Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority

Operations Winter Preparedness

Fiscal and Management Control Board
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Todd Johnson
Overview

• Review of Winter of 2018/2019
• Always Evolving: New Initiatives This Year
  • Infrastructure
  • Vehicles
  • Management
• Winter 2019/2020 Communications Strategy
Winter 2018/2019 Recap

- 42.4 total inches of snow (~43% fell in the month of March)
- Challenging post storm freezing conditions in the month of January and February
- First year of global snow contracting
- 14 treatment occurrences
- Pre-deployment of snow fighting equipment (Braintree, Ashmont, Forest Hills, and Mattapan)
- No full system shutdowns or closures
Always Evolving: Infrastructure

• System-wide Tree Management Program
  • Tree trimming continued Commuter Rail, Red, Orange, Green, and Blue right-of-ways
• Full adoption of the Railroad Operations Emergency Operations Center
• Preparing to address potential impacts from new railroad safety system
Always Evolving: Infrastructure

- Continued successful implementation of remote interlocking monitoring of switch heaters, third rail heaters, and trip heaters
- Weather station pilot to self-regulate heater activation
- Lessons learned from specific locations prone to commercial power outages: generator pre-deployment
Always Evolving: Vehicles

- Replacement of two snow fighters & added two Unimogs with snow attachments
- MPI locomotive fleet continues to undergo field modifications to resolve moisture intrusion
Always Evolving: Management

- Improvement efforts underway from FY19 lessons learned
- Focus to improve response to Level 1 and 2 storm events
- Increase MCC role in storm management
- Assigning one lead for E&M storm-related activities
Winter Preparedness

Always Evolving: Management

- Conducted E&M’s **first** dry run exercise to prep for the upcoming FY20 snow season
- Built a more robust digital ecosystem to search for and find responsibilities by location and to support near real time reporting
- Continue pilot work with MassDOT drone team to operationalize post-storm flights to assess if (select) MBTA facility locations are appropriately cleared for operations

Drone footage from Quincy bus garage taken during Oct 22 dry run exercise
Winter Preparedness

Always Evolving: Management

- New reduced storm schedules for Green Line
- New internal communication plan for operators during reduced schedules
- Revised Winter 2019/2020 Snow and Ice Plan
- Table Top and full system-wide winter drill planned for December 6
Public Information Strategy

**General Awareness:** the MBTA has a plan and is ready for winter

- Awareness campaign
  - Goal: give customers and other stakeholders confidence that we are prepared, familiarize commuter rail customers with reduced schedule
  - Tactics: Digital screens, social media, in-vehicle ads, mbta.com/winter update, printed commuter rail schedules, press
- T-Alerts campaign
  - Goal: get more customers signed up for T-Alerts now that we’re on a new system
  - Tactics: Digital screens, social media, printed ads

**Actionable Information:** before, during, and after storms, get customers the information that is relevant to them when they need it

- Omni-channel messaging
  - PA systems, T-Alerts, public data feed, social media, digital screens, website, in-station personnel, call center, press
  - System-wide overview on broadcast channels like website, digital screens, social media
  - Tailored to customers’ usage on push channels like T-Alerts
- Before: What service we’re planning to run during the storm
- During and after: any delays or disruptions that occur, next day’s planned service
Features for Winter 2019/2020

**Updated Winter Webpage**

- Modeled after successful curated content for visitors
- On non-storm days, the page tells customers what to expect during winter weather
- If a storm is on the way, the page becomes an overview of our service plan and impacts for that storm

**Direct Access to Digital Ad Screens**

- Will have ability to take over all content on all screens in the event of a severe emergency or system shutdown
- Can push emergency content to digital ad screens