedule for delivery of the last locomotive is still within the ARRA funding window.
  - All of the supplier's factory FAIs are complete. The remaining FAIs will take place at Siemens' factory in Sacramento. Final FAIs are scheduled for June 7-9. The FRA sample car inspection will also take place on June 8.
  - The monthly QA review was held on May 11<sup>th</sup> at Siemens factory in Sacramento. The meeting in June will be deferred for the final FAI for the locomotive and resumed in July.
  - The Tier-4 Certificate has been received by Siemens/Cummins for the diesel engine. Load testing for the engine continues this week at Siemens factory.
  - Testing for locomotive #1 and functional tests for locomotive sub-systems for unit #1 continue. JPE subject matter experts are witnessing the tests.
  - IDOT is adding additional in-plant QA inspectors to cover inspections for our option locomotives.
  - All fifteen (15 ea.) DCRs have been sent to Tammy Krause.
  - The test plan for 125 mph testing on the North East Corridor was submitted to FRA by MARC.
  - Each JPE are working out details for pre-revenue test plans.
  - 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 next Diesel Exhaust Fluid (DEF) planning team meeting will be June 13th.
  - The locomotive weight was reported in March 2016, at 271,950 lbs (+/-). Based on actual component weights, the locomotive weight has varied little in the last six months. The calculated P2 force is within specified limits. Weight is being closely monitored, each month and we expect the up-date for April, this week.
- Update: Bi-Level Car Procurement – On 5-19-16 the following update on the Bi-Level car procurement was provided by Caltrans:
- FAIs – Pre FAI for Manual Door was conducted on May 3. It was successful, so the official FAI will take place on May 24, next Tuesday.
  - Carshell –NS is making progress in Carshell re-design. The sidewall Mock-Up specimen is now complete. Caltrans resident inspector inspected the specimen and reported that everything looks good. We will receive a formal report from NS on this mock-up soon. (This was a trial build of a modified Side Panel so that they can confirm the manufacturability, actual appearance and effects of heat by additional welding, etc.) Next Carshell update meeting is scheduled in the week of June 6 via web conference.
  - Testing –We are in the middle of the endurance test for the door cycle count. I receive weekly updates from our Subject Matter Expert reported and so far there has been no issue. The completion of this test will be end of July. (For this week's report, the cycle count is at 235,296 out of 500,000 and no issue.)
  - Misc. – Draft manual for battery has been submitted. Caltrans distributed the draft to our local partners at Amtrak and JPAs for their review and comments.
- GAO/NGEC project: On May 26, 2016, the GAO released its report to: *Rail Grant Oversight: Greater Adherence to Leading Practices Needed to Improve Grants Management*. On that day, Steve Hewitt distributed the link to members of the Executive Board and followed up with a distribution on May 27<sup>th</sup> to the members of the Technical subcommittee.
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- Review of the Bi-Level Car Specification C.4 proposed changes: On May 24, 2016, the Board approved a motion to reconvene the Bi-Level Car Specification Review Panel and to ask that Larry Salci begin a technical review of the Summary of Changes.
  - AAR Committee: The committee is being reactivated and two of the 7 sub-groups (VTI and Interoperability) will be meeting on 5-27-16 on a 3-hour call. The next update: 6-16-16.

#### **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 May, 2016, the Finance and Administrative Subcommittee (FASC) held its monthly meeting on 5-4-16.

Key decisions and action item updates from the meeting included:

- Interpreting NGENC related provisions contained in the FAST Act: On May 4, 2016, the FRA presented its legal office's interpretation of the provisions related to PRIIA Section 305 found in the FAST Act. The subcommittee accepted the interpretation and subcommittee Chair reported the FRA's findings on May 10, 2016. (For a complete reading of the FRA review and FASC discussion, see the Minutes from 5-4-16).
- Developing a report to the Executive Board on the FASC findings with regard to Recommendations 1, 2 and 3: This task has been completed. The memo, with two minor corrections was approved by the FASC for submittal to the NGENC Executive Board for its consideration. On May 24, 16, the Board accepted the memo and approved the FASC recommendations.

The 514 Subcommittee:

**Chair: Brian Beeler II – NNEPRA (Maine DOT)**

**Vice Chair: Jonathan Dees - NCDOT**

**The 514 Subcommittee holds monthly conference calls on Mondays at 4:00PM Eastern.**

On 5-24-16, Jason Biggs provided the following update to the Executive Board:

- The subcommittee has been very active reviewing the minor CIP Fleet and Service Plan table updates. table updates.
- A user group meeting was held last week to go over 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter reconciliations and receive feedback. Additional feedback is welcome and will be brought forward during the next call.
- Amtrak has introduced a transparency initiative. Amtrak presented its proposed changes in a power point presentation on the year to year breakdown on the overhaul of equipment.
- All of these items will be included in the CIP to be published in July.
- Jason reminded states that all are welcome to participate on the 514 subcommittee and its activities.
- The subcommittee has recommended the appointment of Brian Beeler II for Maine DOT, as Chair and Jonathan Dees, NCDOT to serve as Vice Chair of the 514 subcommittee.
- On May 24, 2016, the Executive Board accepted the recommendations of the 514 subcommittee and formally approved the appointments of Brian Beeler II (Chair) and Jonathan Dees (Vice Chair).

**NGEC Specification Review Panel(s):**

**For each PRIIA NGENC 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 NGENC 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.**

The Review Panels did not meet during the month of May 2016, however, on May 24, 2016, the Bi-Level Car Specification Review Panel was reconvened by the Executive Board for the purpose of reviewing Revision C.4 and providing a report with recommendations to the Executive Board. NGENC Consultant, Larry Salci, was asked to begin his review of C.4 and to develop a report with recommendations for Review Panel consideration.

**Special Note of Thanks:**

During the month of May, 2016, legacy NGEC member Tammy Nicholson, Iowa DOT, announced that she has taken on a new position within Iowa DOT and would no longer be able to serve as Iowa's representative to the NGEC. A new Rail Director will be named soon, in the meantime, Amanda Martin has been named as Iowa DOT's representative on the NGEC Executive Board, and as a member of the Finance and Administrative subcommittee. Amanda has also agreed to serve on the Bi-Level Car Specification Review Panel. Welcome Amanda!

On behalf of the PRIIA Section 305 Next Generation Corridor Equipment Pool Committee (NGEC), I want to thank Tammy Nicholson for her invaluable contributions to the Committee from the very beginning (January 2010). Tammy was an integral member of the NGEC serving as a "legacy" member of the Board, and in many other capacities on a number of subcommittees, task forces, and review panels. Tammy, your efforts contributed greatly to the accomplishments of the NGEC to date, and you will be missed.

We wish Tammy all the best in her new career opportunity and in the challenges that lie ahead.

Steve Hewitt  
Manager, NGEC Support Services