





Agency Safety Plan Lessons Learned

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) provides this lessons learned document to assist public transportation providers with considerations for meeting the requirements in 49 CFR Part 673. This document is not legally binding in its own right and will not be relied upon by the FTA as a separate basis for affirmative enforcement action or other administrative penalty. Compliance with the guidance in this document (as distinct from existing statutes and regulations) is voluntary only, and noncompliance will not affect rights and obligations under existing statutes and regulations.







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Agency Safety Plan Lessons Learned

FTA's Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP) Technical Assistance Center (TAC) provides voluntary reviews of draft Agency Safety Plans (ASPs) to help the transit industry meet the PTASP regulation (49 CFR Part 673 (Part 673)) requirements. This document shares lessons learned from ASP reviews conducted to date by the TAC that applicable agencies and States can consider when drafting or reviewing their ASPs.

This document is designed to supplement FTA's <u>PTASP Template for Bus Transit</u>, and PTASP Template for <u>Bus Transit Reference Tool</u>. This document provides practical considerations for States and public transportation providers as they develop their ASPs. These lessons are **voluntary**; States and transit providers are under no obligation to review or use them to support ASP development. **While most lessons focus on addressing minimum requirements in Part 673, lessons that begin with the word "consider" may exceed minimum requirements.**

General Considerations

The ASP must document the **processes and activities** related to Safety Management System (SMS) implementation (§673.11(a)(2)). The TAC found that some submitted draft ASPs did not provide substantial detail about the actions or steps the agency will take to carry out specific requirements for the four SMS components: Safety Management Policy (SMP) (§673.23), Safety Risk Management (SRM) (§673.25), Safety Assurance (§673.27), and Safety Promotion (§673.29).

To address this concern, this document provides considerations to help States and transit agencies describe these processes and activities with defined steps, actions, timelines, and documentation.



Safety Management System Components

In general, States or transit agencies developing or reviewing ASPs may want to ensure that the ASP does the following:

- Uses or addresses key terms as defined in the PTASP regulation,
- Specifies methods or processes to address requirements,
- Includes relevant authorities, accountabilities, and responsibilities, and
- Addresses documentation requirements.





States or transit agencies developing or reviewing ASPs may consider whether the ASP describes how the agency links the activities and processes among each element of the ASP and how the agency scopes and prioritizes these activities to ensure the methods and processes described are feasible.

States or transit agencies could ask the following questions to help formulate a more explicit description for how an agency will conduct safety management:

- What specifically will the agency do?
- Who will do it?
- How will the agency do this (e.g., what is the process, including steps in the process and actions)?
- What is the timeline?
- Where will the agency record the process and store related data or information?

When reviewing plans for completeness, States and transit agencies also are encouraged to use FTA's PTASP Checklist for Bus Transit.

To schedule an ASP review with the TAC, please email the TAC at PTASP-TAC@dot.gov.







1. Transit Agency Information

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Transit agency name and address.	 Agencies that provide transit service under another name may choose to provide both the agency name and the "doing business as" name. For example, "City of Madison Heights, doing business as 'Go Transit." Agencies whose National Transit Database (NTD) reporting name differs from either their agency name or "doing business as" name may choose to include their NTD reporting name.
Name and title of the Accountable Executive.	 The Accountable Executive must meet the requirements specified in §673.5 and §673.23(d)(1) – see Section 4 below. The Accountable Executive is also responsible for carrying out the agency's Transit Asset Management (TAM) Plan. A State that drafts a plan on behalf of another recipient or subrecipient is not the Accountable Executive.
 Name and title of the Chief Safety Officer (CSO) or SMS Executive. 	 The CSO/SMS Executive must meet the requirements specified in §673.5 and §673.23(d)(2) – see Section 4 below. A State that drafts a plan on behalf of another recipient or subrecipient cannot be listed as the CSO/SMS Executive.
Mode(s) of service covered in the Agency Safety Plan (ASP).	 One ASP may be prepared for each mode operated by a transit provider, for a combination of modes, or for all modes. For example, a transit agency could develop one ASP for its rail transit service and another ASP for its bus and demand







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 Mode of service provided by the transit agency (directly operated or contracted service). response modes. This same agency could instead develop one ASP to cover its rail, bus, and demand response modes.

