

<b>POLICY</b>  <b>USE OF PERSONAL ELECTRONIC DEVICES BY BUS AND LIGHT RAIL EMPLOYEES AND CONTRACTOR STAFF (ATU)</b>	<b>Document Number:</b>	OPS-PL-0001
	<b>Version Number:</b>	03
	<b>Date:</b>	12/20/2016

**1.0 Purpose:**

To establish the standards and restrictions for use of Personal Electronic Devices (PEDs).

**2.0 Scope:**

This policy applies to all VTA employees, contractors or their staff (hereafter collectively referred to as "Personnel"), who:

- Operate a VTA bus or Light Rail Vehicle (LRV);
- Operate hi-rail or any other on-track equipment;
- Act as Rail Controllers, flaggers, or the Employee In Charge (EIC) or otherwise control the movement of rail vehicles;
- Perform any task while Fouling the Tracks; and/or
- Perform work within the Safety Envelope.

Note: Electronic devices prescribed by a licensed medical practitioner to permit an employee to meet minimum levels as required by VTA or by a contractor performing work on VTA property, are exempt. Roadway Worker Protection Devices provided by VTA are also exempt.

**3.0 Responsibilities:**

All Personnel are responsible for the safe delivery of transportation services. All Personnel who operate vehicles in revenue service or operate hi-rail vehicles or other on-track equipment; or who control the movement of rail vehicles or perform work on the right of way will receive a copy of this Policy, and be responsible for strict adherence to this Policy and State and Federal regulations.

**4.0 Policy:**

It is VTA policy that all VTA-owned revenue service vehicles, or any hi-rail vehicles and on-track equipment operated on the VTA rail system, will be operated in a safe and responsible manner. Personnel who operate a VTA bus or LRV or control the movement of rail vehicles, or perform work on the right of way or Foul the Tracks in the performance of their duties are responsible for the safety of the passengers and the public at large. Personnel are prohibited from using cellular telephones or any other PEDs (as defined in section 5) while operating VTA buses, LRVs, hi-rail or other on track equipment.

**4.1 Restrictions and Storage:**



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4.1.1 For Personnel operating a VTA bus or LRV, the restrictions include, but are not limited to: making or receiving telephone calls, text messaging, checking e-mail messages, checking the time, using the clock feature of a cell phone, wearing a Fitbit or other fitness monitoring device, wearing a smart watch (e.g., Apple Watch, Samsung Gear, etc.) or similar watch, reading, playing games or listening to music or other audio. Personnel are prohibited from giving the PED to another person, including another employee, on the bus or LRV.

In an emergency, Personnel must proceed to a safe area and stop the bus, LRV, hi-rail vehicle, or on-track equipment, and vacate the operating area. Afterwards, Personnel may use a PED for the purposes of addressing the emergency.

All PEDs shall be Turned Off and Stowed Away while operating a bus or LRV, or while sitting in the Operator's Area, as defined in Section 5. The bag that the PED is stowed away in must conceal the device so that it is not visible without opening the bag.

PEDs may be used by bus and light rail Operators while on break or at a layover when the vehicle is safely stopped and the Operator is out of the Operator's Area. The PED must remain Turned Off and Stowed Away until the Operator has cleared the Operator's Area and must be Turned Off and Stowed Away prior to returning to the Operator Area.

4.1.2 For Personnel operating hi-rail or on-track equipment, the restrictions include, but are not limited to, making or receiving telephone calls, text messaging, checking e-mail messages, checking the time, using any feature of a cell phone, wearing a Fitbit or other fitness monitoring device, wearing a smart watch or similar watch, reading, playing games or listening to music or other audio.

PEDs shall be Turned Off and Stowed Away while operating a hi-rail vehicle or on-track equipment. Personnel operating a hi-rail vehicle or on-track equipment, who wish to use their PEDs while on break, must move their hi-rail or on track equipment off of the right of way to a location that is not Fouling the Tracks. Prior to retrieving and turning on their PED for use, Personnel must stop, shut off the engine, and clear the Operator's Area. The PED must be Turned Off and Stowed Away prior to returning to the Operator's Area or restarting the engine.

Use of cell phone communication is allowed to safely direct the movement of pushing a dead-car train only when no other means of communication is available and prior approval has been obtained from the Operations Control Center.

Personnel who are directing, flagging, or otherwise controlling the movement of rail transit vehicles, or performing any task while Fouling the Tracks may keep the PED in their possession and powered on but must proceed to a safe area outside



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the Safety Envelope (minimum 6 feet from the nearest light rail) to use their PED. Rail Controllers in the Operations Control Center must unplug and step away from their console before using their PED.

**4.2 Discipline:**

Failure to adhere to this Policy may constitute a serious safety violation. Violations of this policy will be considered an instance (adverse entry) under the unsatisfactory record portion of Part A, Section 18.2 of the ATU Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) and will be subject to a two-year record review.

