

SECTION 305 TECH SUB COMM

MINUTES

MAY 13, 2021

3:00PM EASTERN

CONFERENCE CALL

FACILITATOR	<i>George Hull, Chair, NGENC Technical Subcommittee</i>
ATTENDEES	Core Team Members: <i>George Hull, Joe Paul, Melissa Shurland for Jeffrey Gordon, Curtis McDowell for Matthew Simmons, Momo Tamaoki, Jennifer Bastian, Ray Hessinger, Marci Petterson, Steve Hewitt, Mike Kraft, Mike Murray, Tammy Krause, Dave "Emeritus" Warner, Industry Members: Anthony Lucas, Ed Golitko, Kevin Sudano, Donald Woodard, Richard Stegner, Darrell Smith, Josh Coran, Dick Bruss, Richard Curtis, Martin Bloedt, Jack Martinson, Jeff Schultz, Steve Ojalvo, Marco Weber, Joe Kenas, Bill Saddler, Paul Arnone, Donald Woodard</i>
ABSENTEES	<i>Jeff Gordon, Jason Biggs, Mike Jenkins, Edward Engle, Matthew Simmons, Troy Hughes, Tarek Omar, Blair Slaughter, Larry Salci, Oscar Bermudez</i>

DISCUSSION/DECISIONS MADE

1.

Chairman George Hull called the meeting to order and asked Steve Hewitt to call the roll of core team members.

After calling the roll, Steve Hewitt confirmed the presence of a quorum.

As always, industry participants are asked to email a notification of their attendance to Steve Hewitt at shewitt109@aol.com.

2.

Review Action Items – Steve Hewitt, NGENC Program Manager:

2021 NGENC Backgrounder educational document:

The 2021 version of the NGENC two-page backgrounder/educational document has been released and is available electronically or in hard copy by request - contact Steve Hewitt at shewitt109@aol.com

Around 500 electronic copies have been distributed to date.

Maintaining Industry Participation List: There are approximately 200 industry participants.

There have been several updates/changes to the list that have been provided to Steve Hewitt and those changes were made. Any further updates or changes should be sent to Steve Hewitt at shewitt109@aol.com.

Connecticut DOT Rail Car Procurement:

This procurement remains in the "cone of silence" period.

Next Update – as appropriate

Amtrak Vehicle Procurements as of 4-29-21:

On the Charger Locomotives: The first Unit #300 was delayed for 4 weeks due to issues with the fuel system. The problem has been identified and rectified. They will likely wait until the second unit is ready and ship them both together.

On the Intercity Passenger Rail Trainset – Siemens has been announced as the provider and has entered into negotiations with Amtrak.

CAF: Nothing new to report on 4-29-21

Metro North Dual Mode Locomotive Procurement as of 4-29-21:

Siemens is submitting system descriptions for initial design review, focusing initially on systems which remain unchanged from the

conventional Charger.

NGEC Reauthorization as of 4-29-21:

On 4-29-21, Steve Hewitt reported that the States for Passenger rail Coalition (SPRC) sent a letter (4-12-21) requesting the reauthorization of the NGEC and providing suggested language, scope, and funding.

After sending the letter, SPRC chair, Arun Rao, received a call from the House Railroad subcommittee staff (Majority) Frances Bourne, asking about the NGEC:

Are the specs being used? Isn't the work done if specifications have been completed and standardization is occurring? Why not ask that states be required to use NGEC specifications if using federal dollars?

Arun responded that the specifications are not only being used widely across the country and beyond (VIA Rail, Canada) but they are being relied upon. They have saved millions of dollars as they are used as the baseline specification and there is no need to start from scratch which would be at a cost estimated to be about \$2 million.

Arun also noted that the work is not complete – the specifications need to be maintained and updated constantly as they are used, and changes are developed that will keep them current and useful and if the NGEC is not reauthorized the specs would become obsolete. He also noted there may be additional specs yet to be developed as technology changes.

The last question, Arun did not specifically respond to as there are different views on this – the specs are being widely used now without there being a federal requirement which could potentially add more onerous requirements where not necessary.

Steve Hewitt commented on the fact that there is some back and forth on whether there should be a requirement that the NGEC specifications be used when federal dollars are involved. The fact that the specs are already being utilized so widely is a testament to their quality as well as cost savings they provide. Steve noted that if a state is required to use the specs, when document change requests (DCRs) are brought forth during a procurement it triggers what is called the Urgent DCR process whereby NGEC procedures for accepting or rejecting changes to the specification based on those changes being in- compliance with the Specification's requirements document. While this is done in a relatively expedited manner, it still can slow the procurement process down. If there is no requirement to use the specs, the entities are still using them as the baseline spec – provide free to them by the NGEC – and are asked to provide the as built spec to the NGEC at the end of the procurement so that it can be reviewed and changes that have been made can go through the complete document control process to determine if they should be included as a revision to the specification if it makes it better and is in compliance.

