

Speaking Notes

Ottawa, May 15, 2014

**MARC BEAULIEU, CHIEF OF TRANSPORT AND REGIONAL GENERAL MANAGER, EASTERN CANADA, VIA RAIL CANADA
TECHNICAL BRIEFING: REPORT RELEASE ON ISSUES RELATED TO AWDs AT SIX BARRHAVEN-AREA CROSSINGS
DELIVERED IN OTTAWA
CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY**

Good afternoon,

To reiterate what Yves said, ensuring that those in the community who come in contact with VIA Rail's railway crossing operations have complete confidence in their safety and reliability is of paramount importance to all of us at VIA Rail. And we understand the recent events in the Barrhaven-area may have eroded that confidence.

We know the ongoing events have raised concerns and have caused frustration. We are sincerely sorry. Our goal is to turn this around and going forward that is just what we will do.

The only way to rectify the situation and to begin rebuild the public's confidence in us is to continue to take action. While a lot of the corrective actions we took were not visible to the local community, we have been, along with our external experts, working relentlessly to address and correct the situation. We were given recommended actions by our experts, with timelines. To help alleviate the concerns we have caused, we will implement those actions ahead of the proposed timing. We want this resolved and taken care of, once and for all. We will get it done.

While the review was underway we put in place a series of measures at certain crossings in the Barrhaven-area, including Woodroffe Avenue, the OC Transpo Transitway, Fallowfield Road, Greenbank Road, Jockvale Road and Strandherd Road.

We:

1. Deployed personnel at railway crossings to provide supplementary support and maintenance to Automatic Warning Device systems, and to ensure that motorists and pedestrians stop at each crossing;
2. Reduced the speed of trains in the area;
3. Conducted maintenance, repairs and testing, over the past month; and,
4. Plan to install cameras on our property.

VIA Rail's Action plan

We recognize the occurrences have been above acceptable levels, and we remain committed to making changes that will reduce the number of occurrences.

We took the report findings, as well as the recommendations presented to us very seriously. We recognize the occurrences have been above acceptable levels, and we remain committed to making changes that will reduce the number and the impact of them on the members of the community.

VIA Rail produced an action plan in response to its experts' reports and recommendations. These actions are intended to:

1. Improve the reliability of our system and reduce fail-safe activation frequency
2. Reduce the impact of future fail-safe activations on road users, pedestrians and train operations
3. Enable the reporting of fail-safe occurrences in a much more proactive and prompt way or to reduce their duration

The following are the measures VIA Rail took, or will take, to reduce occurrences of fail-safe mode:

Completed measures

- Requested RailTerm to increase the frequency of regular inspections until the data demonstrates that they are no longer required.
- Conduct, for every occurrence of fail-safe, a detailed investigation using new wireless technologies

Short-term measures

- Instructed RailTerm to immediately conduct its 2/4/8 yearly preventive maintenance tests (in-depth reviews) over a 30 day period. Scheduled completion is for end of June 2014.

Mid-term measures

- Implementation of an Electronic Signal and Defect Tracking Management System in order to better detect trends (Q4 2014)
- Complete, by summer 2015, the construction of a new siding between Ottawa and Fallowfield stations in order to reduce occurrences of trains stopping on the main line, thus avoiding a potential false activation.
- Begin, in 2014, the "Detailed Safety Assessment" exercise at the six crossings that was originally planned for 2015.

In addition, we took, and will take, corrective measures to minimize the impact on road users and pedestrians:

- Established communication protocol between the city of Ottawa, RailTerm and VIA Rail
- Continue to have qualified personnel on standby in the area, but in closer proximity, during peak times (6 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday to Friday)
- Installation of unique remote communications equipment at the affected crossings that will serve to notify RailTerm, in real time, of any anomalies (Already in place at three crossings)
- Installation of cameras at crossings (Woordroffe, Fallowfield and OC Transitway crossings will be equipped by end of June)
- Creation of a section on VIA Rail's website in order to provide information on planned work and to educate the public on how AWDs work.

We want to assure all of you we heard your concerns, we took them seriously and we took swift action to address the issues. VIA Rail remains dedicated to ensuring that the highest level of safety is maintained

To the people who pass over our Barrhaven-area crossings on a daily basis, we want to continue the dialogue with you, and we want to be a good neighbor in your community.

Thank you.

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