



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**Federal Transit
Administration**

Headquarters

1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

SENT VIA EMAIL

September 12, 2024

Mr. Phillip Eng
General Manager
Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority
10 Park Plaza
Boston, MA 02116

Subject: Maintenance Vehicle Derailments

Dear Mr. Eng:

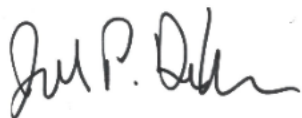
I am writing to express my concern regarding the number of maintenance vehicle derailments that have occurred at MBTA over the past calendar year. Since the start of 2024, MBTA has reported a total of 27 maintenance vehicle derailments that have occurred during the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Of these maintenance vehicle derailments, 17 involved Gradalls. The number of derailments during this initiative has surpassed the number of maintenance vehicle derailments for the previous three years combined. FTA acknowledges that MBTA's TIP has involved a much higher than usual amount of track activity and use of roadway maintenance machines. However, MBTA must ensure that this work is performed in a safe manner that does not endanger. While the FTA acknowledges that the MBTA has taken multiple steps to prevent maintenance vehicle derailments, the derailments continue to occur at a high frequency. The current Red Line surge brings added concerns for additional derailments.

The Safety of MBTA workers is of paramount importance to the FTA. I have seen a variety of actions being taken by the MBTA however my concern remains. FTA understands that MBTA submitted a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) to the Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities (DPU) August 16, 2024, to address Non-Revenue Vehicle (NRV) derailments within work zones during the Red, Green, Orange, and Blue Line surges. However, since those actions there were five additional derailments and one collision.

Safety is our top priority at FTA. While we recognize and support MBTA's goal to clear the speed restrictions and bring the tracks closer to a state of good repair MBTA must carry out this repair work in the safest manner possible. FTA fully expects that the MBTA will take any and all measures needed to ensure the safety of their employees and the operations of maintenance vehicles. Failure to do so may result in further FTA actions.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact our Safety Management Inspection Coordinator, Christian Hernandez, at christian.hernandez@dot.gov or (213) 552-3494.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joe P. DeLorenzo". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Joe" and last name "DeLorenzo" clearly distinguishable.

Joe DeLorenzo
Associate Administrator and
Chief Safety Officer
Office of Transit Safety and Oversight

cc: Peter Butler, Regional Administrator, FTA Region 1
Ryan Coholan, Chief Operating Officer, MBTA
Tim Lesniak, Chief Safety Officer, MBTA
Meredith Sandberg, Chief of Quality, Compliance, and Oversight, MBTA
Pat Lavin, Chief Safety Officer, Massachusetts Department of Transportation
Jamie Van Nostrand, Chair, Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities (DPU)
Robert Hanson, Director of Rail Transit Safety, DPU