



## Transit Safety and Oversight Spotlight Newsletter

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### Message from the Associate Administrator

Dear Transit Colleagues:

After a busy January with events like the Transportation Research Board Annual Meeting and several FTA webinars, I am excited to share all the new resources available to the transit community.

During the last couple of weeks in January, FTA hosted webinars on [human trafficking prevention in tribal communities](#), [Public Transportation Agency Safety Planning and employee safety reporting](#) and [suicide prevention signage](#).

Each webinar provided information on how transit plays a part in not only getting riders and workers to and from their destinations safely, but also how transit impacts the greater safety of the community. I invite you to revisit the information from the webinars and use the resources provided throughout the year.

As we continue to address a variety of safety topics in the transit community, we are excited to kick-off the Transit Advisory Committee for Safety (TRACS). TRACS includes a diverse panel of transit professionals who cooperatively address transit safety issues by recommending fact-based solutions. Last month, TRACS met for the first time under the 2022—2024 charter. The committee is one of the ways FTA and the transit community can work together to make transit safer for the riding public and transit operators and employees. I look forward to engaging with TRACS members and to reviewing the recommendations that TRACS will propose at the end of the charter. Read more about the meeting on page 2.

FTA continues to keep lines of communication open regarding the new Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP) requirements included in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. One of these updates requires certain transit agencies to establish a safety committee comprised of front-line employee representatives and management representatives. We need to remember that everyone brings a unique perspective on safety and contributes to the greater discussion of how we can improve safety for riders and workers. As we continue to implement the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law PTASP requirements, I want to remind you that technical assistance is available through the [PTASP Technical Assistance Center](#) or by [email](#). I encourage you to reach out if you have any questions or concerns about complying with the new PTASP requirements.

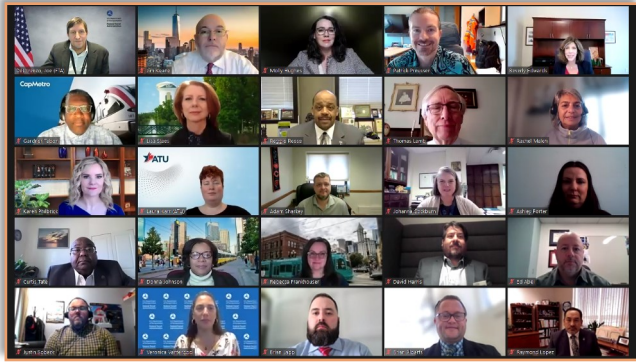
We all have a pivotal role in reducing the number of safety incidents and creating a safer transit system for all.

Sincerely,  
  
Joe



**Joe DeLorenzo**  
Associate Administrator for  
Transit Safety and Oversight  
and Chief Safety Officer, FTA

## TRACS Kick-Off Meeting Summary



TRACS members, DFO Joe DeLorenzo and Deputy Administrator Veronica Vanterpool during the TRACS meeting.

On January 31, TRACS conducted a virtual kick-off meeting to commence activities under its 2022–2024 charter. During the meeting, Administrator Nuria Fernandez welcomed attendees and TSO Associate Administrator and TRACS Designated Federal Officer (DFO) Joe DeLorenzo highlighted the ways in which previous TRACS recommendations have shaped current FTA safety initiatives. TRACS members in attendance introduced themselves and discussed their transit safety experience. In addition, FTA announced Jim Keane as the TRACS Chairperson and Lisa Staes as the TRACS Vice Chairperson.

Afterward, DFO Joe DeLorenzo introduced the committee's three taskings: advancing rider and worker safety, reducing bus collisions and cyber and data security systems.

The meeting concluded with a public comment period and a summary of the immediate and long-term next steps for TRACS members. Visit the [TRACS webpage](#) for the latest information. If you have any questions about TRACS, contact TRACS program manager [Bridget Zamperini](#).

## Recent FTA Webinars and Resources

Recordings of the webinars and other resources are available publicly anytime.