Shayne Gill, AASHTO, had reported on the NGEC FASC call on 4-28-21, that he also had received a call from Frances Bourne. He was asked pretty much the same questions and provided similar responses. Shayne emphasized that the NGEC is needed, that it has worked well towards the goal of revitalizing the passenger rail manufacturing and supply industry in the US, and it has been successful in achieving the objectives of developing and maintaining standardized specifications.

Shayne also emphasized that AASHTO supports the NGEC and its continuation (reauthorization) and recognizes the value it has added in cost savings and job creation.

The word is getting out, and it is a positive that the House Rail Subcommittee has reacted to the SPRC letter and language and has reached out to ask questions and gain an understanding of what the NGEC is and what value it brings. The effort will need to continue, but the NGEC is, at least, on their radar now with a raised profile.

Steve Hewitt also noted that he has distributed the letter along with the agenda for this call and encouraged states and industry members to weigh in with congressional staff as well.

Update as of 5-13-21:

Steve Hewitt reported that, since the 4-29-21 Technical subcommittee call, the issue of reauthorizing the NGEC has remained as an active effort.

The Midwest Intercity Passenger Rail Commission (MIPRC), along with others such as SPRC and AASHTO has now included the NGEC in its Principles for Federal Surface Transportation Authorization. The wording is consistent with what others have said.

Arun Rao, Chair of SPRC, is following up with the House T&I Committee to provide additional information, including a presentation given to the RSAC Passenger Safety Working Group on 5-4-21 by Ray Hessinger, NGEC Chair. The presentation will be sent out to all with the minutes from today's call. It is a concise description of the NGEC – what it is, what it does, how it is structured and what it has accomplished. This presentation along with the SPRC letter and the NGEC 2021 two-pager are all valuable tools that can/should be utilized to educate congressional staff/members on the value of the NGEC and the need to reauthorize it with funding.

SPRC is also working with staff from Senate Commerce on getting language in their version of the bill that would reauthorize the

NGEC with funding.

**3.
Approval of the Minutes from 4-1 and 4-29-21– George Hull, Amtrak:**

On a motion by Jennifer Bastian, IDOT, and a second by Marci Petterson, CtDOT, the minutes from 4-1-21 and 4-29-21 were approved as submitted.

**4.
Update: Multi-State Railcar Procurement as of 5-13-21 –Momo Tamaoki, Caltrans:**

On 5-13-21, Momo Tamaoki, Caltrans, provided the following update:

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. The FDR meeting for cab car Interiors is scheduled for May 25. FDR meetings for the Caltrans Vending Car Water/Waste system and Electrical Systems occurred in April. IDOT Café Car FDR releases are ongoing, FAIs are being planned and open items are being addressed.

The Cab Car Compression Test setup is in process in Sacramento with testing planned for July. Cab Car Collision and Corner Post testing is tentative for August in Germany. 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 is complete, and the test report has also been provided to FRA.

80 cars total are in production or have been produced at Siemens Sacramento Facility. Car deliveries are ongoing to Chicago and Beech Grove for IDOT, and Stockton for Caltrans. The initial consists for Caltrans and IDOT are being prepared for Conditional Acceptance and revenue service while open items are addressed.

**5.
Status/Discussion/Approval Process - DRAFT TSSSA Primer – George Hull:**

Steve Hewitt reported to the Chair that the DRAFT Primer had been distributed to all subcommittee members over a month ago, and that all comments were asked to be sent to George Hull with a cc to Joe Paul.

Steve has heard from a few members expressing a positive reaction to the DRAFT.

George Hull and Joe Paul did not receive any comments or suggested revisions/changes.

George opened the floor for discussion.

Hearing none, George entertained a motion to approve the DRAFT TSSSA document for submittal to the NGEC Executive Board for its review and consideration.

On a motion by Jennifer Bastian, IDOT, and a second by Marci Petterson, CtDOT, the DRAFT TSSSA document was approved to be moved out of the Technical subcommittee and on to the Executive Board for its review and ultimate consideration.

Steve Hewitt asked George Hull to plan on providing a brief overview on the next Board call (5-18-21) next week, and he agreed.

Steve will submit the DRAFT document to the NGEC Board following this call.

**6.
Update: Document Control Management as of 5-13-21- Tammy Krause:**

On 5-13-21, Tammy Krause provided the following update for inclusion in the minutes from today's (5-13-21) call:

The rewrite of the trainset specification continues. All the chapters have been reviewed. No technical changes are being made yet, just rearranged to match the other PRIIA specifications. Camren and I have identified sections that need to be added to the specifications. I will be reaching out to a few WG leaders to get their input on missing sections. There will be some new DCRs required for these sections.

