Safety Update: Aligning Strategic Planning and Safety Initiatives

Fiscal and Management Control Board

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Lynsey Heffernan & Hope Patterson

Safety Initiatives Overview

Safety Panel Findings

34

Safety Panel Recommendations

61

- In response to the Safety Review Panel (SRP) Report, the MBTA devised a list of initiatives that address its findings.

- The safety initiatives go beyond just "checking off" the SRP recommendations.

- Although the MBTA has made significant progress in tackling many of the initiatives, several require significant organizational change, cross-departmental collaboration, or resources to implement.

- We have revamped the project structure to focus on these more difficult-to-implement initiatives and aligned the process with the MBTA's strategic objectives coming out of the Strategic Planning process.

Aligning Strategic Planning and Safety Initiatives

- **Vision:** We envision a thriving region enabled by a best-in-class transit system.

- **Mission:** We serve the public by providing safe, reliable, and accessible transportation.

- **Core Values**

  - **Safety:** We put safety at the forefront of our decision-making.

  - **Service:** We endeavor to deliver superior service, connecting people and communities.

  - **Equity:** We strive to treat all customers and employees fairly and to consult diverse voices and perspectives in decision-making.

  - **Sustainability:** We invest resources wisely in solutions for our team, our communities, and our environment.

Aligning Strategic Planning and Safety Initiatives

Strategic Initiatives from Planning Sessions:

- Communication, Collaboration & Culture
- Workforce Investments
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Safety Matrix Initiatives:

- Safety Culture
- Workforce Investments
- Infrastructure/KPIs/PMIs
- SMS Implementation & Safety Oversight
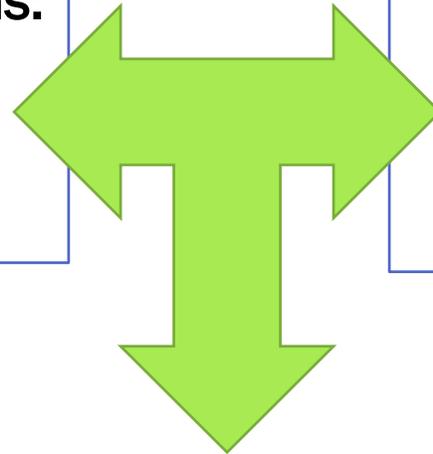
A collaborative, clear process for addressing safety issues across the MBTA allowing for transparency, discussion, and communication across and up/down departments.

Successes and Challenges

- Successes (both pre- and post-COVID onset):
  - 41% of Safety Matrix initiatives are considered complete or are being monitored for continuous improvement.
  - During COVID, collaboration and communication improved between departments *and* the workforce, focusing on essential safety needs.
- Challenges (both pre- and post-COVID onset):
  - Safety Initiatives project had a siloed and unclear reporting process.
  - Project structure did not allow for robust Executive-level feedback or cross-departmental collaboration.
  - Some initiatives were stalled with no clear path forward and no official channel for feedback or guidance.

Core Teams

- Many Safety Panel recommendations were echoed in the Strategic Planning process
- New Core Teams structure is designed to allow for new initiatives to be vetted and implemented, ultimately seeking continuous iteration and improvement for the Authority
- Core Team functions:
  - Troubleshoot impediments to progress
  - Elevate major issues/decisions to Executive Sponsors

Culture

Workforce Development

Infrastructure & KPIs

Safety Oversight & SMS Implementation

New Aligned Process

Original Number of Initiatives

165

Revised Number of Initiatives

116
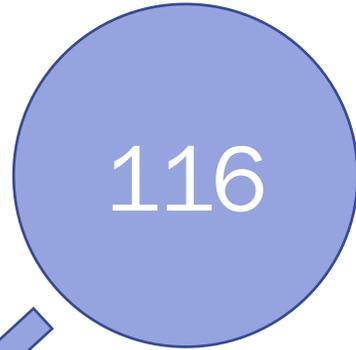
Initiatives Referred to Core Teams

70
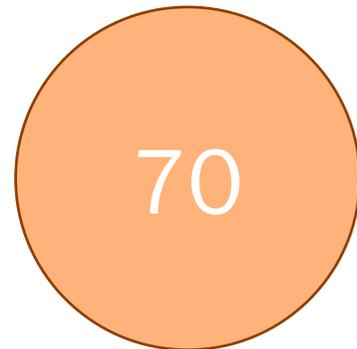
Initiatives Complete

46
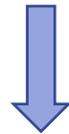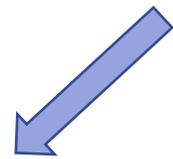
- The project management team merged and refined the original list of initiatives into 116 initiatives.

- Of those, 46 are considered complete or are being monitored for continuous improvement.

- The remaining 70 initiatives have been referred to the Core Teams to drive further progress.

