

# SECTION 305 NGEC Executive Board

MINUTES

NOVEMBER 18  
2010

3:00PM EST

WEBINAR

<b>FACILITATOR</b>	<i>Bill Bronte, Chair, S305 NGEC Executive Board</i>
<b>ATTENDEES</b>	<b>Board Members:</b> <i>Bill Bronte, DJ Stadtler, Rod Massman, Mark Yachmetz, Alan Ware, Kevin Lawson, Tammy Nicholson, Caitlin Hughes Rayman, Ray Hessinger, Scott Witt, Ron Adams, Mario Bergeron, Pat Simmons, Joe Kyle</i> <b>Support Staff/Observers:</b> <i>Ken Uznanski, Rob Edgcumbe, Steve Hewitt, David Ewing, Leo Penne, Shayne Gill, Kevin Kesler, Tammy Krause, Greg Gagarin, Jeff Gordon, Stan Hunter, Anand Probhakaran, Dale Engelhardt, Nancy Greene,</i>
<b>ABSENTEES</b>	<b>Support Staff/Observers:</b> <i>Paul Nissenbaum, Marvin Winston, Drew Galloway, John Bennett, Robin McCarthy, Drew Galloway, Rich Slattery, John Tunna</i>

## DECISIONS MADE

**Overview:**

The S305 NGEC Executive Board met via Webinar/conference call with a full agenda of items. The primary purpose of the meeting, however, was to review, consider and vote on approval of two requirements documents: PRIIA Single Level Passenger Rail Cars – Trainset and Standalone Car and Diesel Locomotive.

**Roll Call – Determine the presence of a Quorum - Steve Hewitt, Manager, S305 NGEC Support Services:**

At the request of Chairman Bill Bronte, Roll call was taken by NGEC Support Services Manager Steve Hewitt, and it was determined that all members of the S305 NGEC Executive Board were present and a quorum was established.

In the case of Board member Alan Ware – it was noted that he would need to leave the meeting at 3:30 and that he had given Pat Simmons his proxy for any votes taking place after he leaves. In the case of Mark Yachmetz, it was noted that he may leave the meeting at some point, and, if so, he would make his absence known and would proxy his vote to Kevin Kesler. It was also noted that DJ Stadtler was calling in from an Amtrak train and intended to be on the call all the way through, but in the event of a lost connection, Mario Bergeron had his proxy.

**Opening Remarks – Welcome – Bill Bronte, Chair:**

Bill Bronte, Chair of the S305 NGEC Executive Board, welcomed the Board Members, support staff and observers attending the webinar/conference call; and thanked the Executive Board, Amtrak, FRA and, especially, the members of the S305 Technical Subcommittee; for the hard work and conscientious effort that has been put forth throughout the existence of the NGEC and noted the tremendous progress that has been made to date.

**Approval of Summary/Minutes of the August 31, 2010 Executive Board Meeting and the September 15, 2010 Executive Board Emergency Conference Call – Bill Bronte, Chair:**

Chairman Bronte gave a brief overview of the Minutes/summaries of the August 31, 2010 in person meeting of the Executive Board and of the September 15, 2010 emergency conference call meeting of the Board. He asked for a motion to accept the minutes (individually) as submitted.

Ron Adams offered a motion to approve the minutes of the August 31, 2010 Executive Board meeting and was seconded by Caitlin Hughes Rayman. Rod Massman offered a motion to approve the September 15, 2010 minutes, and was seconded by Scott Witt. Without objection or exception the minutes of both meetings were approved.

**Review of the Status of Action Items established at the August 31, 2010 Executive Board Meeting – Steve Hewitt, Manager, NGEC Support Services:**

Steve Hewitt reviewed the Action Items as established during the August 31, 2010 meeting of the Executive Board and gave a status update on each item. (Action items status update attached)

**Overview of the Draft Requirements Document for Single Level Trainsets and Standalone Cars – Dale Engelhardt, Amtrak and Vice Chair of the Technical Subcommittee:**

Dale reviewed the requirements document and noted that he would make any changes decided by the Board in real-time during the course of the webinar discussion.

