



*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: March 31, 2021**

**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, considering 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: Ray Hessinger, NYSDOT**

**Vice Chair: George Hull, Amtrak**

**Secretary: John Oimoen, IDOT**

**Treasurer: Tim Ziethen, Amtrak**

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

During the month of March 2021, the Executive Board met once via web conference, on the 23rd.

Highlights, decisions, and action items from the month of March 2021 include:

- Technical subcommittee review of the Access Board Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking regarding accessibility guidelines for Rail vehicles:

The intent of this effort is for states to submit their comments to the Access Board Docket on the Accessibility Requirement Guidelines Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking. Amtrak has submitted its comments already and will share them with the Executive Board. Once the comments have come back (The comment period has been extended) and there is ultimately a Final Rule, the Technical subcommittee (through its technical working groups) will compare them with the NGEC specifications to ensure compliance and make any necessary changes by utilizing the NGEC DCR process.

The comment period on the advanced NPRM which had been extended until July 14, 2020, has ended. As of 8-20-20, the FRA reported that the Access Board is reviewing comments received. On 8-20 -20, Melissa Shurland, FRA, reported to the Technical subcommittee, "we are in a holding pattern to see what the comments were and what the Access Board's disposition of them will be." Melissa will keep the NGECE technical subcommittee informed as the process is completed.

As of 3-31-21 – this item remains in a holding pattern.

- Executive Board review of NGECE documents to ensure there are no holes in the NGECE portfolio of specifications and other documents.

Development of a TSSSA template/primer:

In April it was agreed that developing a TSSSA template/menu of potential options would be undertaken by the Technical subcommittee.

As expressed by Chairman Hessinger, the intent is to have an "a la carte" menu of options when considering a TSSSA as a part of the procurement process.

Once the DRAFT is prepared, it will be provided to Tammy Krause to get it ready to be included as an NGECE document for Technical subcommittee approval and, ultimately for Executive Board review and approval.

As of 3-31-21, a DRAFT TSSSA primer was developed by Amtrak Mechanical and is under review by George Hull. Once he completes his review, it will be sent to Tammy Krause to work through the NGECE document management process. This is an item, once approved, which may be added to the PRIIA 305-220 Recommended Practices document.

- Treasurer's Report – 3-23-21:

Balance and Spend Rate through December 2020:

Total Initial Grant Amount: \$1,250,000.

Amount Spent through December 2020: \$707,119.75.

Balance remaining: \$ 542,880.25.

Estimated spend at current rate for the remaining grant period (through 9-30-23): \$457,548.07.

Current Spend Rate per month (as info and used in calculating): \$13,865.09.

Estimated Balance at the end of the Extension Period (Contingency): \$85,332.18

Tim noted that he has reached out to AASHTO (Strat Cavros) and expects to receive the January invoices shortly. It is anticipated that the January and February spend totals will be around \$28,000 which keeps us in line with the current spend rate of around \$14,000 per month.

- 2021 NGECE two-pager:

The two-page NGECE 2021 educational document was distributed electronically to all NGECE members – including over 200 members of the industry. Hard copies are now available by request through Steve Hewitt at [shewitt109@aol.com](mailto:shewitt109@aol.com). By the end of 2021 – an update will be made for 2022.

- Update – Multi-State Rail Car Procurement (provided by Caltrans) as of 3-23-21:

Design review for the standard coach is complete. The Cab Car structure FDR is complete and the structural test plans are being coordinated with Caltrans, Siemens and FRA with compression testing planned for April. The Cab Car IDR phase is complete and FDR meetings are scheduled to resume in April. IDOT Café Car reviews are complete and open items are being addressed.

IDOT Business Class table testing occurred February 16<sup>th</sup> in Spain. NEC testing for standard coach is complete and the report is accepted by FRA. Caltrans 238.111 testing is complete, and the report has been submitted to Amtrak and FRA. IDOT 238.11 testing and the report is in the submittal stage.

75 cars total are in production or have been produced at Siemens Sacramento Facility. There are currently twelve Caltrans cars at the Stockton Facility and eighteen IDOT cars in Chicago. Additional Caltrans and IDOT cars are scheduled to ship in March or April.

