



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: May 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 May 2019, the Executive Board met once, via conference call, on the 21st.

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

- Equipment Procurement Updates:

Status Update - Multi-State Rail Car Procurement as of 5-21-19 - provided by Caltrans to the NGEC Executive Board:

All FDR System Level and related submittal approvals for the standard coach are at a Conditional Approval level or greater. Those submittals conditionally approved are ongoing documents that will be updated and submitted periodically.

Siemens held a new café car & galley PDR meeting with IDOT on 5/7 and 5/8/2019 in Chicago. Amtrak and a representative from FDA were present for the meetings. Caltrans cab car PDR sessions are scheduled for week of May 20. Reviews that week will include Carshell, Cab Layout, and F-end H-type coupler.

The first 14 carshells are in production at Siemens Sacramento Facility. Carshells #1 and #2 are in the final assembly phase. Carshell #1 is mostly complete except seats, ceiling panels, luggage shelves, trap doors and double sliding steps as well as smaller components. ATR for car #2 is ready for installation on the car. Carshells 3 and 4 are proceeding based on material availability, which has been improving throughout the month of April. Carshell #5 started final assembly. Carshell #6 is in final assembly with installation of rivets and nuts in preparation for component assembly to begin. Carshell #'s 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 are in various stages of integration or storage.

The FAI process continues and FAIs have occurred for the Carshell Complete, Digital Communication System, Lighting System, Couplers, Sanitary System, Sidewall Lining, FRP Panels, Brake System, Interior Doors, Truck Frame, Flooring and heated panel and Battery Charger, HVAC, Full Truck, Sliding Step, Seats, Electrical Cabinet, Windows, Analog Communications and Fully Assembled Bogie, Double Sliding Step, Vestibule FRP Panels, Wheelset and Gap Filler. Open items are being addressed and the FAIs are revisited for closure by the customer team as needed. FAI Closure Approval has been provided to SCOA/Siemens for Lighting, Digital Communication, HVAC, Truck Frame, Analog Communications, Passenger Windows, Brakes, Couplers, and Wheelsets. The FAI for the Trap Door is scheduled for June 5th.

Status Update: Metro North Dual Mode Locomotive Procurement as of 5-21-19:

The due date for proposals was 5-10-19. Submittals were received from the short-listed car builders and Metro-North has initiated its review of those submissions

Amtrak Locomotive Procurement – 5-21-19:

On the locomotive procurement:

Amtrak is in the process of “pulling the program together...no big changes”.

On the passenger vehicle procurement:

Amtrak has received responses to the RFP from several 5 or 6 vendors. Amtrak is partnering with the states that are a part of the review process.

There are some suitable candidates in the submissions – with some questions that will need to go back to them for answers.

The intent is to do the best to have a “fair and level battlefield to provide the best possible equipment”.

METRA Equipment Procurement status:

As of 4-9-19, an RFP is 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 May 2019.

- Document Control Update – 5-21-19:

Status: Revision B.2 – completing technical writing for 305-003 Rev B.2 specification document:

The technical writer was delayed in her anticipated timeline for completion, but Tammy expects to get the final completed document by the end of this week. As of 5-31-19 – the document has not yet been completed. Anticipated timeline is now sometime during the first week of June.

Status: Single Level Trainset Specification Revision:

Nothing new to report on the status of revising the Single level Trainset specification. Tammy has reached out to two of the technical working group team leaders to see if their workload has reached the point where they may prefer her looking for another team leader.

Status: Electronics on Trains Working Group - development of DTL software specification:

New team leader – David Brabb – and the team have begun working on the DTL software specification, but also want to make changes to the hardware specification as well. David has sent out a survey to his team members to get input in what they would like to see the group work on as David develops its work plan.

Status: Verifying/Updating all Technical working group member lists:

- The Equipment Acquisition and Ownership Working Group activities as of 5-21-19:

Since the last meeting of the working group (4-18-19), Eric Curtit has reached out to Amtrak and Caltrans to get an ETA for getting the missing sections or parts of sections, completed and out for review. (The section on Implementation (team leader – Caltrans) has not yet been submitted, and the section on Revenue service is incomplete pending input from Amtrak).