- [Human Trafficking Prevention in Tribal Communities Webinar](#) — As part of Human Trafficking Prevention Month, FTA hosted this webinar that explored how human trafficking impacts American Indian/Alaska Native (AIAN) populations. The webinar discussed the role transportation and public transit plays in trafficking, how transit agencies can prevent trafficking and how drivers and other front-line transit employees can intervene if trafficking is identified. The webinar included a presentation on a new toolkit designed to increase awareness and prevention of human trafficking in AIAN communities and populations. FTA developed its new resource, which is funded through an FTA crime-prevention grant, in partnership with the Texas Transportation Institute, South West Transit Association and the Community Transportation Association of America.
- [PTASP Webinar: Making the Most of Your Employee Safety Reporting Program](#) — Provided an overview of Employee Safety Reporting Programs (ESRPs) and featured transit leaders' experiences with implementing and promoting their ESRPs. To learn more about ESRPs, read [part 1](#), [part 2](#) and [part 3](#) of the ESRP article series.
- [Suicide Prevention Signage on Public Transit Webinar](#) — Intended to help transit agencies implement the recommendations included in [Safety Advisory 22-4: Suicide Prevention Signage on Public Transit](#). The webinar included an overview of current suicide trends, the impact on the transit industry and the use of signage as a countermeasure to mitigate suicide-related events on public transit. Guest speakers from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration and San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) discussed suicide prevention information and resources available to public transit agencies and the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline. One BART representative shared their experience with suicide-related events and messaging campaigns that apply best practices for reducing suicide attempts.

16TH ANNUAL  
FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION  
DRUG AND ALCOHOL PROGRAM  
NATIONAL CONFERENCE

MARCH 14-16, 2023

**SAN DIEGO**  
— CALIFORNIA —

[HTTPS://TRANSIT.DOT.GOV/DRUG-ALCOHOL-PROGRAM](https://transit.dot.gov/drug-alcohol-program)



# Causal Factors in Safety Investigations (Part 1): Causal Factors and Safety Management Systems

## Overview

The Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP) regulation (49 CFR part 673) states that each transit agency must establish activities to “conduct investigations of safety events to identify causal factors” (§ [673.27\(b\)\(3\)](#)). As defined in the PTASP regulation, an investigation is “the process of determining the causal and contributing factors of an accident, incident or hazard, for the purpose of preventing recurrence and mitigating risk” (§ [673.5](#)). Investigations are an essential part of an agency’s Safety Management System (SMS), particularly for Safety Risk Management (SRM), Safety Assurance (SA) and Safety Promotion processes.

The PTASP regulation defines *events* to include [accidents](#), [incidents](#) and [occurrences](#). By investigating all these events – not just the most serious ones – agencies can learn valuable information and implement safety risk mitigations before severe consequences occur. Identifying causal and contributing factors during investigations allows an agency to determine *why* a safety event happened in addition to *what* caused the event and *how* it occurred. Identifying causal factors can highlight deficiencies that the agency can then address to improve safety performance.

## What Are Causal and Contributing Factors?

Causal and contributing factors include key actions, situations or conditions that led to an event’s occurrence or that increased an event’s effects. Determining causal factors is about more than “at-fault” determinations or establishing whether a safety event was “preventable” or “non-preventable.” In addition to looking at those actions immediately preceding the event, the investigation should examine organizational factors that could have contributed to the event, such as procedures, training, supervision or resourcing. It may also include analyzing factors related to the operating environment, the natural environment (snow, ice, rain, etc.) or the condition of infrastructure or equipment. Determination of causal factors will allow the agency to identify actions that can help prevent reoccurrence.

## Causal Factors and SRM

As defined in [Part 673](#), SRM is the process of “identifying hazards and analyzing, assessing, and mitigating safety risk.” The results of an investigation feed into an agency’s SRM, providing valuable information about both new and known hazards. This information can help prioritize hazards, for example, by showing the increased likelihood of a consequence for a hazard the agency was previously tracking, thus prioritizing the mitigation of the hazard.

## Causal Factors and SA

The identification of causal factors provides an agency with valuable information to support SA activities. The data supports safety performance monitoring and measurement, allowing an agency to determine where issues with compliance or the sufficiency of current operating and maintenance procedures may exist. (See the [SMS Techniques for Monitoring Operations and Maintenance Procedures](#) for more information.) It may also reveal whether and how a recent change in operations may have created a new safety hazard.