The initial consists for Caltrans and IDOT are being prepared for Conditional Acceptance and revenue service.

- Metro North Dual Mode Locomotive Procurement – Update as of 3-23-20:

Metro-North has awarded the Dual Mode Locomotive contract to Siemens. A get-start meeting was held on March 8<sup>th</sup> and design activities are now underway.

- Amtrak Equipment Procurement Update – as of 3-23-21:

CAF: Progress continues – with 2 more sleeper cars complete – there are 7 left.

Charger Locomotive – Also continues to progress well. The first unit is in testing and it is going well.

AmFleet replacement – is in the “cone of silence” period with discussions continuing with vendors.

Acela Express 21 (AE21) testing continues – they are addressing some modeling issues and evaluating schedule impacts.

- Connecticut DOT Rail Car RFP as of 3-31-21:

This procurement is in the “cone of silence” period.

- VIA Rail Equipment Procurements:

On 2-23-21 at the Annual Meeting a comprehensive overview/update of the VIA Rail procurement was presented by Mario Bergeron, Bruce Cacciola, Ron Bartels, and Joe DiLiello. This full presentation was distributed to NGEC members and is posted on the NGEC website.

The next update is anticipated to take place around June 2021.

- Document Control Update - as of 3-23-21:

- The Equipment Acquisition and Ownership Best Practices Document has been signed and will be added to the website soon.
- Tammy Krause has been creating the DMU specification DCRs proposed by Stadler Rail. She has sent out DCRs to the Electrical, Interiors, and Mechanical Working Group team leaders.
- Tammy is working on the Trainset specification updates and the first 3 chapters are now complete. She will be resuming her weekly meetings with Camren to keep it progressing.

- METRA Equipment Procurement Effort:

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

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

John Oimoen, IDOT, is scheduled to provide an update on this procurement to the Executive Board in a future Board call.

As of 3-31-21 – nothing new has been reported.

- Updates: States and Amtrak – Charger Locomotive and Rail Car Experience:

In-depth updates were provided during the 2021 Annual Meeting and were distributed to NGEN members and can be found on the NGEN website.

**Technical Subcommittee:**

**Chair: George Hull, Amtrak**

**Vice Chair: Joe Paul, Amtrak**

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

During the month of March 2021, the Technical subcommittee met once, via conference call, on the 18<sup>th</sup>.

Key decisions and action item updates from the month of March 2021, included:

- Backgrounder educational document:

The Executive Board has approved the 2021 NGEN educational document. It has been distributed electronically to all NGEN members and is available in hard copy and/or in a PDF by sending a request to Steve Hewitt at [shewitt109@aol.com](mailto:shewitt109@aol.com)

- AWG/RVACC:

Technical subcommittee review of Access Board advance NPRM Accessibility Guidelines and compare with current NGEN Specifications

The intent of this effort is for states to submit their comments to the Access Board Docket on the Accessibility Requirement Guidelines (advanced) Notice of Proposed Rulemaking. Amtrak has submitted its comments already. Once the comments "have come back", the Technical subcommittee will compare them with the NGEN specifications to ensure compliance.

As of 3-31-21 – the Access Board continues to be in a holding pattern on this review.

- 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 Acting CMO and NGEN Vice Chair George Hull on a regular basis.

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

- Connecticut DOT Rail Car Procurement:

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

- University of Nebraska study on High Speed wireless technology as of 3-31-21:

As reported on 4-1-21 by Hamid Sharif-Kashani:

"We continue our effort in designing and implementing our computer models and simulations for the sub-1-GHz frequency bands for rail applications. Currently, we are investigating the 160 MHz band with the consideration of propagation model for different rail environments. The 160MHz band is of interest since it provides good communication range but has the three main challenges of: (1) channelization, (2) availability of neighboring channels, and (3) lack of characterization of system performance at higher layers. We hope with the computer models and simulation results, the performance limitations of this band and the impact on different rail application could be determined."

