

# **2020 FTA Joint State Safety Oversight and Rail Transit Agency Virtual Workshop**

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U.S. Department  
of Transportation

**Federal Transit  
Administration**



U.S. Department of Transportation  
Federal Transit Administration

# State Safety Oversight (SSO) Staffing and Qualifications

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## Overview

- Regulations
- Milestones
- Factors to Consider for Staffing Levels
- Qualifications
- Oversight Activities
- Maintaining Compliance
- Staffing Dynamics
- Change in Staffing

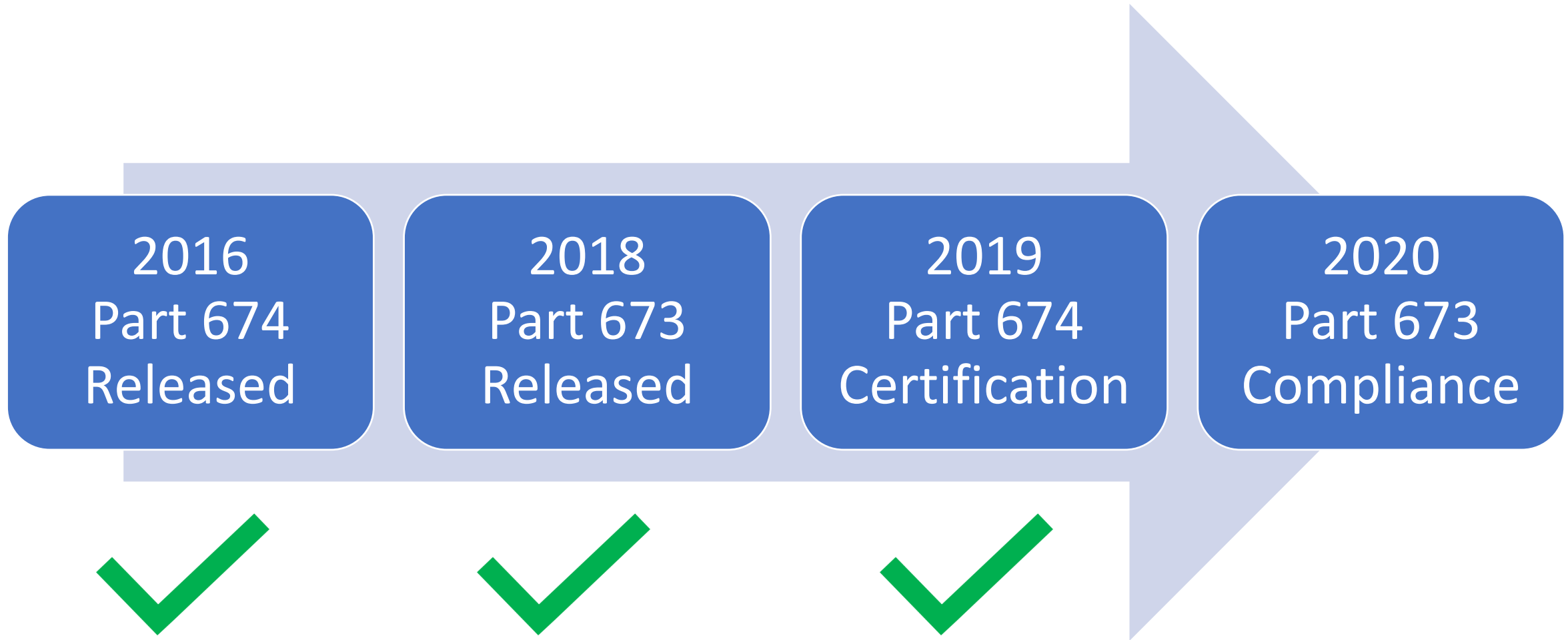


## Regulation

Staffing and qualifications are emphasized under  
Part 674 & Part 672.



# Milestones that Impact Staffing and Qualifications



## Factors to Consider for Staffing Level

Part 674.19(d) – “FTA must evaluate whether the cognizant SSOA has sufficient authority, resources, and expertise to oversee

- Number
- Size, and
- Complexity...”

of the rail transit agencies within the State.