Throughout the discussion minor revisions were suggested and the changes were made accordingly. (Final document with all changes included will be posted to the AASHTO website: [www.highspeed-rail.org](http://www.highspeed-rail.org) and distributed to all Board members following adoption)

During the discussion, Mark Yachmetz, FRA, raised the issue of ADA and Level Boarding requirements. Mark acknowledged that USDOT has not yet issued guidance, but that it was important that whatever floor height is settled on in the requirements document does not preclude level boarding at a future date. The discussion revolved around the proposed 8" Top of Rail (TOR) Requirements vs. the USDOT "envisioned" 15" Top of Rail requirements. Mark commented that 8" TOR will not facilitate level boarding at future date.

Dale Engelhardt noted that the 8" TOR was selected for trainsets because that is what the only current manufacturer of trainsets was using, but that we have the ability to modify later if so desired. It was agreed that the Board could approve the requirements document with the current TOR requirements and come back to it at a later date as guidance is forthcoming.

Mark Yachmetz requested that, as part of the next report from the technical subcommittee, there should be a look at high level vs. low level boarding and what it should be. He expressed concern; also, that "we do not tailor specs to one manufacturer" rather, we should see what works for us and see what the manufacturers can do.

Ron Adams commented that the intention was to reflect infrastructure outside the NEC where the standard is 8"TOR and that that same requirement is in the already approved PRIIA Bi-Level specification.

Mark again emphasized that he would like to ask the Technical Subcommittee to look at where we stand with regards to ADA requirements and provide a discussion of equipment with different floor heights.

Kevin Kesler noted that it was previously decided by the Technical Subcommittee that it would compile assumptions and interpretations of what would be expected/anticipated in ADA requirements and get back to the Board. This process, Kevin noted, is already underway within the Technical Subcommittee.

Some clarifying questions were asked and answered and clarifications were provided. Of note – it was clarified that Tier 1 is speeds up to 125 MPH and Tier 2 begins at 125 MPH. This was important to clarify that the specs being developed were for Tier 1 equipment.

Discussion was closed – all changes, as agreed to, were made in real time to the document. A vote would take place after the discussion of the Locomotive Requirements document.

#### **Overview of the Draft Requirements Document for Diesel Locomotives – Dale Engelhardt, Amtrak and Vice Chair of the Technical Subcommittee:**

Dale reviewed the document and specifically noted changes that had been recommended (and included) by Ron Adams. Much of the discussion revolved around operational considerations and duty cycle requirements. Dale reminded the Board that "we are trying to build a Ferrari and run it like a Chevy". The current infrastructure cannot handle 125 MPH – the trains can get to 125 MPH – but will "take a while" to get there. As the infrastructure is improved, we will "hope that technology catches up" and 125 can be achieved in a shorter distance. Dale emphasized that "as more drag on the train is reduced, the faster it will be able to get to the faster speeds that you are trying to attain."

A few clarification questions and minor editing modifications were suggested and accepted. Most revolved around keeping the documents (in both cases) consistent – using consistent verbiage. (for example: "maximum speed is up to 125 MPH" rather than maximum speed is 125 MPH)

Final document with all changes included will be posted to the AASHTO website: [www.highspeed-rail.org](http://www.highspeed-rail.org) and distributed to all Board members following adoption.

#### **Action – Executive Board:**

With all changes made to both documents in real-time and with no further comments or discussion, Bill Bronte asked for a motion to approve the two requirements documents as posted with the changes included.

Ron Adams made a motion that the Executive Board adopt the two requirements documents as presented; and Pat Simmons seconded the motion. Steve Hewitt suggested that the Board be polled so as to ensure that a quorum was still present and to ensure that Bill Bronte would be able to determine if consensus is achieved.