For more information, please contact Hamid Sharif ([hamidsharif@uni.edu](mailto:hamidsharif@uni.edu))

Next Update: 4-29- 21

- Update: Electronics on Trains Working Group:

The following update was provided by David Brabb on 1-26-21:

*On 1-26-21, we had a call with a fairly good-sized group today (for us) at 3pm eastern. We are looking at finishing up the first revision to 305-919 hardware spec., by moving appropriate firmware info to that spec from 305-920. We will reach out to you when we are ready to follow the appropriate procedure for issuing a revision.*

*We do have a couple of new team members that are eager to share lessons learned and what/how they are doing with some of their designs/ builds. The two new gentlemen are Kevin Sudano (Transit Consultant) and Fabio Cussigh of VDS Rail in Italy. Ken Martin (Sharma) and I plan to meet with them in a separate call, in early February 2021 to gather whatever information that they want to share. Of course, all information gathered will be shared/vetted with our group.*

*Our next NGENC Electronics call is scheduled for March 2nd at 3pm eastern.  
4-1-18-21 David Brabb, Team Leader, was unavailable and did not provide an update.*

Next Update 4-15-21

- Working Group on Specification Wright Issues as of 3-31-21:

Jeff Gordon provided the following update on 4-1-21 for the minutes of the Technical subcommittee:

*The group met on March 26. 11 participants.*

*Had good discussion led by Siemens regarding car-to-car production weight issues.*

*Group seems to agree that a  $\pm 2\%$  tolerance is reasonable for coaches.*

*Siemens to provide additional information to help make determination of whether that is also applicable for locomotives.*

*Also, to be determined, is the baseline (the weight against which the tolerance is applied): first pilot car, first production car, etc.*

*Next meeting has not yet been scheduled but will be during week of 4/19.*

*Always looking for more participants.*

If interested in participating on this working group, contact Jeff Gordon at [Jeffrey.gordon@dot.gov](mailto:Jeffrey.gordon@dot.gov) or Steve Hewitt at [shewitt109@aol.com](mailto:shewitt109@aol.com)

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

**Chair: Tim Ziethen, Amtrak**

**Vice Chair: Brian Beeler II, NNEPRA for Maine DOT**

**Second Vice Chair: John Oimoen, Illinois DOT**

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

During the Month of March 2021, the Finance and Administrative Subcommittee met on 3-31-21:

- On 3-31-21, the FASC Chair, Tim Ziethen, appointed Brian Beeler II NNEPRA, for Maine DOT, to fill the vacancy of first Vice Chair. The vacancy occurred with the announced retirement from state service by NGENC legacy member Brent Thompson, WSDOT.

Brent, we want to thank you for your long-time commitment to the NGENC! We wish you well in retirement!

- Treasurer's Report as of 3-31-21:

Balance and Spend Rate (through December 2020):

Total Initial Grant Amount: \$1,250,000.

Amount Spent through December 2020: \$707,119.75.

Balance remaining: \$ 542,880.25.

Estimated spend at current rate for the remaining grant period (through 9-30-23): \$457,548.07.

Current Spend Rate per month (as info and used in calculating): \$13,865.09.

Estimated Balance at the end of the Extension Period (Contingency): \$85,332.18

Strat Cavros, AASHTO, reported that he had submitted January invoices and is about to send the February invoices.

Tim Ziethen asked that Strat resend the January invoices as he has not received them. Once Tim has January and February, he will update the Balance and Spend Rate report and send it to Steve Hewitt. The next Quarterly Grant Report to FRA due to by the end of April 2021.

- Conveying the Message – Focus: Federal Surface Transportation Authorization – Reauthorization of the NGENC (3-31-21):

Steve Hewitt reviewed the tools the NGENC has for conveying the NGENC message and for urging other associations and agencies to put forth that message to ensure that Congress includes the reauthorization of the NGENC (PRIIA Section 305) with funding in its successor to the FAST Act. Steve provided a background on past support and on the steps needed to ensure that support for inclusion of the NGENC is reiterated to the new Congress.

- a. 2021 NGENC two-page handout:

The 2021 NGENC two-pager is now available in hard copy and electronically. It should be used by states and related organizations to educate Congress on what the NGENC is and what it has accomplished. It is a great tool to use to convey the message.