- The NTD defines modes of transit service. See the <u>NTD</u> Reporting Policy Manual for more information.
- Modes of transit service may be "rolled up" to a higher level.
 - For example, an agency could categorize its bus, commuter bus, and bus rapid transit services as "Fixed-Route Bus" and could categorize its demand response and demand response taxi services as "Demand Response." The same agency could also list each service separately.
 - For example, an agency could "roll up" its rail transit service into a single "Rail Transit" mode, or break it down into light rail, heavy rail, streetcar, and cable car modes.
- Clarify whether modes of transit service are directly operated,
 e.g., provided directly by a transit agency and using their own
 employees to supply the necessary labor to operate the
 revenue vehicles, or if they are purchased transportation, e.g.,
 service provided to a public transit agency or governmental unit
 from a public or private transportation provider based on a
 contract or other agreement.







- FTA funding types.
 Common FTA funding types that agencies may use include the following:

 Urbanized Area Formula Grants Section 5307 (most common for agencies required to implement an ASP)
 Metropolitan & Statewide Planning and Nonmetropolitan Transportation Planning Section 5303, Section 5304, and Section 5305
 Capital Investment Grants Section 5309
 Enhanced Mobility of Seniors & Individuals with Disabilities Section 5310
 Formula Grants for Rural Areas Section 5311
 State of Good Repair Grants Section 5337
 Formula Grants for Buses and Bus Facilities Formula Program Section 5339
 - List and description of transit services the agency provides on behalf of any other agency or entity, if applicable.
- Only include information for this item if the transit agency provides transit service for another agency, including other transit agencies, social service agencies, etc.
 - For example, a community transportation system that provides paratransit service for an agency with fixed-route bus service in the same community.







- PTASP Template for Bus Transit
- PTASP Template for Bus Transit Reference Tool
- PTASP Checklist for Bus Transit
- 2019 PTASP Bus Workshop Participant Guide
- Sample ASP Development Timeline for Bus Transit Providers







2. Plan Development, Approval, and Updates

Template Contents	Lessons Learned
Name of entity that drafted the ASP.	 Indicate if a State Department of Transportation, transit provider, operations or administration contractors, or other entity drafted the ASP.
Accountable Executive's signature and date of signature.	Include the name, title, and date, along with the signature.
Approval by the Board of Directors or equivalent authority.	 If signed by the Board Chairperson or an equivalent position, include the name, title, and date, along with the signature. If approval is recorded in another document, such as a resolution, memorandum, or meeting minutes, identify where the document is located. For example, note that it is maintained on file by the CSO/SMS Executive, or provide a hyperlink to the approval, if it is publicly available.
Certification of compliance.	 To be completed by a State Department of Transportation on behalf of a small public transportation provider. Include the name of the State agency that certified the ASP, the name and title of the individual that certified the ASP, the date of certification, and any relevant documentation.
Revision history.	 Establish the initial ASP version number, such as Version 1, and provide the date of issuance.
Annual review and update of the ASP.	Identify an ASP review and update process and timeline.







- Specify the process and timeline for the Board of Directors or Equivalent Authority to review and approve the ASP.
 - For example, an agency may explain that the CSO and Assistant Director of Operations will jointly review and update the ASP by June 1 of each year. The CSO and Assistant Director of Operations will then present the updated ASP to the Accountable Executive for review and approval. The Accountable Executive will approve and then forward to the County Commission for approval by July 15.
- Consider including a process for interim revisions to document how the agency would handle ASP updates in between annual review cycles.

- Sample ASP Development Timeline for State Departments of Transportation
- Key Points for Developing ASPs for Recipients with Contractors or Other External Service Providers Fact Sheet







3. Safety Performance Targets

- Targets by mode for total reportable¹:
 - Fatalities, injuries, and safety events;
 - Target rates for reportable fatalities, injuries, and safety events per vehicle revenue miles; and
 - Target mean distance between major mechanical failures in vehicle revenue miles.
- Include seven total safety performance targets per transit mode: the total numbers and rates per vehicle revenue miles for safety events, injuries, and fatalities, and the mean distance between major mechanical failures.
- Identify the time frame and rates for performance targets.
 - For example, the safety performance targets will be evaluated over a fiscal year period with a baseline year of Fiscal Year 2021 (7/1/2020 –6/30/2021).
 - For example, rates for safety performance targets are calculated per 100,000 vehicle revenue miles.
- Consider describing how the agency set its targets.
 - For example, the agency established the total numbers and rates used for its safety performance targets based on an average of its safety performance data over the last three years.
- Consider describing the process for routinely reviewing these targets to ensure they are still suitable and assess how effective the agency's activities are in meeting the targets.