Mark Yachmetz agreed to move on with a vote to adopt these requirements documents with the qualifier that a further discussion of standardization gets worked into it. It was noted that Standardization is being discussed at the Technical subcommittee and that a subgroup had been formed to address the issue and bring forth

recommendations to the Executive Board.

With no further discussion, Steve Hewitt polled the Board - all members were accounted for (Al Ware's vote was cast by Pat Simmons as previously noted since it was after 3:30 and Al had left the meeting) All other members voted on their own behalf. The vote was unanimous in favor of adopting the two requirements documents as presented with the changes incorporated based on today's discussions. Chairman Bill Bronte determined that consensus had been achieved.

**Establishing/Appointing Review Panels – Bill Bronte, S305 NGEC Executive Board Chair:**

Chairman Bronte called for volunteers to be appointed to two Review Panels. The Review Panels will review the specifications approved by the Technical Subcommittee and compare them against the requirements documents. Upon completion of their work, the Review panels will submit a written report with recommendations to the Executive Board. Board members will review the report and at the February Board meeting will vote on adoption/approval of the specifications. Kevin Kesler noted that Larry Salci, consultant, was expected to be brought in again (as he was with the bi-level specification) as consultant to the Review panels and he would draft the reports for Review panel approval.

It was agreed that the following would comprise the members of the Diesel Locomotive Review Panel:  
Bill Bronte, Scott Witt, Ron Adams, Ray Hessinger John Tunna

It was agreed that the following would comprise the Single level standalone Cars Review panel:  
Bill Bronte, Scott Witt, Ron Adams, John Tunna

Mario Bergeron and Dale Engelhardt, Chair and Vice Chair of the Technical Subcommittee will serve as resources to the Review panel, but not as members. Other resources will include; the Amtrak Engineering team and the 5 Technical subcommittee subgroup team leaders. (Greg Gagarin, Tammy Krause, Jeff Gordon, Steve Fretwell, Brian Marquis, Anand Prabhakaran)

Bill Bronte noted that a timeline was needed which would describe the process from the adoption of the specifications by the Technical subcommittee through to the February meeting of the Executive Board.

**Standardization – Rob Edgcumbe, Consultant to Amtrak**

Rob Edgcumbe reported that the Technical Subcommittee had appointed a subgroup to look at issues of standardization. This subgroup is comprised of a member from the states, FRA and Amtrak with input already provided by the industry participants throughout the process. The subgroup has prepared a scope of work which was distributed to the Board prior to this webinar meeting by Steve Hewitt.

The sub group has met several times to date and will continue to meet over the next several months. It is their intention to develop an understanding of what standardization might entail and make recommendations to the Board in February. The sub group will define what standardization is as a way forward in looking at future specifications and requirements and will provide the Board with its findings in February.

Mark Yachmetz commented on the importance of developing standards that will encourage domestic manufacturing and help to control costs. He noted that the USDPT deputy Secretary believes that it is extremely important that the 305 Committee understands that it has the opportunity to do it right. 305 should ensure that what has occurred in the bus and transit industries does not occur in the passenger rail industry. In the former – there are so many component types that it has not been effective in controlling costs. The 305 Committee should look at components that lend themselves to standardization (we do not need 10 kinds of wheels).

Rob Edgcumbe reiterated that this is exactly the intent of the sub group. These are the types of issues they are addressing. They will look at the benefits and the downsides of standardization.

Mark noted that proprietary designs create their own challenges so the more we can standardize, the better off we all will be.

**Additional discussion item – Caitlin Hughes Rayman, MDOT:**

At this point Mark Yachmetz mentioned that he needed to leave the Webinar shortly. Caitlin Hughes Rayman asked Mark to comment on the status of future funding for the S305 NGEC. She wondered if the FRA is talking to the "Hill" about 2011 funding. Mark commented that they have had discussions for 2011 and noted that the Committee had not yet used much of the funding already in place. They are, however, seeking to be funded at the same level as last year and keep the funds continuing. He advised that, to the extent that you have a question of needs beyond carrying over the current funds – making it known would be a "good thing." He also noted that he anticipated that there would be a CR for the next few months rather than a full year appropriations getting done before the end of this session.