- b. Ensuring others – SPRC, Amtrak, AASHTO – keep the NGENC on Congress' radar

It is important that we press agencies and organizations within the Rail community to help get the NGENC message out and to request that it be reauthorized and funded in the next Surface Transportation authorization legislation.

In the last Congress, AASHTO, SPRC, and to some extent Amtrak, included it in their authorization principles, but it was left out of the House bill drafted at that time.

The new Congress is using the House bill as the basis in developing its bill. The NGENC will need our sister agencies and associations to reaffirm their requests that the NGENC be included in the new bill proposal. In the last Congress, staff developing the bill, did say that the fact that the NGENC was not in their DRAFT proposal was simply an oversight. The issue now is to correct that omission and make sure it gets in this bill.

Tim Ziethen noted that Amtrak has included the NGEC in its reauthorization principles in a group along with other authorized programs under its oversight. He will reach out to Ken Altman, Amtrak Government Affairs, to see if there is something that can be done to reinforce the NGEC support.

Shayne Gill stated that AASHTO included it in their last set of Reauthorization principles and has it, once again, in its latest set of principles to be conveyed to Congress.

Steve Hewitt pointed out that SPRC included it with expanded language in its Authorization Principles several weeks ago and has conveyed those Principles to the new Congress. Steve will reach out to SPRC Chair. Arun Rao, to suggest that they send a separate letter with language to Congressional staff in support of the NGEC. They did this in the last Congress but will need to do it again.

Tim Ziethen asked if the NGEC does not get authorized, does it mean the committee must stop its work even though it is funded through 2023? No one on the call knows for certain, but the general sense is that, if the current grant extension allows for the funds to be available until expended.

Jeff Gordon, FRA, will talk to the grants people at FRA to get clarification. Tim Ziethen will also talk to Amtrak grants to get their view on this.

Steve Hewitt reiterated that this clarification is important to ensure the continuation of the NGEC work through 9-30-23 but emphasized that it remains critical that language in the next bill not only reauthorizes the NGEC but includes an authorization for funding. In the FAST Act the NGEC was reauthorized but did not include funding.

Shayne Gill noted that it is important to also reach out to the industry members of the NGEC to encourage them to make Congress aware of the importance of reauthorizing the NGEC and to include funding for it. Shayne also noted that specific members of the industry have benefitted from the NGEC in the recent equipment procurements.

c. NGEC State Members working with their Government Affairs offices

The states Government Affairs offices should include the NGEC two-pager as a part of its interaction with Congress in its reauthorization packets wherever possible.

d. Plan of Action :

Jeff Gordon will seek clarification from FRA on the status of the current grant agreement in the event that the NGEC is not reauthorized.

Tim Ziethen will ask for clarification from Amtrak grants and talk to Ken Altman to see if there is anything further that can be done to ensure that Amtrak conveys the message that the NGEC needs to be reauthorized with funding.

Shayne Gill will continue to keep this on the radar at AASHTO as they put forth their Principles to the new Congress.

Steve Hewitt will follow up with SPRC to encourage a separate request be sent to congressional staff in support of the NGEC being reauthorized with funding.

Steve Hewitt will also follow up with industry members to encourage them to reach out to congressional staff.

State members are asked to encourage their Government Affairs offices to include the NGEC in their authorization requests.

- Quarterly Grant Progress Report:

The quarterly report for the period ending 331-21 is due to FRA on 4-30-21.

- Annual Review of NGEC By-Law:

Task complete – next review – Fall 2021.

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

**For each PRIIA NGEN 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 NGEN 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, 2019 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 NGEN Executive Board accepted the Review Panel's Report and Recommendation and formally adopted PRIIA Single Level Trainset Specification 305-007 Revision B.

In October 2020, NGEN Executive Board Chairman, Ray Hessinger re-convened the DMU Specification Review Panel and tasked Technical consultant Larry Salci with reviewing the changes approved by the Technical subcommittee on 10-15-20 and preparing a Review Panel report with recommendations.