Eric continues to anticipate the remaining draft material soon and that duplications will be resolved by a complete (all sections) review by the working group. The sections submitted are written in a similar voice and will be tightened up before being distributed to the full Executive Board for its review and comment.

Eric continues to look for some time in late June or early July for a full DRAFT to be ready for distribution to the NGEC Executive Board for review.

Note: As of 5-31-19 – Amtrak has provided information to include in the revenue section.

- The Charger Experience States and Amtrak:

Background:

In October 2018, NGEC Chairman Eric Curtit requested summary updates on the Chargers since they had been placed in service. At the NGEC Annual Meeting (2-22-19) states and Amtrak provided updates to their Charger experience. The full presentations can be found in the Minutes from the Annual Meeting and on line at on the NGEC website.

In summary, the experience has been very positive among all entities, and collaboration and cooperation among the states, Amtrak, FRA and the OEM has been a key factor in the successful implementation of the Charger into service.

No updates provided in May – updates will be requested periodically.

- 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 5-31-19 the NGEC program Manager, Steve Hewitt, has distributed 240 hard copies and 353 electronic copies.

Additional copies can be obtained by contacting Steve Hewitt at shewitt109@aol.com

- Treasurer's Update – Current Balance and Spend Rate as of 5-21-19:

Current Balance and Spend Rate as of 5-21-19:

Total Grant: \$1,250,000.00

Spent to date: \$401,255.35

Balance: \$848,744.65

Based on the current run rate and accounting for a bump up in costs for the annual meeting – the balance should cover another 38-40 months.

Status – Requesting additional no-cost grant agreement extension:

FRA has informed Amtrak that an additional one year no-cost extension can be requested and would be received favorably. It would be approved through the normal approval process.

FRA has suggested that Amtrak wait until the current agreement gets closer to the end date before applying for another extension, but that it will be received favorably.

The current extension expires 9-30-20.

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 May 2019, the Technical subcommittee met three times, via conference call, on the 2nd, the 16th and the 30th.

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

- Status of the activities to update ECP Standards: This is an ongoing item which the Technical subcommittee is tracking. Status as of 5-30-19:

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 NGECC 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.

In addition to developing the Passenger ECP system, an electronic valve replacement for the 26C service portion was developed.

The test committee and APTA PRESS Mechanical technical working group appreciates the support provided by the NGECC. This project would not have been possible without the dedication of Amtrak, APTA, NYAB and Wabtec personnel, and the support of FRA observers.

- Background educational document:

On 2-22-19, at the NGEN 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

As of 5-31-19, 240 hard copies have been distributed along with 353 electronic versions.

- 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 NGEN website at 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.

No further updates have been provided. This item will be reported on whenever an update is forthcoming.

- 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 NGEN 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 5-30-19:

FRA reported it is close to getting the contract in place for Phase 3 and 4. Possibly by the end of the week (5-31-19). On the FRA side of things, all is going well.

- University of Nebraska study on High Speed wireless technology as of 5-30-19:

On 5-2-19, it was reported that the simulation model is available to anyone who is interested. During the field-testing Hamid welcomes input from technical subcommittee members - if interested – please contact Hamid at hamidsharif@unl.edu

Contact Information:

Hamid Sharif Kashani
Phone: 402-554-3628
Email: hsharif@unl.edu

- Update: Electronics on Trains Working Group as of 5-30-19:

David Brabb, new working group leader, provide the following update on 5-30-19 for inclusion in the minutes:

1. *We had our initial NGEC Electronics sub-committee meeting last week and introduced myself, and my colleagues; Ken Martin and Tanner Buel, as folks that are going to organize and lead our group meetings going forward.*
2. *I sent out a "get me (meaning us at Sharma) up to speed" survey to the group for comments to questions my colleagues and I have about hoe we have gotten to where we are, and what the group understands as our goals....so that we are best prepared to lead the group.*
3. *Our next call/meeting will be on June 11th.*

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 May 2019, the Finance and Administrative Subcommittee met twice – on the 1st and the 29th.

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

- Treasurer's Report – 5-29-19:

On 5-29-19, Tim Ziethen provided the following Treasurer's report:

Spent/accrued to date: \$401,255.35

Total Grant amount: \$1,250,000.00

Balance to date: \$848,744.65

Average monthly spend rate: \$13,375.00

The monthly rate can vary somewhat based on technical specification/document management activities during a given month and there is always a bump in spending around the annual meeting.