### **Systems Engineering for Future Corridor Service Passenger Equipment – Kevin Kesler, FRA**

Kevin Kesler discussed the need for the S305 NGEC to eventually adopt, not only a configurations management process and a requirements process, but also a systems engineering process. He is leading the effort within the Technical subcommittee to try to develop a recommended approach to systems engineering and, essentially to recommend back to the Board a way to carry it out. Is it within the 305 Committee; with certain states; with Amtrak or is it within APTA?

Kevin requested that the Board show strong support for the need for the need for a systems engineering process moving beyond the life of the 305 Committee and on into the future. He said that he is seeking support, guidance, encouragement from the Board, that the technical subcommittee take on the assignment and bring back to the Board a configured, managed and budget process.

Mario Bergeron expressed strong support for developing a systems engineering process. He stated that “we need a process and defined roles on how we do it”. He commented, however, that “we are racing against the clock and having resourcing issues, of course.”

Kevin committed that “between now and the February Board meeting we will scope out what it means and how to go about it and we’ll take that back to the Board in February.”

Bill Bronte stated that “conceptually, it is the way to go”. He also asked what the timelines were. Kevin responded that the idea was to determine what we think and what it will take along with options on roles and costs. And we will “bring the concept forward in February.

Bill agreed that this is a good idea, but that he (CALTRANS) can’t really commit resources.

Kevin agreed and said that this is more of an FRA/Volpe effort with support from the Amtrak Team – primarily Greg Gagarin. Stan Hunter, CALTRANS, volunteered to assist if Bill gave him the ok. In the end, Bill agreed Stan’s help would be invaluable and he was ok with Stan providing his assistance.

Kevin asked that anyone who wants to participate in the effort or assign someone to participate should send him an email with contact information.

Leo Penne, AASHTO, asked Kevin to please keep Steve Hewitt apprised of the activities of the effort and its members so that he can include it in the monthly S305 Activities report. Kevin agreed and also noted that the effort was contained within the Technical subcommittee work.

### **S305 NGEC as an Entity – Status Update – DJ Stadtler, Chair of the Finance Subcommittee and Treasurer of the NGEC Executive Board:**

DJ Stadtler reported on the joint efforts of the Finance subcommittee and the Administration Task Force in regards to the issue of possible incorporation of the Committee and or determining what type of entity, if any, it should be. He noted that the Steve Patterson and George Howell of Hunton & Williams had given a presentation jointly to the subcommittee and task force and that the primary issue remains determining what the states needs or objectives are for S305. He asked the Board for its blessing to enlist members of both groups (subcommittee and task force) to begin contacting states and polling them on what their needs are.

David Ewing, AASHTO Consultant observed that there is linkage between standardization/systems engineering/ and entity creation.

Both Kevin Kesler and DJ agreed with this general premise. Kevin elaborated that he believed there is a long term value in the Committee becoming a legal entity to “at least own the specs”.

DJ stated that the issue remains what kind of entity we need to become – and that all depends on what the needs are.

Kevin noted that “while we await those determinations, we will proceed with the idea that we will become an entity.

Bill Bronte reminded d state members to fill out the questionnaire that had been distributed to them previously (in regards to issues facing individual states in participating in a legal entity or corporation, etc) and get those responses to Steve Hewitt as soon as possible.

In regards to the Steve Patterson Power point – Steve Hewitt agreed to distribute it to all Board members – he noted that, to date, it had only been distributed to the members of the Finance subcommittee and the Administrative Task Force.

It was agreed that the joint effort to poll the states could go forward.