VTA employees who violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary action as listed below subject to the underlying circumstances and the individual employee. Talking on a PED, texting, playing video games or other violations that distract the Operator and pose the greatest risk will result in the highest levels of discipline.

Repeat violations of any portion of this Policy is considered a serious matter. The applicable sequence of the offenses (first, second, and third) is based on violations of any portion of this Policy. For example, if an employee violates Section 4.2.5 and six months later violates Section 4.2.2, the second violation will be considered a “Second Offense” and will be issued the corresponding discipline of termination. All “days” referenced in the box below are continuous calendar days of unpaid suspension.

	<b>VIOLATION</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Offense</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Offense</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Offense</b>
4.2.1	Any violation of this policy where the employee is involved in an accident (preventable or non-preventable).	Termination		
4.2.2	Use of PED while operating a bus, LRV, hi-rail vehicle or on-track equipment.	20 – 30 days	Termination	
4.2.3	Use of PED in the Operator’s Area, but not while operating a bus or LRV.	10 – 20 days	20 – 30 days	Termination
4.2.4	Use of PED while directing, flagging, acting as the EIC, or otherwise controlling the movement of rail transit vehicles, or performing any task while Fouling the Tracks.	10 – 20 days	20 – 30 days	Termination
4.2.5	Failure to Turn Off and properly Stow Away PED while operating a bus or LRV, or while in the Operator’s Area.	Up to 10 days	10 – 30 days	Termination



Santa Clara Valley  
Transportation  
Authority

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4.2.6 Any contractor staff violating this Policy will be removed from the job and will not be allowed to return to the project. The contractor may be made responsible for any fines levied on VTA for the violation. Repeat violations from the same contractor's staff may result in the contract being cancelled.

**5.0 Definitions:**

5.2 Fouling the Track: The placement of an individual in such proximity to a track that the individual could be struck by a moving train or other on-track equipment, or is within six feet of the nearest rail.

5.3 Operator: bus and Light Rail Vehicle Operators, hi-rail and on-track equipment operators, service workers, mechanics, and any other authorized VTA employee or contractor and their staff.

5.4 Operator's Area: On VTA buses, this area is defined as all area forward of the yellow line and expressly includes the Operator's seat. On Light Rail Vehicles, this is the area inside the Operator's cab and expressly includes the Operator's seat. On hi-rail or on-track equipment, this is the area where the Operator is positioned during operation of the vehicle or equipment.

5.5 Personal Electronic Device or PED: means any wireless or portable electronic device. This includes, but is not limited to, wireless phones, personal digital assistants, smart phones, two way pagers, portable internet devices, laptop computers, DVD players, iPods, MP3 players, smart watches, Fitbits or other personal fitness monitors, games, Bluetooth devices, or any headphones or ear buds of any type. The following devices are excluded from this definition:

5.5.6 VTA-owned licensed radio communications equipment such as cab-mounted or portable two-way radios with channels dedicated solely for VTA operations.

5.5.7 Electronic or electrical devices prescribed by a licensed medical practitioner to permit an employee to meet minimum levels as required by the VTA or contractor.

5.5.8 Roadway worker protection devices.

5.6 Rail Controllers: Individuals tasked with flagging or otherwise controlling the movement of rail transit vehicles. Tasks include "dispatching" as described in California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) General Order 172 (Rules and Regulations Governing the Use of Personal Electronic Devices by Employees of Rail Transit Agencies and Rail Fixed Guideway Systems).



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- 5.7 Safety Envelope: The area within six feet of the closest rail on light rail tracks or within ten feet of the overhead catenary.
- 5.8 Stowed Away: Not on one's person; must be completely concealed, so that it is not visible, in a backpack or bag and out of reach.
- 5.9 Turned Off: The power is off.


**6.0 Summary of Changes:**

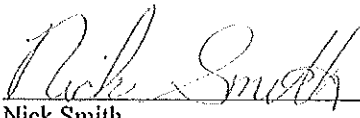
Policy title changed. Policy updated to accurately reflect Safety Envelope. Greater clarity on discipline levels for different infractions were provided. Contractor language was added to provide policy on violations by contractors and their staff. Policy now allows for the use of cell phones when dead pulling a train when no other means of communications is available, with prior Operations Control Center approval.

**7.0 Approval Information:**

<i>Prepared by</i>	<i>Reviewed by</i>	<i>Approved by</i>
 George Sandoval Operations Manager-LR Mtc.	 Inez Evans Chief Operating Officer	 For: Nuria I. Fernández General Manager/CEO

Concurrence by Amalgamated Transit Union, Local 265:

  
 Diana Hermone  
 President & Business Agent, ATU

  
 Nick Smith  
 Asst. Business Agent - Maintenance

Date Approved: 12-20-2016



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