Additionally, three DCRs for the single level specification were approved this week. I will be reaching out to the WGs that are working on the DCRs for the DMU and get a date for completion.

Steve Hewitt asked Tammy about the status of the DMU specification – specifically the review of the Stadler DCRs, and he asked if she had provided Larry Salci with the list of those DCRs so that he can submit a revised SOW to AASHTO for the Review Panel

Report Task Order.

Tammy stated that she has provided Larry with the list of DCRs. She also reported that she has not hear much feedback from the technical working groups that are reviewing the Stadler DCRs. She agreed to reach out to those team leaders and to set a date for submitting their comments to her.

Steve stressed the need for completing the DMU effort and the Trainset Re-formatting as well.

7.

Update: Working Group on Weight Issues as of 5-13-21 - Jeff Gordon, FRA:

Jeff Gordon was unavailable for today's call, but provided the following update read into the record by Steve Hewitt:

The NGEV Vehicle Weight Working Group held its fifth meeting on May 3. Of the 24 members, 16 were in attendance.

Items of discussion included, in part:

- *a brief presentation by Stadler on how it weighs articulated trainsets,*
- *Siemens presented information on production weight variances for its locomotives. Based on those data, it appears that the proposed $\pm 2\%$ weight tolerance for coaches (as it relates to the "production" vehicle(s)) could also be applicable to locomotives,*
- *lateral imbalance and how this might also be related to requirements in the FRA Low-Speed Wheel Climb Safety Advisory,*
- *allowable scale tolerances. The group is discussing including a reference to a relevant AREMA standard on this.*
- *how the vehicles should be configured when weighed. It appears that different criteria need to be applied to coaches and locomotives to account for required items such as DEF and fuel, and*
- *a member provided some suggested language to define the baseline "production" vehicle against which the weight tolerances would be applied.*

The next meeting of the group is on June 9 at 1pm ET.

8.

Update: Electronics on Trains Working Group – Steve Hewitt for David Brabb:

Steve Hewitt reported that he did not hear anything from David Brabb on the progress of this working group.

Steve asked Tammy Krause to check in with David and make sure he is following NGEV DCR procedures. Tammy agreed and noted that she plans to participate on the next scheduled working group call – 5-25-21.

Steve asked Tammy to provide the Technical subcommittee with an update (unless David Brabb does) on 5-27-21. Tammy agreed to do so.

9.

Update: University of Nebraska High Speed Wireless study as of 5-13-21 – Hamid Sharif-Kashani:

Hamid was unavailable for this call, but provided the following update read into the record by Steve Hewitt:

We completed our first phase of our modeling and simulations for the sub -1-GHz frequency bands for rail applications. We modeled and studied the 160 MHz band with the performance consideration focusing on the impact of signal propagation related to different rail track locations. We are in the process of verifying our simulation results based on the channelization and the availability of neighboring channels for reliable communications.

I will be happy to share our results with the group and receive any comments, suggestions, or simulate any specific application of interest for our group. Please feel free to contact me at hsharif@UNL.edu

10.

Other:

No other matters/issues were brought forth on the call.

Steve Hewitt commented that moving the TSSSA DRAFT primer out of the Technical subcommittee to the Board today was an important step towards the development and completion of a document that will prove to be of great value for those who are procuring passenger rail equipment. The Board will now have the opportunity to review and discuss the DRAFT document and to ultimately adopt it at some point in the near future.

**11.
Adjourn:**

With no other business forthcoming on today's call, George Hull adjourned the meeting at 3:23PM.

Next Tech subcommittee Call: 5-27-21– 3:00pm Eastern

Decisions and Action Items

2021 NGEC Backgrounder educational document:

The 2021 version of the NGEC two-page backgrounder/educational document has been released and is available electronically or in hard copy by request - contact Steve Hewitt at shewitt109@aol.com

Action: Use of this document as an educational tool to inform states, industry and, in particular congressional staff of the accomplishments of the NGEC and the benefits derived from its activities and products. Emphasize the need for reauthorizing the NGEC with funding in the successor to the FAST Act.

Maintaining Industry Participation List: There are approximately 200 industry participants.

There have been several updates/changes to the list that have been provided to Steve Hewitt and those changes were made. Any further updates or changes should be sent to Steve Hewitt at shewitt109@aol.com.

PRIIA Multi-State Procurement Update 5-13-21:

Multi-State Car Procurement - Caltrans (Lead State): Progress reports from the lead state will be provided on each subcommittee call.