**Confirming dates and location for the Annual Meeting in February, 2011 - Bill Bronte/Steve Hewitt:**

After a brief discussion of dates of availability, it was agreed that the Annual Meeting of the S305 NGEC will take place on **February 15, 2011**. It will be held at USDOT facilities and there will be a full Executive Board business agenda (Steve Hewitt to prepare a proposed draft agenda and circulate to Board members for input)

Kevin Kesler has reserved space at USDOT (the Atrium and a few smaller meeting rooms) and will need a head count to determine which room or rooms will be required. Steve Hewitt to handle registration/attendee information and will send a notice out to all Board members, subcommittee members, task force members and industry participants inviting them to attend the meeting and asking them to register with him, via email ([shewitt109@aol.com](mailto:shewitt109@aol.com)) by December 15, 2010.

It was also requested that Kevin reserve a smaller conference room for the possibility of the need for the Executive Board to go into executive session at some point. Kevin agreed to reserve a room for that possibility.

Steve to work with AASHTO in regards to other logistics activities (possibly arranging for a block of hotel rooms for members – or at least providing a list of hotels in the area).

Kevin will work with Steve on other needs/logistics and support needed from AASHTO.

The starting time was anticipated to be around 9:00am and the meeting is expected to be a full day in duration.

**Concluding Comments -All:**

There was a brief discussion revolving around the possible redistribution of HSIPR funds. The primary question concerned the timing – when will we know of such redistribution.

The general consensus was that there are a lot of uncertainties and the timing is unknown. FRA has said it will be handled timely, professionally and expeditiously.

**Next Steps – Bill Bronte:**

Bill commented that this was a very productive meeting and he thanked all participants for their time and for their efforts to date and going forward. He reviewed what happens next:

1. Specifications are to be adopted by the Technical subcommittee at their Dec 15-16 meeting
2. The specs will then be formally transmitted to the Chairman, who subsequently will hand them over to the Review panels for their review and input.
3. The review Panels complete their work and file a report with recommendations to the Executive Board in advance of the February 15, 2011 meeting.
4. The Board will need to develop/adopt timelines for all of these things to occur
5. The Board needs to identify what the next specifications will be after the single level trainsets spec is completed (trainsets follows the two currently being developed)
6. Steve Hewitt will begin to develop a proposed agenda for the February 15<sup>th</sup> meeting – some key items that need to be on the agenda including; level boarding and ADA requirements; standardization; systems engineering etc.
7. The subcommittees, the Board, AASHTO and the Administrative Task Force need to prepare revised scope of work for their areas – as the current scope of work ends March 31, 2011.
8. Ken Uznanski will develop a timeline for completion of new budgets and work plans (scopes of work) and a description of actions needed. (Ken noted that one specific action that will need to take place is to determine if AASHTO is to continue to provide support services to the NGEC and, if so, we will need to formally state that – their current agreement ends on march 31, 2011)
9. Ken will send the action list and timelines to Bill Bronte and Steve Hewitt

The webinar meeting of the S305 NGEC executive Board concluded at approximately 5:00PM Eastern.

## Action Items

**Standardization** – the subgroup will define standardization and make recommendations to the Executive Board at the February 15, 2011 meeting – **Rob Edgcumbe**



1. Opening Remarks – Welcome – Review of Meeting Agenda – Chairman Bill Bronte
2. Roll Call - Determine presence of a Quorum - Steve Hewitt
3. Approval of Summary/Minutes of the August 31 Exec Board Meeting and September 15 Emergency Conference Call Meeting of the Exec Board – Bill Bronte
4. Review of Action Items established at the August 31 Board Meeting – Steve Hewitt
5. Overview of the Draft Requirements Document for Single Level Trainsets and Standalone Cars – Dale Engelhardt
6. Overview of the Draft Requirements Document for Locomotives – Dale Engelhardt
7. Clarifying Questions – Executive Board Members/representatives
8. Recommended Changes – Executive Board Members/representatives
  1. Minor
  2. Major
9. Action - Executive Board
10. Establishing/Naming a Review Panel – Bill Bronte
11. Standardization – Rob Edgcumbe
12. Systems Engineering for future Corridor Service Passenger Equipment – Kevin Kesler
13. S305 NGECC as an Entity – Status Report – DJ Stadler
14. Confirming dates and location for Annual meeting in February - Bill Bronte/Steve Hewitt
15. Concluding Comments – Bill Bronte
16. Next Steps – Bill Bronte