## SSOA Qualifications

Part 674.11(e) and Part 674.39(a)(2) – SSOA staff must be “qualified to perform their functions, based on appropriate training”

- Experience
- Training completed
- Training planned or scheduled for completion

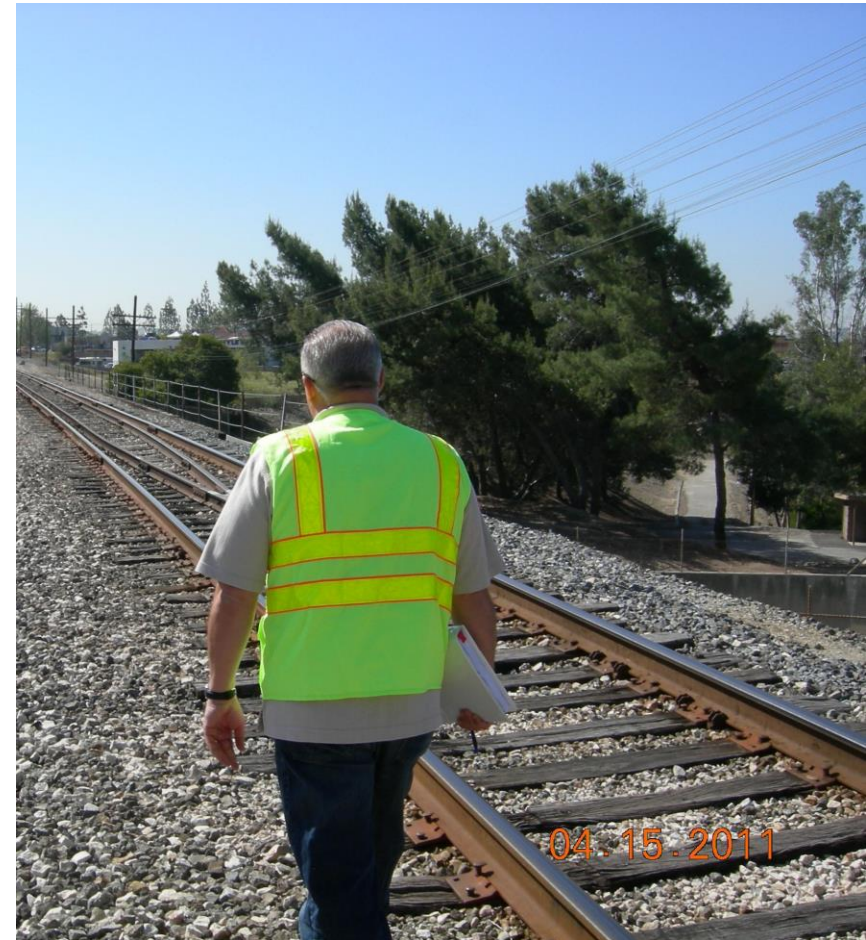




## Oversight Activities

Outlined throughout Part 674:

- Program management
- PTASP reviews
- Triennial audits
- Accident Investigations
- Inspections
- CAPs reviews
- Annual reporting





# Maintaining Compliance



Each SSOA is expected to maintain staffing levels and qualifications criteria the FTA found to be sufficient when the SSOA was certified, with some exceptions.

## Poll Question – SSOA Resources



Select the description that best represents how you support SSO programs.