¹ "Reportable" fatalities, injuries, and events are defined in the NTD Safety and Security Policy Manual. For purposes of these safety performance measures, FTA excludes suicides and trespassing-related fatalities, and injuries resulting from assaults and other crimes. For the safety events performance measure, FTA uses the NTD major event threshold and excludes non-safety (security) events. The exclusion of security-related injuries is consistent with FTA's 49 CFR Part 674 Two-Hour Accident Notification Guide. Note that although Part 674 applies only to rail transit agencies, FTA excludes security events for safety performance measures for all agencies, including both those that operate and those that do not operate rail transit.







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- Make safety performance targets available to the State and relevant Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs).
- Explain how the agency makes its safety performance targets available to the State and MPO.
 - For example, the agency officially transmits its targets in writing to the State and MPO by July 15 of each year.
- Acknowledgement of the requirement to coordinate with the State and MPOs on the selection of State and MPO performance targets to the maximum extent practicable.
- Document that the agency will coordinate with the State and MPO to support the selection of State and MPO transit safety performance targets to the maximum extent practicable.
- Consider describing any existing planning relationship or agreement(s) with the State and MPOs.
- Consider describing the process the agency uses to coordinate with the State and MPOs on the selection of State and MPO performance targets to the maximum extent practicable.

- Safety Performance Targets Guide
- FTA's National Public Transportation Safety Plan







4. Safety Management Policy Statement

Template Contents	Lessons Learned	
 Safety Management Policy Statement or Statement incorporated by reference. 	 Review the sample SMP Statements developed by FTA to see a number of examples (see resources below). Consider providing a hyperlink to the full Statement if the agency posts it to an agency intranet or website. 	
 Description of the method(s) the agency uses to communicate the SMP to the entire agency. 	 Describe how the agency communicates the safety management policy throughout the agency. Include dates where applicable. For example, through all-staff meetings held monthly, bulletin boards refreshed monthly, safety bulletins distributed quarterly, annual refresher training, etc. 	
Safety objectives.	 Include safety objectives in the ASP if they are not included in the SMP Statement. 	
 Description of the authorities, accountabilities, and responsibilities the agency assigns for SMS development and management to the Accountable Executive, CSO/SMS Executive, agency leadership and executive management, and key staff. 	 Specify that the Accountable Executive is ultimately responsible for the following: Carrying out the ASP and the TAM Plan, Controlling or directing the human and capital resources needed to develop and maintain the ASP and TAM Plan, and Ensuring that the agency's SMS is effectively implemented, and action is taken, as necessary, to address substandard performance in the agency's SMS. 	







- Clarify that the CSO/SMS Executive has a direct line of reporting to the Accountable Executive and consider including an organization chart to demonstrate that line of reporting.
- Clarify that the CSO/SMS Executive is an adequately trained individual and consider defining "adequately trained."
- Remember that while the CSO/SMS Executive has the authority and responsibility for day-to-day implementation and operation of an agency's SMS, Agency Leadership and Executive Management play an important role in making sure their departments implement and support SMS activities.
- Consider defining "key staff" by job title or position and include committees or teams that may support the SMS.
- Consider describing necessary authorities, accountabilities, and responsibilities for all other agency employees and contractors to carry out the ASP.
- Consider describing any relevant delegated authorities and responsibilities, keeping in mind that the Accountable Executive cannot delegate ultimate accountability for the agency's safety performance.
- Description of the Employee Safety Reporting Program (ESRP), including:
 - Protections for employees who report safety conditions to senior management.
 - Actions (if any) that may not be covered under those protections and may result in disciplinary action.

- Identify the entity or entities responsible for the ESRP.
 - For example, explain the role of the CSO/SMS Executive in managing the process and the agency's Safety Committee in reviewing employee reports.
- Describe, or reference a procedure that describes, how employees report safety conditions.