On 5-13-21, Momo Tamaoki, Caltrans, provided the following update:

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. The FDR meeting for cab car Interiors is scheduled for May 25. FDR meetings for the Caltrans Vending Car Water/Waste system and Electrical Systems occurred in April. IDOT Café Car FDR releases are ongoing, FAIs are being planned and open items are being addressed.

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Additionally, three DCRs for the single level specification were approved this week. I will be reaching out to the WGs that are working on the DCRs for the DMU and get a date for completion.

Tammy Krause will reach out to working group team leaders re: the DMU specification revision and provide a date for submitting their comments on the Stadler proposed DCRs.

Working Group on Weight Issues as of 5-13-21:

Jeff Gordon provided the following update for inclusion in today's (5-13-21) minutes:

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

Next Update: 6-10-21

Electronics on Trains Working Group activities:

The last report Steve Hewitt received from David Brabb, provided on 4-12-21, he noted that the NGEC Electronics sub (working group) was to have its periodic meeting on 4-13-21. They are just ramping back up and will be issuing the PRIIA 305-919 DTL Hardware Spec. Rev. A. shortly.

On 5-13-21, Steve Hewitt reported that he did not hear anything from David Brabb on the progress of this working group.

Steve asked Tammy Krause to check in with David and make sure he is following NGEC DCR procedures. Tammy agreed and noted that she plans to participate on the next scheduled working group call – 5-25-21.

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I will be happy to share our results with the group and receive any comments, suggestions, or simulate any specific application of interest for our group.

For any questions, please contact Hamid Sharif at hamidSharif@UNL.edu.

Next Update: 6-10-21

Metro North Dual Mode Locomotive Procurement –4-29-21:

Following the call today, (4-29-21) Steve Hewitt received the following update from Ray Hessinger for inclusion in the minutes:

Siemens is submitting system descriptions for initial design review, focusing initially on systems which remain unchanged from the conventional Charger.

Next Update: 5-27-21

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As of 4-29-21, this procurement is in the “cone of silence” period.

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On the Intercity Passenger Rail Trainset – Siemens has been announced as the provider and has entered into negotiations with Amtrak.

CAF: Nothing new to report.

Next Update: 5-27-21

Establish process and timeline for Tech SC review of Access Board NPRM Accessibility Guidelines and compare with current NGEN Specifications

On 8-20-20, Melissa Shurland, FRA, reported that the comment period ended on 7-14-20 (after having been extended to that date) and the Access Board is now processing those comments received. Melissa stated, “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 NGEN technical subcommittee informed as the process is completed.

In January 2021 Melissa Shurland informed Steve Hewitt that there still was no update from the Access Board on this activity – it remains in a holding pattern.

Next Update: As appropriate

Developing a TSSSA spec/menu/template:

On 5-13-21, the Technical subcommittee approved the DRAFT TSSSA document for submittal to the NGEN Executive Board for its review and consideration.

Reauthorizing the NGEN in the next Federal Surface Transportation Authorization Act:

Update as of 5-13-21:

Steve Hewitt reported that, since the 4-29-21 Technical subcommittee call, the issue of reauthorizing the NGEN has remained as an active effort.

The Midwest Intercity Passenger Rail Commission (MIPRC), along with other organizations such as the States for Passenger Rail Coalition (SPRC) and AASHTO, has now included the NGEN in its Principles for Federal Surface Transportation Authorization. The wording is consistent with what others have said.

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SPRC is also working with staff from Senate Commerce on getting language in their version of the bill that would reauthorize the NGEN with funding.

Next call: 5-27-21

ATTACHMENTS



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

PRIIA Section 305 Tech Sub Committee Meeting

Web Ex video/audio information:

By Computer: <https://stephenhewitthewittconsulting.my.webex.com/meet/shewitt109>

by phone: 1-415-655-0001

Access code: 126-073-1531

5-13-21

The agenda for the meeting is below:

- | | |
|---|----------------------|
| 1. Roll Call | Steve Hewitt |
| 2. Review Action Items | Steve Hewitt |
| 3. Approve Minutes from 4-1-21 and 4-29-21 | George Hull |
| 4. Update: Multi-State Rail Car Procurement | Momo Tamaoki |
| 5. Status/Discussion/Approval Process - DRAFT TSSSA Primer | George Hull |
| 6. Update: Document Control Management | Tammy Krause |
| 7. Update: Working Group on Weight Issues | Jeff Gordon |
| 8. Update: Electronics on Trains working group | Steve Hewitt |
| 9. Update: University of Nebraska High Speed Wirelsss Study | Hamid Sharif-Kashani |
| 10. Other | All |
| 11. Review this meeting: | Steve Hewitt |

Next call – 5-27-21