- a) State employee
- b) Contract support for an SSOA
- c) Other

## Poll Question – SSO Staffing Organization

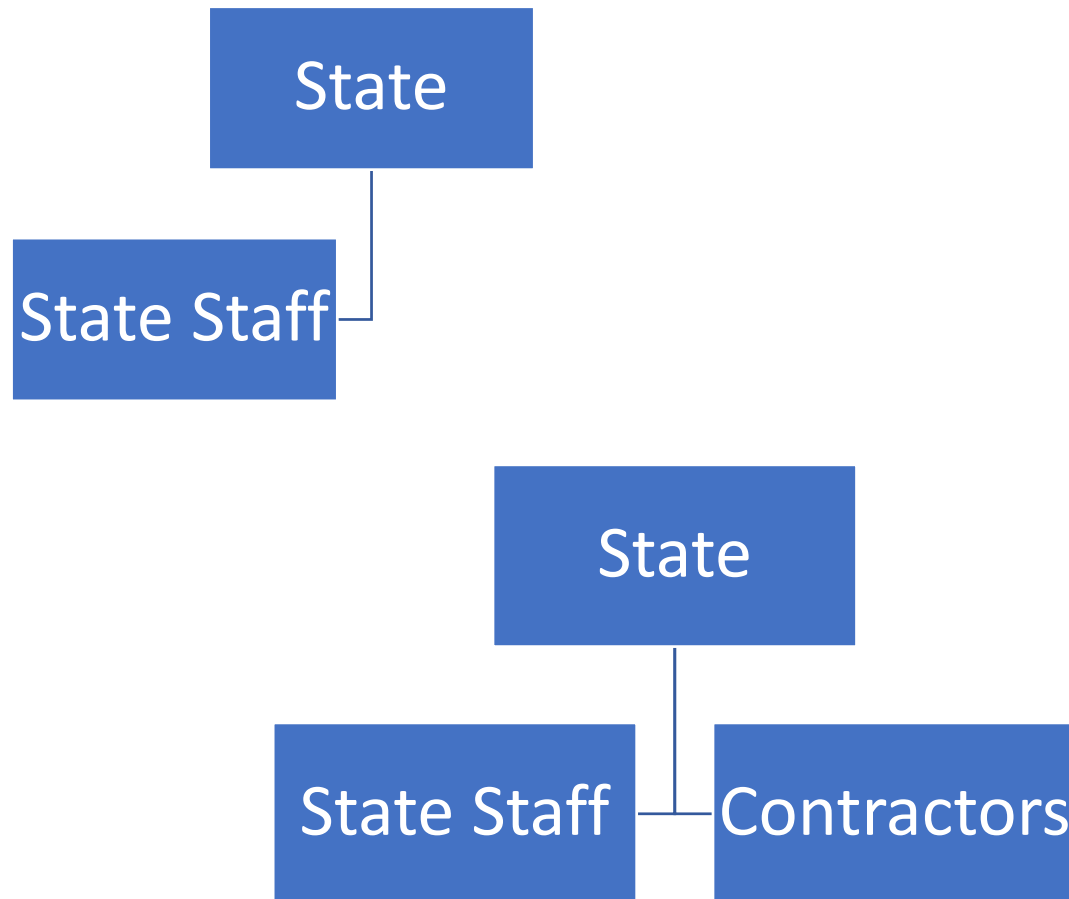


Select the description that best represents the type of SSO program you work for/with.

- a) Dedicated state staff only
- b) Combination of state staff & contractors
- c) Other



## Key Point



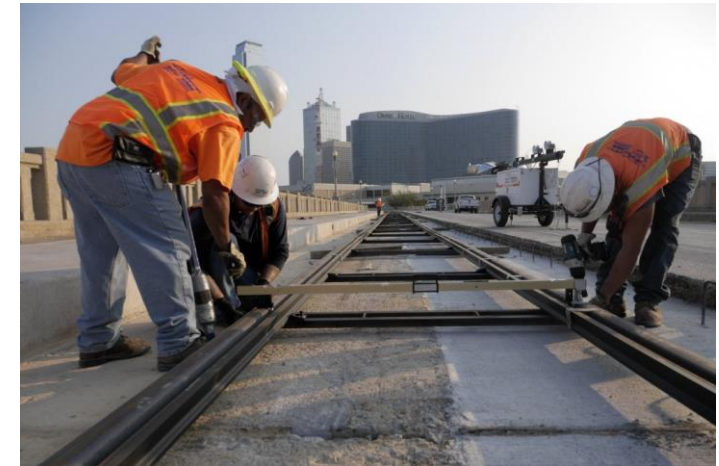
Both staffing models—SSOA staff only or combination of SSOA staff and contractors— are completely acceptable for SSO programs. It is about what works for your SSO program.