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 Method(s) the agency uses to inform employees of safety actions taken in response to ESRP reports.

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- For example, using a safety hotline or email address, or a locked box in the employee breakroom.
- Identify protections provided to employees who report safety conditions.
 - Consider referencing existing employee manuals, procedures, or whistleblower protection policies.
- Identify employee behaviors that are not protected under the ESRP and that may result in disciplinary action.
 - Consider referencing existing employee manuals or rulebooks.
- Describe how the agency reviews, analyzes, and tracks employee reports received through the ESRP.
- Consider providing examples of the types of information that the agency would like employees to report.
- Consider explaining how existing processes support the ESRP, if applicable.
- Consider describing how the agency will integrate this ESRP data and information in other relevant SMS processes, such as Safety Risk Management, and how the agency will maintain the data and information for three years.







- Guide to Developing the Safety Management Policy Component of a Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan
- Developing the Safety Management Policy Statement
- CSO/SMS Executive Fact Sheet
- The Role of the CSO in Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP) Implementation
- Safety Management Policy and Safety Promotion Webinar (May 2019)
- Employee Safety Reporting Program Webinar (July 2019)







5. Safety Risk Management

- Description of the agency's SRM process, including safety hazard identification, safety risk assessment, and safety risk mitigation.
- Apply SRM terminology as defined in the PTASP regulation.
- Consider including or referencing definitions for key terms provided in §673.5 and, if using alternative terms or definitions, consider clearly explaining the link to PTASP terms.
- Specify that the described SRM processes apply to all elements of the transit system.
- Describe the methods or processes the agency uses in each step as well as the responsible party(ies) for each step of the SRM process.
- Describe how the agency documents each step of the SRM process, how the agency analyzes the information gathered in SRM, and how the agency uses information gathered and analyzed in SRM in the agency's overall SMS.
- Description of the main sources the agency uses to identify hazards and consequences, including considering FTA and other oversight authority information.
- Describe the methods or processes used to identify hazards and consequences of hazards, and note the relevant authorities, accountabilities, and responsibilities of key positions.
- Consider referencing a separate document with details on methods and processes and/or consider describing how the agency carries out hazard identification.
 - For example, identify responsible parties, describe data management, describe identification frequency, and describe key outputs.
- Include FTA and other oversight authorities as a source of hazard information.



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Template Contents	Lessons Learned
	 Consider specifying that employees, contractors, and the public may also be sources of hazard information.
	 Consider describing the protocols the agency uses to immediately address hazards that pose an imminent threat to the safety of persons or property.
	 Consider describing how the agency will select or prioritize hazards and potential consequences to undergo safety risk assessment.
Description of the agency's safety risk assessment process.	 Describe how the agency assesses likelihood and severity of the consequences of hazards, including existing mitigations, when applicable. Note the relevant authorities, accountabilities, and responsibilities of key positions.
	 Describe how the agency prioritizes hazards based on the safety risk of their potential consequences.
	 Consider establishing or adopting a safety risk matrix to help assess likelihood and severity and describe how the matrix is used to assess safety risk. (See examples below.)
	 Consider describing how the agency accesses subject matter expertise when assessing certain hazards.
	 For example, the CSO/SMS Executive requests subject matter experts, and the relevant department head must provide access to experts such as mechanics, engineers, operations supervisors, etc., to assist the agency in assessing related hazards.
	 Consider describing the risk levels that result from the safety risk assessment process adopted by the agency, such as "unacceptable," "undesirable," and "acceptable."







- Consider describing the specific actions that must be taken to address each risk level in the agency's process.
 - For example, "unacceptable requires action," "undesirable requires management approval," "acceptable requires safety department review,' and "acceptable no review required."

- Description of the agency's safety risk mitigation process.
- Describe the methods or processes used to identify mitigations, or the strategies that are necessary to reduce the likelihood and severity of the consequences as a result of the safety risk assessment.
- Consider clarifying that the agency can reduce safety risk by reducing likelihood and/or severity, but that a single safety risk mitigation does not have to address both.
- Consider establishing or adopting a safety risk reduction order of precedence.
- Consider describing the methods or processes the agency uses to track and authorize mitigations and relevant authorities, accountabilities, and responsibilities for key positions.
- Consider describing who "owns" the safety risk mitigation.
 - For example, does the safety department implement and track all mitigations or is the responsibility assigned to a department that will be involved in implementing and/or monitoring the mitigation?
- Consider describing how the agency prepares for and makes decisions regarding mitigation monitoring activities required under Safety Assurance.