### Resources

- [Safety Event Investigation in SMS webinar](#)
- [Sample Hazard Classification System](#)

### Upcoming Webinar

#### Identifying Causal Factors in Safety Event Investigations

Wednesday, March 29, 2023

2:00 p.m. EDT

Registration Coming Soon!

Continued from page 4

## Causal Factors and Safety Promotion

Communicating the causal factors identified during a safety event investigation throughout the agency may help increase awareness of the safety event and promote safety policies or rules that may help prevent or mitigate future events. Furthermore, these communications can highlight the importance of policies and rules and encourage compliance.

An investigation may also identify gaps in training. Depending on identified gaps, the agency may find it necessary to clarify roles and responsibilities or develop training that targets the areas of deficiency that the agency identifies as a causal factor in a safety event.

In Part 2 of this series, we will examine methods for determining causal factors.

Visit the [PTASP Technical Assistance Center \(TAC\) Resource Library](#) for guides, fact sheets and webinars on the PTASP regulation and SMS. The PTASP TAC is also available at [PTASP-TAC@dot.gov](mailto:PTASP-TAC@dot.gov) to provide technical assistance with any PTASP-related topic.

## FY2023 Transportation Safety Institute (TSI) Safety Training Available

[Registration](#) is open for the FY2023 TSI safety training courses for transit personnel. These courses also support FTA grantees subject to the [Public Transportation Safety Certification Training Program \(PTSCTP\) regulation](#) with initial training and refresher training requirements.

- [FTA Safety Training Page](#) — outlines training requirements and available training courses. Contact [FTASafetyPromotion@dot.gov](mailto:FTASafetyPromotion@dot.gov) for more information about course offerings, Individual Training Plans, credit for non-FTA sponsored coursework and other safety-training related matters.
- [FTA-Sponsored Training Courses](#) — provides information on FTA-sponsored FY2023 training delivered by the TSI.
- [TSI Course Schedule](#) — includes TSI safety training courses for transit personnel to support FTA grantees subject to the [PTSCTP](#) regulation with initial training and refresher training requirements. In addition to PTSCTP bus and rail courses, trainings include courses for bus, rail, general transit safety and transit crime prevention and emergency management. The availability of in-person TSI courses depends upon each host's local guidance. Contact TSI at [TSI@dot.gov](mailto:TSI@dot.gov) or 405-954-3682 for more information. TSI can verify the status of scheduled courses and assist with any other course-related questions.
- [Enhanced Transit Safety and Crime Prevention Initiative Related Trainings](#) — offers virtual Assault Awareness and Prevention (AAP) and Violence in the Transit Workplace (VTW) courses, provided by the National Transit Institute (NTI). The AAP and VTW courses support the FTA Enhanced Transit Safety and Crime Prevention Initiative. Transit agencies can also use the AAP course to fulfill the new [Bipartisan Infrastructure Law requirement](#) for de-escalation training. Contact NTI at [nti\\_info@nti.rutgers.edu](mailto:nti_info@nti.rutgers.edu) or 848-932-1700 with any questions.





## Data Spotlight: Transit-Related Fatalities, January 2016–August 2022

The national safety data presented below aims to help transit agencies analyze safety hazards in their systems, as well as establish safety performance targets as a part of an [Agency Safety Plan](#). This month's spotlight provides National Transit Database (NTD) fatality data from Full Reporter transit agencies under FTA's safety jurisdiction from January 2016 to August 2022.<sup>1</sup>

FTA requires transit agencies under its safety jurisdiction to report all safety and security event fatalities that meet certain thresholds to the NTD.<sup>2</sup> From January 2016 to August 2022, agencies reported **920 fatalities**. This calculates to a fatality rate of **7.89 per 100 million vehicle revenue miles (VRM)** of service.

The bar graph to the right shows the trends in the annual transit fatality rate for the years 2016 to 2021. This rate increased each year from 2017 to 2021.