As of 11-30-20, additional comments submitted on weight, by the mechanical working group have not yet been adjudicated. Industry members from Stadler (builders of DMUs) have come in late to the process and requested time to develop and submit more changes through the NGEN DCR process. As noted above, Mr. Salci emphasized that any changes requested by Stadler must be FRA compliant. As of 11-30-20, the Stadler comments have not been submitted and they have requested and were provided more time to develop those comments internally before submitting through the NGEN Document Control process as DCRs. The timeline for consideration of the additional DCRs by the Technical subcommittee is now anticipated to be sometime in January 2021. The view is that it is better to get it right than rushed.

Additionally, the broader issue of weight across the vehicle procurements will likely be taken up by a working group being established to look at that issue and report back to the NGEN technical subcommittee with recommendations. Establishing the working group will be on the 11-10-20 Technical subcommittee agenda.

As reported earlier in this document, a technical working group on equipment weight was established under the jurisdiction of the NGEN Technical subcommittee on 12-20-20 and is led by Jeff Gordon, FRA.

As of 1-31-21, the DMU specification update Revision B was on hold pending the Stadler DCRs.

As of 3-31-21 – DCRs submitted by Stadler for the DMU Specification Revision B have been distributed to the appropriate working groups.

Additionally, DCRs for the Single Level Trainset specification update have been submitted and distributed to the working groups. These will eventually go through the Trainset Review Panel for consideration.

### **Milestones – Quarterly update (January 1 through March 31, 2021)**

#### **Bi-weekly meetings:**

Throughout the quarter, the NGEN Executive Board and the Technical subcommittee held bi-weekly conference calls with the noted exception of just prior to the Annual Meeting and just following it. The Annual Meeting was held on 2-23-21 with all subcommittees and the Board participating and giving reports. All business of the Board and its subcommittees continued to progress throughout the quarter.

#### **Monthly meetings:**

During the quarter, the Finance and Administrative Subcommittee (FASC) met every four weeks on Wednesdays with the noted exception as noted above. A complete Annual Treasurer's Report was provided during the Annual Meeting and was accepted by the NGEC Executive Board as presented.

**Dissemination of educational/informational pieces:**

The 2021 two-page educational/backgrounder was released in January 2021. To date, around 400 electronic versions have been distributed to NGEC members and various associations.

**NGEC Annual Meeting:**

The (11<sup>th</sup>) Annual Meeting took place virtually on 2-23-21 with over 100 NGEC members attending.

The next (12<sup>th</sup>) Annual Meeting will take place in February 2022.

**Annual Review of NGEC By-Laws and Operating Procedures:**

This task for 2020 was completed in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter. The Executive Board adopted changes proposed by the NGEC Finance and Administrative subcommittee. The changes were incorporated into the document by Steve Hewitt, and he distributed to the Executive Board members and to AASHTO to post it on the NGEC website.

The 2021 annual By-Law review will take place in the last quarter of 2021.

**Grant reporting:**

As required by the Grant Agreement, Amtrak will submit a quarterly report to the FRA. Information provided in the monthly NGEC Activities reports for the quarter, prepared by the NGEC Manager, will be utilized as a basis for the Quarterly Reports to the FRA.

The first such quarterly report included the period from October 1, 2016 through December 31, 2016, was submitted by Amtrak by January 31, 2017.

The second quarterly report included the period from January 1, 2017 through March 31, 2017 and was submitted by April 30, 2017.

The third such quarterly report included the period from April 1, 2017 through June 30, 2017 and was submitted by Amtrak to FRA by July 31, 2017.

The fourth such quarterly report included the period from July 31, 2017 through September 30, 2017 and was submitted by Amtrak to FRA by October 31, 2017.

This first quarterly report for 2018 included the period from January 1, 2018 through March 31, 2018 and was submitted by Amtrak to FRA by April 30, 2018.

The second quarterly report for 2018 includes the period from April 1, 2018 through June 30, 2018 and will be submitted by Amtrak to FRA by July 31, 2018.

The third quarterly report for 2018 includes the period from July 1, 2018 through September 30, 2018 and will be submitted by Amtrak to FRA by October 31, 2018.

The fourth quarterly report for 2018 includes the period from October 1, 2018 through December 31, 2018 and will be submitted by Amtrak to the FRA by January 31, 2019.