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Template Contents	Lessons Learned
	 For example, consider describing how the outputs of safety risk mitigation activities become inputs for mitigation monitoring activities required under Safety Assurance.
	 Consider describing how the agency ensures safety risk mitigations are appropriate for the circumstances and do not introduce new safety hazards.

- Sample List of Documented SRM and Safety Assurance Process Elements
- Guide to Developing the SRM Component of a PTASP
- Sample Hazard Classification System
- Hazard Management vs. Safety Risk Management Guide
- Potential Sources of Hazard Information for Bus Transit Operations
- Sample Safety Risk Assessment Matrices for Bus Transit Agencies
- Sample Safety Risk Register for Bus Transit Agencies
- Guide to the Sample Safety Risk Register for Bus Transit Agencies
- Hazards and Consequences Self-Guided Learning Tool
- Safety Risk Management Webinar (June 2019)







6. Safety Assurance

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- Description of the agency's Safety Assurance process, including Safety Performance Monitoring and Measurement, Management of Change (if applicable), and Continuous Improvement (if applicable).
- Describe the activities the agency performs to develop and implement its Safety Assurance process.
- Clarify whether the agency implements a management of change process or a continuous improvement process.
- Consider explaining that safety performance monitoring and measurement activities focus on current agency processes and procedures for rules compliance and safety event investigations.
- Consider describing the accountabilities, authorities, and responsibilities for each Safety Assurance activity.
- Description of the agency's activities to ensure compliance with and sufficiency of operations and maintenance procedures.
- Describe the activities to ensure compliance with operations and maintenance procedures.
 - For example, rules compliance programs, internal audits, records reviews, observations, "ride-alongs," etc.
- Describe the activities to ensure sufficiency of operations and maintenance procedures.
- Consider describing the scope, or focus and level of effort, of these activities.
- Consider describing how the agency acts on issues identified during these activities.
- Description of the agency's activities to monitor safety risk mitigations to ensure they work as intended.
- Describe how the agency monitors operations to identify safety risk mitigations that may be ineffective, inappropriate, or not implemented as intended.







- Consider describing the inputs the agency uses to monitor safety risk mitigations.
- Consider describing the threshold(s) the agency uses to determine whether to act on a safety risk mitigation that is not implemented or performing as intended.
- Consider describing how the agency responds to ineffective safety risk mitigations.
 - For example, reanalyzing the hazard(s) or consequences the mitigation was intended to address through Safety Risk Management.
- Consider describing how the agency responds to inappropriate safety risk mitigations, such as identifying new mitigations.
- Consider describing how the agency responds to safety risk mitigations that are not implemented as intended.
 - o For example, identifying alternative mitigation approaches.
- Description of the agency's safety event investigation process, including how the agency identifies causal factors.
- Define what the agency investigates and ensure, at a minimum, that the agency's approach includes accidents, incidents, and occurrences as defined in §673.5.
- Describe the agency's investigation process, including how the agency identifies causal factors.
- Consider referencing existing procedures, policies, or handbooks, if available.
- If establishing that the "preventability" of the safety event is part of the investigation process, consider explaining the role that causal factors play in this determination.



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Template Contents	Lessons Learned
	 Consider listing or describing specific categories of causal factors that the agency reviews or considers as part of its investigation process. Consider describing how the agency addresses hazards identified in investigations through the SRM process. Consider describing the agency's training requirements for individuals who investigate events.
Description of the agency's activities to monitor information reported through any internal safety programs.	 Describe the agency's activities to monitor information reported through internal safety programs. List or describe the agency's internal safety programs, including the Employee Safety Reporting Program. Consider a range of internal safety reporting programs, such as Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) reporting, results of internal reviews and assessments, outputs from data systems that track safety performance information, etc. Consider describing how the agency collects, analyzes, and assesses information reported over time.
• Description of the agency's management of change process. ²	 Specify that the management of change process applies to all elements of the transit system. Describe how the agency will identify changes that may introduce new hazards or impact safety performance.

