# FTA
## FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION

PTASP TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CENTER

# Employee Safety Reporting Program (Part 1)

## How Does an Employee Safety Reporting Program (ESRP) Support a Transit Agency's Safety Management System (SMS)?

The Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP) regulation under 49 CFR Part 673 requires transit agencies to have an ESRP:

> A transit agency must establish and implement a process that allows employees to report safety conditions to senior management, protections for employees who report safety conditions to senior management, and a description of employee behaviors that may result in disciplinary action (§ 673.23(b)).[1]

### Resources

- [The Role of Employee Safety Reporting in an Effective Transit Safety Management System](#)
- ESRP Webinar: [Presentation](#) | [Recording](#)
- Safety Promotion Agency Safety Plan Section Lessons Learned Webinar: [Presentation](#) | [Recording](#)

An ESRP supports the Safety Risk Management (SRM) and Safety Assurance (SA) components of a transit agency's SMS by collecting data that

- Uncovers anticipated safety hazards (SRM),
- Confirms the implementation and effectiveness of mitigations (SA), and
- Alerts a transit agency to safety concerns experienced by personnel (SRM and SA).

## What Types of Data Does an ESRP Collect?

An ESRP collects data from agency workers on safety concerns throughout the agency that may otherwise go unreported. Compared to information gathered through other methods, ESRP data is often more timely (reported immediately), diverse (reported by employees with

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[1] The contents of this document do not have the force and effect of law and are not meant to bind the public in any way. This document is intended only to provide clarity to the public regarding existing requirements under the law or agency policies. Grantees and subgrantees should refer to FTA's statutes and regulations for applicable requirements.

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different experiences and backgrounds), and comprehensive (multiple reports over time can reveal trends).

The type of ESRP an agency implements will depend on the agency's need, size, and scope. An ESRP can collect both **incident-based** reports on events that *have* happened and **risk-based** reports on concerns that *could* lead to an event.

Incident-based reporting is **reactive**. It allows an agency to gather information on events that have already occurred and supports SA in mitigating further occurrences. This is particularly helpful to capture events that would not otherwise be reported, such as trips or slips and falls without injury or equipment malfunction or failure without property damage.

Risk-based reporting is a **proactive** approach to safety management and provides data that assists the agency in identifying and mitigating safety risk *before* an event occurs. Risk-based reports include close-calls, near-misses, and observed safety concerns.

An effective ESRP provides data from risk-based reports to support the SRM process and identify safety concerns and mitigate safety risk before an event occurs. The following ESRP report examples give information that the agency can proactively act on before a safety event occurs:

- A train operator reports that signal aspects are difficult to see at dusk because a particular signal is backlit by the sun.
- A car cleaner reports a concern that employees in the rail yard are not setting all cab brakes, a practice that some supervisors allow to expedite work. However, this practice could lead to a rollaway train entering the mainline.
- A bus operator reports that illegally parked vehicles associated with a construction project are blocking the operator's field of vision at a busy intersection.

These reported safety concerns give the agency timely information for Safety Risk Assessment, enabling the agency to implement targeted mitigations based on these reports.

This series on ESRP will continue in next month's *TSO Spotlight* with a closer look at ESRP methods and implementation.

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**PTASP Technical Assistance Available Now**

- Access one-on-one Agency Safety Plan support
- Learn and share through the PTASP Community of Practice
- Explore the PTASP Resource Library

https://www.transit.dot.gov/PTASP-TAC