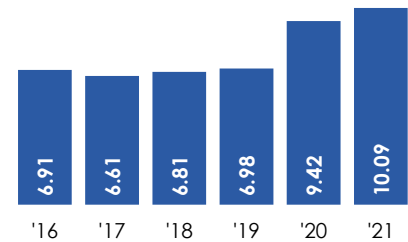
The following types of events resulted in the most fatalities from January 2016 to August 2022:

- Collisions between transit vehicles and people outside of motor vehicles (**Person Collisions**) accounted for 689 fatalities,<sup>3</sup>
- **Suicides** committed on transit property accounted for 473 fatalities,<sup>4</sup>
- Collisions between transit vehicles and non-transit motor vehicles (**Motor Vehicle Collisions**) accounted for 374 fatalities,<sup>5</sup> and
- **Violent Crimes** committed on transit property accounted for 171 fatalities.<sup>6</sup>

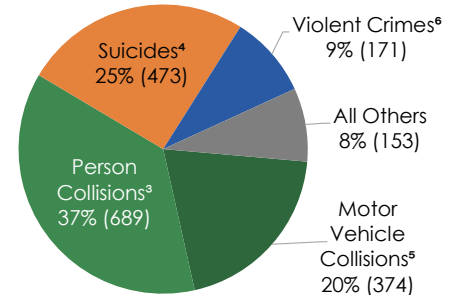
The pie chart to the right shows additional details on the distribution of transit fatalities.

The bar graphs below illustrate the trend in 2016–2021 fatality rates for each event type listed above. Future editions of the *TSO Spotlight Newsletter* will include more detailed analyses of these four event types.

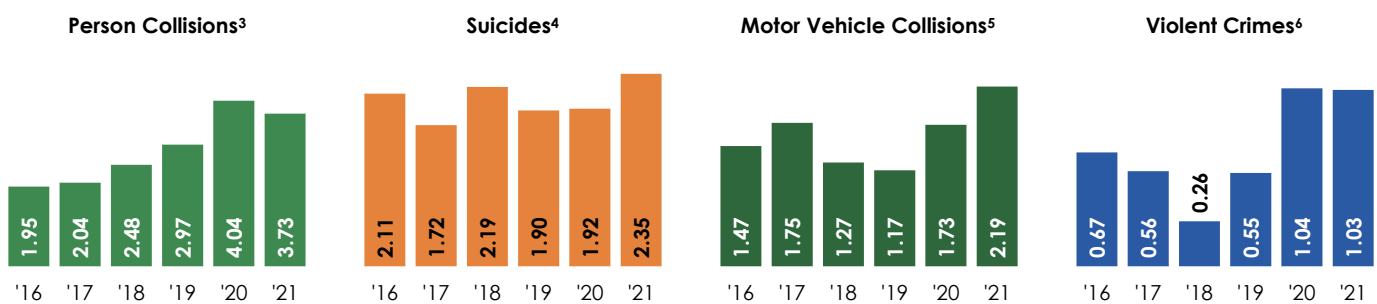
**Trends in Transit-Related Fatalities per 100M VRM, 2016–2021<sup>1</sup>**



**Transit-Related Fatalities by Event Type, Jan 2016–Aug 2021<sup>1</sup>**



**Trends in Transit-Related Fatalities per 100M VRM by Event Type, 2017–2021<sup>1</sup>**



<sup>1</sup>Data reflect NTD major event submissions from Full Reporters through December 2, 2022. NTD data for 2021–2022 are preliminary. Full Reporter agencies include all rail agencies and all large bus agencies serving urbanized areas (see the [NTD Reporting Policy Manual](#) for Full Reporter criteria). The Alaska Railroad, commuter rail and ferryboat modes and some heavy and hybrid rail modes fall outside FTA safety jurisdiction and are excluded from all analyses.

<sup>2</sup>FTA's criteria for determining if fatalities must be reported to the NTD are available in the [NTD Safety & Security Reporting Policy Manual](#).

<sup>3</sup>Person collision fatalities are those resulting from collisions between a transit vehicle and any person not within a motor vehicle. This includes collisions involving a transit vehicle, a person and other vehicles. Suicides are excluded.

<sup>4</sup>Suicide fatalities are those identified as suicides by NTD reporters. Suicide fatalities may result from any type of event, including collisions and violent crimes. Suicide fatalities also include any other fatalities resulting from a suicide attempt that led to a collision or other safety event.