Still, the overall average is quite consistent at \$13,375.00 per month. Looking at this on an ongoing basis the NGEC balance would sustain the Committee for about 5 years. With the current grant agreement ending on 9-30-20, and with no changes to workload or scope, the spend rate would put the NGEC at 3+ years left beyond the 9-30-20 grant agreement expiration date. Thus, the grant period of performance could reasonably be extended for about 3 more years beyond 9-30-20.

- NGEC Looking Ahead

On 5-29-19 the following discussions took place on topics related to the future of the NGEC:

Ensuring that the NGEC is reauthorized in the FAST Act successor

1. Confirming with Amtrak – its role in advocating for the NGEC reauthorization – following up with Ken Altman and Joe McHugh:

Tim has reached out to Ken Altman and Joe McHugh to request documentation in the Amtrak reauthorization effort that references the NGEC. While he has not received documentation yet, both Joe and Ken have given assurances that Amtrak does want to advocate to fund and reauthorize the NGEC within the required guidelines.

Tim Hoeffner, Michigan DOT, commented on the importance of getting the NGEC reauthorization request in the principle of as many organizations as possible. He noted that it is in AASHTO's paper on reauthorization and in that of the Mid America regional effort as well. Tim noted it is also expected to be in the Mid-West Intercity Passenger Rail Commission's paper – currently DRAFT.

Steve Hewitt added that the NGEC is in the recently adopted SPRC reauthorization principles and is contained in a DRAFT resolution on reauthorization prepared for the Council of State Governments-Eastern Regional Conference and will be taken up for adoption during its annual meeting at the end of July.

Tim H recommended that members follow up with other entities that they are working with to make sure it is seen in multiple places.

2. Conveying the message – distribution of the NGEC two-pager – Steve Hewitt:

Steve Hewitt reported that he has distributed 240 hard copies of the NGEC 2 pager educational document and 352 electronic copies. The hard copies have largely been distributed by representatives of transportation associations for distribution on the Hill. Some have also been used by industry members when speaking or attending various industry conferences.

This document is another way of getting the message out and is useful to many organizations to have to include with their information packets as they make their rounds on the Hill.

For copies– contact Steve with the number requested and where to send them.

a. Requesting another no-cost grant extension

1. Confirming with FRA Grants offices whether this is possible and the next steps/timing – Tim Ziethen:

Tim Ziethen reported that FRA has confirmed in an email that the NGEC Grant is eligible for additional no-cost grant agreement extension(s). There are no issues in the grant language that would preclude making such a request.

The FRA also noted that it would be amenable to such a request. The FRA suggests that the NGEC/Amtrak wait until closer to the end of the current grant agreement (likely first or second quarter 2020) to make the formal request for a no-cost extension.

Again, Tim reiterated, that it looks like there will be available funds at the end of the current period (9-30-20) to extend out three years beyond that date with no new funding.

b. Long term future funding options for the NGEC – making the case – identifying the needs

1. Status – Developing Talking Points – Eric Curtit:

Eric reported that he and Tim Ziethen have talked and Eric is refining some bullet points with the intent of developing a second NGEC handout document that describes “what we do, how we do it, why we do it and the benefits and need for national standardization of passenger rail equipment. The paper would include economic benefits to the industry – the supply change, cost efficiency and economies of scale derived from standardization etc.

Eric added “it would inform on what we bring to the table, how we are funded, and why”.

The plan is to come with recommendations for FASC discussion on the next call – June 26, 2019.

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 Single Level Car Specification Review Panel met on February 7, 2019 to consider the Review Panel Report and Recommendations for Single Level Car Specification 305-003 Revision B.2 as prepared by consultant Larry Salci. The report was approved on 2-17-19 and submitted to the NGEC executive Board. On 2-12-19, the Executive Board accepted the report and its recommendations and formally adopted the Single Level Car Specification 305-003 Revision B.2. As noted earlier in this report, the Technical writer is expected to complete incorporation of all adopted changes to create #05-003 Revision B.2 and make it available to Steve Hewitt for distribution upon request.

The Specification Review Panel(s) did not meet in May 2019.