Safety Initiatives Governance Structure

Executive Sponsor Team:
Ron Ester, Jeff Gonneville, Todd Johnson, Danny Levy, Jay Neider, Laurel Paget-Seekins, Dave Panagore, Steve Poftak, Nancy Prominski, Erik Stoothoff

Internal Project Management Team

Culture:
Laurel Paget-Seekins

Workforce Development:
David Panagore

Infrastructure/KPI/ PM:
Erik Stoothoff

Safety Oversight & SMS:
Nancy Prominski

Core Team Lead

Executive Sponsors

Core Team Working Groups

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Initiative Issues

- Executive Team supports for the Core teams and resolves problems which may arise in three key areas for initiative owners:

| **Collaboration** Working across many teams presents barrier to success | **Resource Constraints** Sufficient resources are required for success | **Scope Approval** A lack of scope clarity hinders success |

- Executive Team and the cross-function Core Teams meet on a monthly basis to drive the work of the initiatives.

- This structure will provide a forum for employees across different departments to voice safety concerns and tackle critical issues in a collaborative fashion.

Process Benefits

- Sustainable structure to address systemic challenges beyond the safety initiatives

- Improved cross-functional collaboration

- Silos between departments broken down

- Greater feeling of team and cohesion around a concept

- Open-mindedness to new ideas or approaches

- Improved communication - both listening and sharing with other departments

- Better organizational culture

- **Clear process for cross-functional decision-making**

Appendix

2020 Timeline

Strategic Planning

2020 Timeline
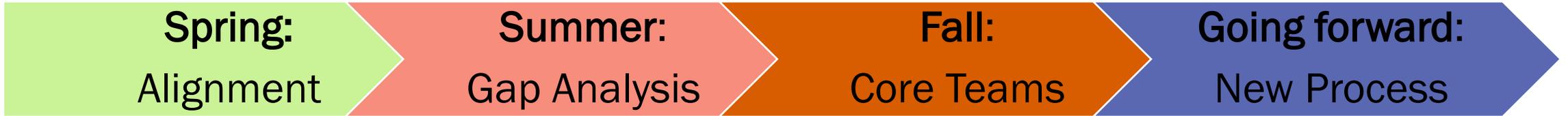
Spring: Alignment	Summer: Gap Analysis	Fall: Core Teams	Going forward: New Process
• Project managers collected updates individually from initiative owners • Tangible & task-based projects moved forward without significant oversight • However, several initiatives were stalled due to Covid-19 or lack of clear scope	• Project managers performed a gap analysis to identify procedural barriers • Initial Core meetings focused on team charters and structure • 46 initiatives have been completed or moved to monitoring stage • 70 initiatives have been funneled into the Core Teams	• Core Teams meet monthly to do deep dives into 2-4 strategic initiatives which may be stalled, stuck, or resource-dependent • Re-launch Executive Sponsors monthly meetings to make decisions based on discussions and findings from Core Teams	• Core Teams structure and meeting cadence will be evaluated for continuous improvement • Project managers will return to the FMCB in December for a one-year post-SRP progress update

Changing Culture: Why?

- A positive workplace culture attracts talent, drives employee engagement in our mission, impacts happiness, and affects performance.

- How we collaborate, communicate, and make decisions on a day-to-day basis impacts not just our riders and the public, but also our workforce and the service they deliver.

- Organizational culture contributes to a unique social and psychological environment at the MBTA.

- For the MBTA to deliver a safe, modernized, and robust transit to the region, we must focus on our workforce and improving our culture.

MBTA Culture: 2019 Safety Panel Quotes

- "The Panel also found that a current culture of blame and retaliation impede the T's ability to achieve a greater level of risk management and safety assurance. Perceived or real, employees in general do not trust their leadership and therefore, do not share with leadership what is happening in the field for fear of heavy-handed discipline."

- "The workforce does not feel supported by management and are clearly frustrated with the management's lack of responsiveness to their needs."

- "The lack of upward and downward communication within the agency is also at the core of many of the T's safety issues....there is a total lack of routine upward or downward communication within the agency."

Our Process Was Intentional

Fall 2019-Winter 2020
Engaged in facilitated deep dialogue and leadership development, focused on *how* we function

110 Senior Managers
Chosen to represent the diversity of roles at the MBTA

Working Sessions
Over 6,000 staff hours committed to aligning our efforts in improving our culture

Our Process Was Employee Led

- **Employee input** was needed and appreciated.
- **Problems** were identified and analyzed.
- **Relationships** were formed, **trust** was built, and **consensus** was achieved.

Next Steps: Continuing the Change

Internal Priorities

Workforce Investment	Communication, Collaboration, and Culture	Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Resulting Strategies

Recognize the diverse talent that we have and develop it	Improve internal communications	Invest in a more diverse, inclusive and equitable organization

Building the Foundation

- A strong organization must have a solid foundation. For the MBTA, that foundation is made up of 6,400 employees who must feel valued and supported by their employer.

- Implementing the key strategies and reforms identified will improve employee engagement.

- A more engaged and supported workforce will deliver a higher-quality service to our riders and the public.