# What may change an SSOA's staffing level?

Rail transit is a dynamic industry.

- RTAs open
- RTAs close
- RTAs expand

SSOAs may need to adjust staffing to meet changes in the number, size or complexity or their RTA(s).



## Scenario Exercise #1

Scenario: The SSOA is responsible for overseeing a large heavy rail system and two small streetcar systems in different cities, geographically spread across the State. They have identified an appropriate level of staffing to oversee these RTAs.

*Given the change (as presented in the next few slides), do you think the SSOA should revisit their staffing level?*

*Agree or Disagree?*



## Agree/Disagree

### Circumstance A:

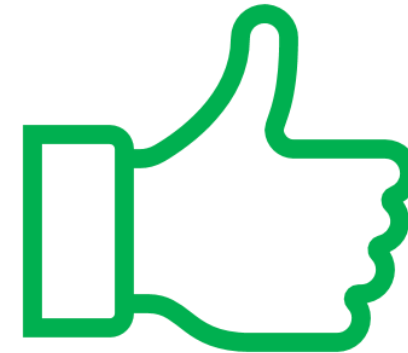
A 12-mile light rail system is expected to open in a new location, far away from the other three RTAs.

Should the SSOA revisit their staffing level?

## Agree/Disagree

Circumstance A:

Yes, the SSOA should  
revisit their staffing level.



## Agree/Disagree

Circumstance B:

Two of three RTAs have new accountable executives starting in the next calendar year.

Should the SSOA revisit their staffing level?

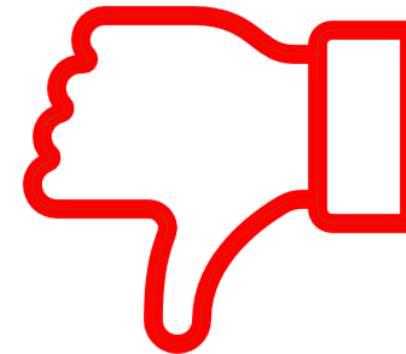




## Agree/Disagree

Circumstance B:

No, based on this circumstance, the SSOA does not need to revisit their staffing level.



## Agree/Disagree

### Circumstance C:

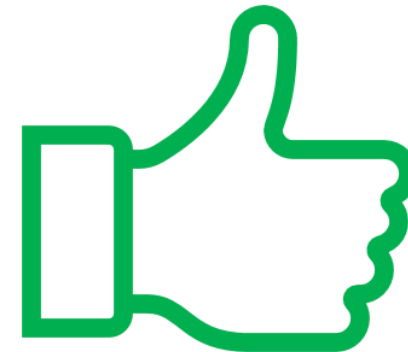
The two separate streetcar systems have been damaged by severe weather. One system plans to replace rail with rubber-tired buses. The other streetcar plans to rebuild.

Should the SSOA revisit their staffing level?

## Agree/Disagree

Circumstance C:

Yes, the SSOA should  
revisit their staffing level.





## Scenario Exercise #2

Scenario: You are conducting an annual review of your SSO documentation. Under which circumstances would you need to update your documentation to make sure it reflects the true nature of your SSO program.

*Given the circumstance (as presented in the next 4 slides), does your SSOA need to update documentation?*

*Agree or Disagree?*

## Agree/Disagree

### Circumstance D:

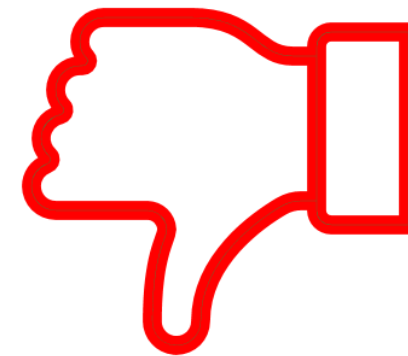
The Program Standard has listed 4.2 FTEs for overseeing the RTAs. The SSOA has since changed its model from all SSO staff to a combination of SSOA staff and contractors that also totals to 4.2 FTEs. These staffing details are captured in a separate document. The RTAs have not made any operational changes.