## **S 305 Executive Board Action Items – November 15, 2010 Status Update:**

- Technical subcommittee to work with FRA to develop a rationalization list and change and responsibility process for PRIIA specification Control Management – to be presented to the Executive Board at the next meeting – planned for early to mid-February, 2011 **Action underway by Tech subcommittee – a draft configuration management proposal to be presented at next subcommittee call – at the end of November.**
- The Administrative Task Force and the Finance Subcommittee will form a joint subgroup for the purpose of refining/revising the proposed procurements approval process matrix and policy statement. The subgroup will present its recommendations to the full Task Force and Subcommittee membership for approval – and will submit to the Executive Board for its consideration at the next (February, 2011) meeting of the Board. **The Task Force and Finance Subcommittee held its first joint subgroup call on October 14<sup>th</sup>. After much discussion – it was agreed that a smaller subset of this group – comprised of Caitlin Hughes Rayman and Leo Penne and AASHTO accounting staff and DJ Stadtler and representatives of Amtrak accounting will meet in DC November 23 to delve into the issue and report back to the Administrative Task Force and Finance Subcommittee.**
- Nancy Greene, Amtrak, will revise the current version of the S305 Bylaws to add in the changes/amendments as presented by the Administrative Task Force and approved by the Board at the August 31 meeting. Nancy will also make “technical corrections” discussed at the Board meeting and provide the revised document to Bill Bronte for approval. This should be completed as soon as possible. **Revisions were made and approved by Bill Bronte and submitted to AASHTO for posting – Task Complete**
- Once the revised Bylaws have been approved by Bill Bronte, Steve Hewitt will notify AASHTO staff to replace the current Bylaws document with the revised version on the AASHTO website: [www.highspeed-rail.org](http://www.highspeed-rail.org). **Task Complete**
- The Board, through the Chair, is to create a subset of Board members to develop a straw man long term agenda for the S305 Committee for the next five years – this assignment should be made prior to the next Executive Board meeting for development and submission to the Board at the February, 2011 meeting. **This action item still needs to be acted upon. Awaiting assignments from the Chair.**
- The issue of indemnification is to be included in the “scope of work” for future procurement of legal services to address procurement and contract issues. (No specific timeline – as needed basis) **The Administrative Task Force is looking at this again in regards to possibly developing a temporary policy that would serve as a temporary protection while the Board is determining its entity. The temporary policy being considered is predicated upon Board members determining whether or not they are currently covered by their own organization’s indemnification policies.**
- The next in-person meeting of the Executive Board will also be its Annual Meeting, as called for in the Bylaws. The intent of the Board is to hold the meeting in early to mid February, 2011 in Washington, DC. Kevin Kesler to look into the availability of meeting space to accommodate up to 450 people at



USDOT facilities. Kevin is to notify Steve Hewitt of availability dates by the end of September. **Kevin Kesler has informed Steve Hewitt that the USDOT facilities are available at any time in February except February 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>. Next steps: Board Chair needs to set a date for the Annual Meeting – early to mid –February. Dates have been narrowed to the 15-16-17 of February. Board has been polled – a decision needs to be made. This is on the agenda of the Nov 18<sup>th</sup> Webinar meeting of the Board.**

- Steve Hewitt and Rob Edgcumbe will work with Andrea Ryan, AASHTO, on logistical arrangements for the Annual Meeting of the Board and keep Board members apprised. **Awaiting proposed date to be set.**