The first quarterly report for 2019 includes the period beginning January 1, 2019 through March 31, 2019 and will be submitted by Amtrak to FRA by April 30, 2019.

The second quarterly report for 2019 will include the period beginning on April 1, 2019 and ending on June 30, 2019. The report was submitted by Amtrak to FRA by July 31, 2019.

The third quarterly report for 2019 will include the period beginning on July 1, 2019 and ending on September 30, 2019. The report will be submitted by Amtrak to FRA by October 31, 2019.

The fourth quarterly report for 2019 will include the period beginning on October 1, 2019 and ending on December 31, 2019. The report was submitted by Amtrak to FRA on time by January 31, 2020.

The first quarterly report for 2020 will include the period beginning on January 1, 2020 and ending on March 31, 2020. The report was submitted by Amtrak to FRA by April 30, 2020.

The second quarterly report for 2020 will include the period beginning on April 1, 2020 and ending on June 30, 2020. The report was submitted by Amtrak to FRA by July 31, 2020.

The third quarterly report for 2020 will include the period beginning on July 1, 2020 and ending on September 30, 2020. The report was submitted by Amtrak to the FRA by October 30, 2020.

The fourth quarterly report for 2020 will include the period beginning on October 1, 2020 and ending on December 31, 2020. The report was submitted by Amtrak to the FRA on January 31, 2021.

The first quarterly report for 2021 will include the period beginning on 1-1-21 and ending on 3-31-21. The report will be submitted to the FRA by 4-30-21.

#### **Fiscal and contractual actions:**

During the April 1 to June 30, 2017 quarter, the Finance and Administrative subcommittee, and, subsequently, the Executive Board, adopted a motion that expressed the intent to extend the contracts of AASHTO and the subcontracts in synch with the Grant Agreement and consistent with the budget and SOW. Currently, Amtrak and AASHTO are in the process of developing their contract extension and, following its execution, AASHTO has been directed to do the same with the sub-contracts identified in the SOW and noted in the adopted motion inserted below.

*“As was intended in past NGEN budget approvals and to ensure compliance with the Audit of Grant Agreement of March 27, 2013, and the NGEN’s updated Procedure of Establishing Contract Support adopted August 6, 2013, the NGEN authorizes Amtrak to contract with AASHTO for administrative support services as well as subsequent sub-contracts per the statement of work for entities such as; with Hewitt Consulting for Manager of Support Services, and with SalciConsult for Specification Consultant services. In addition, with the Federal Railroad Administration’s June 8th, 2015, approval of the NGEN’s Supplemental Statement of Work and related budget extension through September 30, 2017, and its subsequent approval of the Statement of Work and Budget included in the Grant Agreement executed on October 26, 2016 for the period beginning October 1, 2016 through September 30, 2019, Amtrak is authorized to extend its agreement with AASHTO and AASHTO’s sub-consultants in accordance with the Statement of Work.”*

Adopted by the NGEN Executive Board on 6-6-17.

On 9-26-17, AASHTO and Amtrak executed a contract extension for NGEN Support services to continue from 10-1-17 through 9-30-19. On 9-27-17 AASHTO executed a contract modification with Hewitt Consulting – (Steve Hewitt) extending the NGEN Manager’s contract for the period 10-1-17 through 9-30-19.

In the fourth quarter, 2017 – AASHTO and Amtrak executed a contract extension for technical support (spec writing) with Casamar – extending the contract through 9-30-19.

During the fourth quarter, NGEN Revision Control Coordinator (RCC), Tammy Krause, Amtrak, accepted the separation agreement and announced her departure to the NGEN Executive Board – effective 12-31-17. To fill the void created by this change, Amtrak has temporarily assigned these responsibilities to Michael Burshtin, Amtrak, and has begun taking steps needed to potentially subcontract this work similarly to how the other NGEN support services are provided. The SOW was revised by the NGEN Executive Board during this quarter to provide the flexibility to have the duties of the RCC conducted in house – Amtrak – or be subcontracted to a consultant. The Amtrak and FRA grants offices are reviewing the proposed change and, if approved, a sole source contract will be executed per NGEN Contract Management procedures.

