

# Memorandum

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**To:** Board of Directors

**From:** Debra A. Johnson, General Manager and CEO

**Date:** June 15, 2023

**Re: Staff Response to Inquiry Regarding Rail Crossing Signal Malfunction Near University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus**

On Wednesday, June 14, 2023, I received an email, as did Director Ruscha, from Neil Krauss, Assistant Vice Chancellor of Initiatives and Community Engagement, University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus, relative to a traffic signal malfunction at East 17th Place and North Potomac Street in Aurora. Mr. Krauss noted in his email that the malfunction was related to RTD's signaling system. He further stated the issue has become an operational, efficiency and safety concern for the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus and the City of Aurora, which has resulted in traffic congestion and backups for emergency vehicles coming to the hospitals' emergency rooms.

I then corresponded with Director Ruscha informing her that Chief Operations Officer Michael Ford would be reaching out both to her and to Mr. Krauss to apprise them of the situation.

Following a phone call on June 14, 2023, with Mr. Ford to discuss the malfunction, Director Ruscha mentioned, and later that same day sent a subsequent email regarding, a related rail crossing malfunction at 30th Avenue and Peoria Street.

This memo serves as staff's response to those questions and concerns in order to apprise other Directors who may receive similar inquiries.

## Background

Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA), is a control system architecture comprising computers, networked data communications and graphical user interfaces for high-level supervision of machines and processes, which in RTD's case is utilized for managing the rail system.

The agency recently migrated to new SCADA servers. In early June 2023, following the server migration, RTD suffered a SCADA network failure, thereby impacting certain rail crossings along the R Line alignment. In those locations, the crossing arms entered into safe mode, causing the gate crossing arms to lower and remain lowered until such time as they can be restored to automated operation.

Staff has been communicating via phone, email, and in-person meetings with City of Aurora and Anschutz Medical Campus representatives to keep them informed regarding the status of the crossing restoration. Communications and Engagement personnel have been coordinating media relations with City of Aurora staff, and Chief Communications and Engagement Officer Stuart Summers and Government Relations Officer Michael Davies have



been regularly sharing information directly with their respective counterparts at the City of Aurora. RTD has issued service alerts, sent news releases, and posted on social media about the current situation. Additionally, Customer Care employees have been apprised and have been addressing customer concerns.

### **Current Status**

At this time, two rail crossings near the Anschutz Medical Campus remain in safe mode, whereas the remaining crossings have been restored to normal automated operation, including the crossing at 30th Avenue and Peoria Street noted in Director Ruscha's second email. SCADA and Maintenance of Way (MOW) staff have been working diligently to restore both remaining crossings to normal operations.

In the meantime, flaggers have been placed at those crossings, and the gate crossing arms in those locations have been secured in an upward position, thereby allowing vehicle traffic to proceed through the intersections. This temporary solution requires that the traffic signals remain in four-way red signal flash mode, thereby causing significant traffic congestion, as vehicles must proceed through the intersections one at a time after coming to a complete stop.

### **Next Steps**

Staff is currently working with external experts to restore full functionality to the crossings, although there is no concrete timeline for completion of the required repairs.

To provide temporary relief to the traffic congestion caused by the four-way red traffic signals, the agency will suspend service to the 13th Avenue Station and not operate through the 17th Avenue and 17th Place crossings. Doing so will allow the traffic signals to return to normal operation, thereby restoring the flow of automobile traffic at those locations, while staff works to correct the SCADA malfunction.

Bus bridge service will commence at the start of revenue service the morning of Friday, June 16, 2023. The service will cover a distance of approximately three miles, from 13th Avenue Station to Peoria Station, and will include service to the Colfax and Fitzsimons stations, both of which serve only the R Line.

Mr. Ford has reached out to Mr. Krauss to apprise him of the steps being taken to mitigate the crossing/signal malfunctions.

Should you have any other questions or should you receive any customer or constituent inquiries on this matter, please feel free to contact me directly.

Thank you.