Does the SSOA need to update the Program Standard?

## Agree/Disagree

Circumstance D:

No, based on this circumstance, the SSOA does not need to update the Program Standard.



## Agree/Disagree

Circumstance E:

You are reviewing the SSOA Training Plan and find that there are two employees who retired 2 years ago, and they are still listed on the most recent training plan.

Does the SSOA need to update the Training Plan?

## Agree/Disagree

Circumstance E:

Yes, the Training Plan needs to be kept updated.





## Agree/Disagree

Circumstance F:

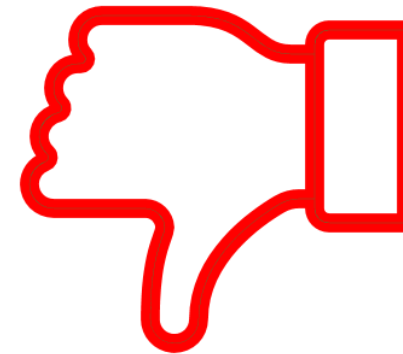
Your SSOA Training Plan does not follow the template available from FTA, but it includes all required components and is up to date.

Does the SSOA need to update the Training Plan?

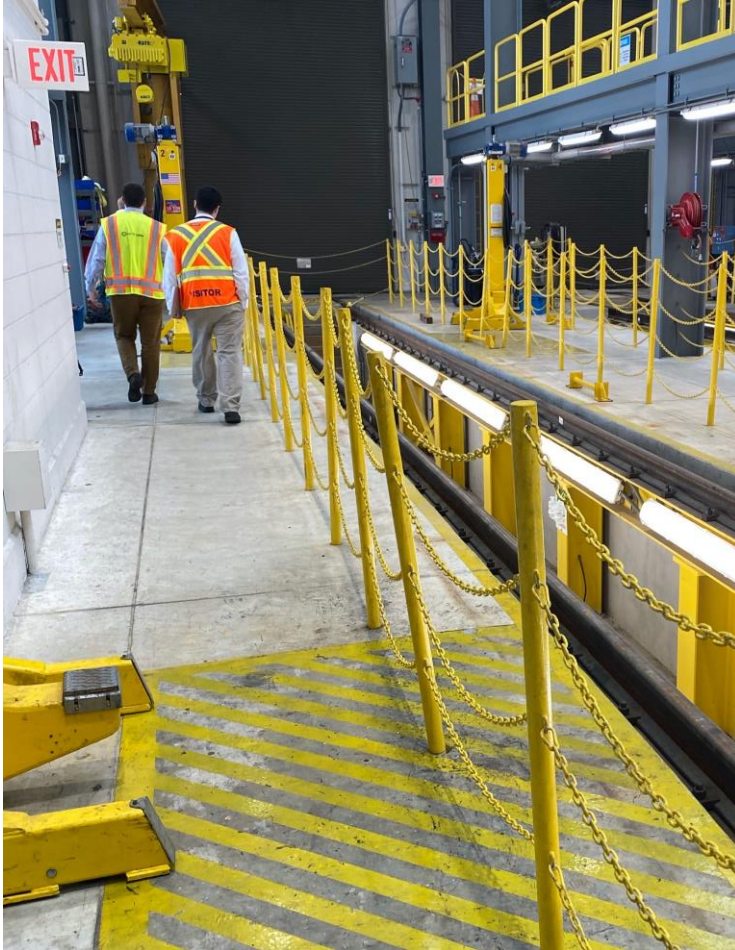
## Agree/Disagree

Circumstance F:

No, based on this circumstance, the SSOA does not need to update the Training Plan.



## Key Point



Your SSOA documentation, such as the Program Standard, procedures, plans, and training certificates, should be current and reflect the correct staffing resources and training plan.



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# Contact Information

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