As of 3-31-18, and as noted previously in this quarterly report, the NGEC Grant Agreement SOW revisions have been submitted to FRA and are under review. It is anticipated that the revisions will be approved and executed in April 2018. Simultaneously, the actions necessary to execute a contract for the Document Control Manager (DCM) have progressed with a revised SOW and budget having been submitted by the prospective sole source contractor for review and approval of the NGEC Treasurer and the Technical Subcommittee Chair who will be responsible for managing the work of the DCM.

During the quarter ending June 30, 2018, per the NGEC process, AASHTO executed a contract with TLK Associates, LLC (Tammy Krause) to perform the Document Control Management responsibilities, as identified in the SOW and budget, and as previously approved by the NGEC Executive Board.

During the quarter ending September 30, 2018, the FRA and Amtrak executed a no-cost 12-month extension (as approved by the NGEC Executive Board and formally requested by Amtrak) of the NGEC Grant Agreement. This extends the grant performance period to 9-30-2020.

Subsequently, on 5-8-19 AASHTO executed contract modification #2 with Hewitt Consulting – (Steve Hewitt) extending the NGEC Manager's contract for the period 10-1-19 through 9-30-20.

In December, the Executive Board Chairman approved a contract modification extending the document control manager's contract through 9-30-20.

During the quarter ending June 30, 2019, the NGEC Finance and Administrative subcommittee, through its chair, (the NGEC Treasurer) clarified with Amtrak Grants and FRA Grants that the NGEC would be eligible for a further no-cost extension beyond the current grant period end date of 9-30-2020.

In the quarter ending December 31, 2019, the FRA confirmed that a no-cost NGEC grant agreement extension can be for multiple years and has recommended that Amtrak (and the NGEC) make the formal request by July ,2019 to fit within the window for extension requests (July -September). The NGEC Executive Board agreed with the FASC recommendation that the grant agreement extension be for a 36-month period (10-1-2020 through 9-30-2023) and will formalized its request in January 2020.

In January 2020, Amtrak submitted the formal request (GARF) for a 36-month no-cost extension. It is currently in the review process at FRA with the intent being to approve/execute the agreement extension sometime in May 2020.

As of 6-30-20 – the FRA is reviewing the grant extension request with consideration of approval anticipated to occur soon.

As of this quarter, (ending 6-30-20) all NGEC subcontractor/consultant contracts are current.

On 9-16-20, the FASC Chairman announced that the FRA and Amtrak had approved and executed a 36 month – no cost NGEC grant agreement extension. This would extend the NGEC grant agreement through September 30, 2023. The scope and activities identified in the grant agreement remain the same and the work of the committee will continue as described there-in.

As of 9-30-20 – the subcontractor/consultant contracts are current. As of the end of business on 9-30-20, they will need to be extended in sync with the 36-month extension. The first step in this process is for Amtrak and AASHTO to extend the AASHTO contract for the 36-month period. AASHTO would, in turn, extend the subcontractors contracts for the same period as per the motion adopted by the NGEC Executive Board on 6-6-2017 and per Chairman Ray Hessinger's instructions during the Executive Board web conference held on 9-22-20.

In October 2020, all contract extensions (Amtrak/AASHTO) and AASHTO/Hewitt, AASHTO/Krause and AASHTO/Casamar) were executed and will run through 9-30-23.

As of 3-31-21, all contracts are up to date and active.

**Review/Update of NGEC Specifications (Document Control):**

This activity is ongoing and on track:

Activities specific to this quarter:

During the quarter ending March 31, 2021, the Executive Board adopted PRIIA 305-200 Recommended Practices. The document is now available by request through Steve Hewitt and is available on the NGEC website. Additionally, it has been distributed to all NGEC members.

The DMU Specification Revision B continues to be worked through the process with Stadler Rail having requested additional time to review and submit DCRS. The extended period of time was granted and in February, all changes had been received and were distributed to the appropriate technical working groups for review per NGEC procedures.

The re-formatting of the Single Level Trainset specification continues and has resulted in a number of DCRS which will be distributed to the appropriate working groups for review per NGEC procedures.