<sup>5</sup>Motor vehicle collision fatalities are those resulting from a collision between a transit vehicle and a motor vehicle not operated by a transit agency. Suicides and collisions involving a person outside a motor vehicle are excluded.

<sup>6</sup>Violent crime fatalities are those resulting from violent criminal activity that took place on transit agency property. Violent crimes include assaults, bombings, chemical / biological / nuclear / radiological attacks, hijackings, homicides, rapes and robberies. Suicide fatalities occurring during the crime are excluded.

## FTA Employee Spotlight: Gian Marshall



**Gian Marshall**

Chief, Compliance Division, Office of Program Oversight, Office of Transit Safety and Oversight, FTA

**How would you explain your job to someone you have never met?** I am the Chief of the Compliance Division under the Office of Program Oversight. The division is responsible for ensuring compliance by FTA grant recipients of all program requirements.

**What were you doing before this role?** Before joining FTA, I was the Program Manager for the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration Drug and Alcohol Clearinghouse. The Clearinghouse is an online database containing drug and alcohol program violations of commercial drivers. Employers are required to query the Clearinghouse at least once annually and before hiring a commercial driver for a safety-sensitive functions. As of December 1, there were almost 182,000 drug or alcohol violations reported to the Clearinghouse.

**What's your favorite moment of your professional career so far?** When I was stationed in Germany with the Army, I was the non-commissioned officer in charge of the Honor Guard. We would present the Colors at various military balls,

ceremonies and events. One of the events was a Galaxy Football game and the Color Guard presented the Colors and conducted a 21-gun salute with three cannons. We even greased the rounds so flames shot out of the barrel of the cannons when the rounds were released. I believe we were met with a standing ovation and a cheering crowd.

**What was your first time using public transit like?** My first experience with public transportation was almost 20 years ago when I rode the Tube in London. My friend and I bought a multiple-day ticket and just hopped on and off for several days. It was one of the easiest metro systems to learn.

**What people or experiences have shaped you?** I joined the Army when I was nineteen. It was one of the hardest but most transformative experiences in my life. My fellow services members and the people and cultures that I was exposed to shaped me into the person I am today.

**What movie or TV show could you watch on loop? Why?** This is tough. I think I'm torn between "The Shawshank Redemption" or "Good Will Hunting." If I came across either movie while channel surfing, I'd be pulled in. The stories and actors are incredible.

**What are the saved weather locations in your phone?** My saved locations are Bristol, VA; Cape Charles, VA and Raleigh, NC. My kids are in Bristol. My sister and brother-in-law (two of my favorite people) live in Cape Charles and I like that it's on the water. I find that Cape Charles helps me recharge my spirits. My father-in-law is in Raleigh and I go every year to celebrate Christmas with him.





U.S. Department of Transportation  
**Federal Transit Administration**

Federal Transit Administration  
Office of Transit Safety and Oversight  
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Access the [FTA Transit Safety and Oversight Spotlight Newsletters](#).

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## Upcoming FTA TSO Office Speaking Engagements

### **Teamster Passenger Transport Conference**

March 2, 2023

### **APTA Legislative Conference**

March 12–14, 2023 | Washington, DC

### **Drug and Alcohol Program National Conference**

March 14–16, 2023 | San Diego, CA

### **Drug & Alcohol Testing Industry Association Annual Meeting**

March 22–25, 2023 | Las Vegas, NV

### **PTASP Webinar: Identifying Causal Factors in Safety Event Investigations**

Wednesday, March 29, 2023 | 2:00pm-3:30pm ET | Virtual (Registration Coming Soon)

### **Lifesavers Conference**

April 2–4, 2023 | Seattle, WA

### **APTA Mobility Conference**

April 23–26, 2023 | Minneapolis, MN

## Save the Dates: SSO Quarterly Call

May 17, 2023 | 3:00–4:30 pm ET | Virtual

August 16, 2023 | 3:00–4:30 pm ET | Virtual

November 15, 2023 | 3:00–4:30 pm ET | Virtual

*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.*