

MBTA South Coast Rail train arrives in New Bedford for emergency first responder training

After years of doubt and speculation, New Bedford residents finally saw the MBTA South Coast Rail train in New Bedford this past weekend.

On Sunday, November 19, 2023, at approximately 10 AM, the MBTA conducted an emergency evacuation training drill in the area of the Whale's Tooth parking lot in New Bedford as part of safety training in support of the start of South Coast Rail passenger service.

The drill was a learning exercise that included a scenario in which a train traveling along this section of track unexpectedly experiences an incident. Several passengers are injured, and others must evacuate the train. This exercise was designed to establish a learning environment for public safety officials to exercise emergency response plans, policies, and procedures as they pertain to a mass casualty event on a Commuter Rail train. First responders received hands-on Commuter Rail equipment familiarization training. To ensure an effective exercise, subject matter experts and representatives from numerous agencies took part in the planning process and the exercise conduct and evaluation.

Agencies that participated in this joint exercise included the MBTA, MassDOT, Keolis Commuter Services, MBTA Transit Police, Mass Coastal Railroad, AECOM, the Federal Railroad Administration, and first responders from New Bedford, Dartmouth, Acushnet, Fairhaven, Norton, Freetown, Mattapoisett, Taunton, and Raynham. The exercise was developed

and led by K&J Safety and Security Consulting Services, Inc.

We were at the scene getting photographs and video which you can see below.