² Agencies designated as "small public transportation providers," or those non-rail providers whose vehicles operated in maximum service is 100 or fewer across all fixed route modes and 100 or fewer for any one non-fixed route modes, are not required to implement management of change or continuous improvement processes.





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Template Contents Lessons Learned o For example, describe the sources of information that will be used to identify these changes, the steps and timelines associated with this process, and the roles and responsibilities of those involved. Consider describing how the agency currently identifies and manages changes throughout the entire agency, such as organization, budget, resources, operating environment, technology, equipment, policies/procedures, capital projects, etc. Describe the agency's process for determining that a change may impact its safety performance. • Consider identifying the position or qualifications of the person responsible for determining whether a change will affect safety risk and whether the change in safety risk is acceptable. Explain how the agency will ensure that the proposed changes that may impact safety performance are evaluated through its Safety Risk Management process. Describe how the agency documents its management of change process, including the results of that process. Description of the agency's continuous improvement process.3 Describe the agency's continuous improvement process, including the steps the agency will take to assess its safety performance.

³ Agencies designated as "small public transportation providers," or those non-rail providers whose vehicles operated in maximum service is 100 or fewer across all fixed route modes and 100 or fewer for any one non-fixed route modes, are not required to implement management of change or continuous improvement processes.







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- Explain how safety deficiencies will be identified during safety performance assessment, and how plans will be developed under the direction of the Accountable Executive to address the deficiencies.
- Consider describing the metrics the agency uses to define improvement in its safety performance assessment.
- Consider that the safety performance assessment can address both the performance of the SMS, and the safety performance of the agency, relative to the agency's safety objectives and safety performance targets.

- Sample List of Documented SRM and Safety Assurance Process Elements
- <u>Safety Assurance Webinar</u> (July 2019)







7. Safety Promotion

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Description of the safety training program for all agency employees and contractors directly responsible for safety including refresher training as appropriate.

Consider referencing the training requirements identified in

trained" for the CSO/SMS Executive position.

considered "directly responsible" for safety.

training, as appropriate.

FTA's Public Transportation Safety Certification Training Program regulation, 49 CFR Part 672. Note that these training requirements do not apply to non-rail transit agencies; however, they may voluntarily adopt some or all of the training described in the regulation.

Describe the safety training program including refresher

Consider specifying which employees and/or contractors are

Consider identifying safety-related courses employees and contractors must take based on their job responsibilities. Consider defining what the agency considers "adequately

- Description of the processes and activities the agency uses to communicate safety and safety performance information throughout the agency.
- Describe the processes and activities the agency uses to communicate safety and safety performance information throughout the agency.
 - o For example, stand-downs, bulletins, toolbox talks, etc.
- Describe how the agency conveys information on hazards and safety risks relevant to employees' roles and responsibilities.
- Describe how the agency communicates safety actions taken as a result of its analysis of reports received through the ESRP.
 - For example, a safety department representative follows up directly with the reporter if they self-identified to let them







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	know what actions were taken to address their report, and the safety department also communicates the results to the entire agency through its biweekly safety newsletter.
	 Consider including the frequency of regular communications.
	 For example, monthly newsletters, quarterly safety bulletins, annual safety stand-downs, etc.
	 Consider describing how the agency promotes bi-directional safety communication.
	 For example, local safety committees, open forums, etc.

- Guide to Developing the Safety Promotion Component of an ASP
- Safety Training Resources for Bus Transit Agencies
- Public Transportation Safety Certification Training Program and ASP Training Requirements







8. Supporting Documentation

Template Contents

- Description of the process the agency uses to retain documentation relating to:
 - Establishing the ASP,
 - o Programs, policies, and procedures to carry out the ASP,
 - o SMS implementation activities, and
 - Results from SMS processes and activities each for at least the previous three years.

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- Consider describing how the agency will make these documents available upon request to the FTA or another oversight agency.
- Consider describing the process the agency uses to retain required documentation for at least three years.
- Consider identifying specific documents, such as a policy manual or ASP development guide, and/or types of documents.
 - For example, procedures, training, etc., that the agency maintains; consider providing hyperlinks when possible.