



King County

**King County
Metro Transit Department
Rail Division**

Operations & Maintenance Facility
3407 Airport Way South
Seattle, WA 98134

RAIL DIRECTOR DIRECTIVE

DATE: August 3, 2020

FROM: Evan Inkster, Acting Rail Division Director

TO: All King County Rail Operations Employees

SUBJECT: Adherence to Track Access SOP 6.15

King County Metro (KCM) Rail Division Track Access process has recently encountered issues due to what we can describe as “practical drift” in the execution of Track Access procedures. There were too many exceptions made to SOP 6.15, creating many issues for our Rail personnel in their efforts to complete their assigned tasks. A team met on July 22, 2020 to discuss ways to resolve Track Access process problems. All participants agreed that there is a need to address the issue of practical drift and SOP 6.15.

Transit agencies must adhere to their procedures to support safe working conditions for staff and safe transportation for our riders. We in KCM Rail Division strive to be good partners and accommodate permit work through the Track Access process. However, these accommodations should not conflict with our adopted SOPs. These same issues that we are currently experiencing came up during initial Link extensions giving rise to the creation of SOP 6.15. The incidents of late applications and requests for emergency permits were greatly reduced when it was followed. We are seeing these issues arise again due to practical drift.

The “drift” is not limited to processing non-conforming requests, but also includes people not feeling empowered to say “no” or speak up in the field. Again, you should not make exceptions to SOPs and you have my full support to enforce SOP 6.15, including all provisions made for those in EIC or EIS roles.

I am directing KCM personnel to strictly adhere to SOP 6.15 and not grant exceptions. It is understood that exceptions may be necessary at times, but they must meet the

definition in SOP 6.15, Section 2.0, for Emergency Permits, and will require authorization from the KCM Director of Rail and Sound Transit Director-Light Rail (as was done for the initial segment and others before). This authorization will be coordinated through the Track Access staff.

For those outside of King County, please understand that this is not a change, but a reminder to follow a well-planned and proven procedure for Track Access. Requiring attentive planning and communication is not imposing anything new. Link Rail appreciates everyone's cooperation moving forward and we all look forward to our continued success as partners operating Link Light Rail.

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Signed: Evan Inkster Date: 8/3/2020
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Evan Inkster, Acting Rail Division Director