

SSOR Refresher Training January and February 2023 Webinar FAQs

Enhancements to SSOR:

Q: Are there any specific continuous improvement efforts for SSOR?

A: Yes, FTA is dedicated to continuous improvements, and conducts weekly meetings to address any bugs, fixes, and changes that will enhance the user experience. The SSOR system developers work on a specific schedule to push the changes out to the system. If you have any feedback or suggestions on improving the tool, please contact Myesha Stephney, myesha.stephney@dot.gov.

Q: Is FTA taking suggestions for making SSOR easier to navigate and use?

A: Yes, FTA reviews emails sent to the SSOR team and reviews feedback gathered by the FTA SSO Program Managers. FTA prioritizes SSOR user suggestions when making changes to the system. If you have any feedback or suggestions, please contact Myesha Stephney, myesha.stephney@dot.gov, or discuss them with your assigned FTA SSO Program Manager.

Document Uploads to SSOR:

Q: Are SSOAs required to upload STARs reports and the investigation reports into SSOR?

A: Yes, FTA requires that these documents are uploaded to SSOR along with relevant information in the data entry fields. If an SSOA does not submit these documents, this is an “issue” that the FTA Validation team will note in the system during the validation period. FTA encourages SSOAs to house its safety oversight programmatic documents and other program information in the SSOR tool.

Q: What is the difference between the document ‘Version Date’ and ‘Effective Date’?

A: The SSOR system captures information on when changes are made to documents and has options for users to upload multiple versions of a document. The “version date” is when the document was updated or modified in the SSOR system, and users have the option to input an “effective date” which specifies when the document was implemented or effective at their SSOA or RTA.

Q: Are there any additional required documents that are not listed as required within the system?

A: The SSOR prepopulates required documents that must be collected with the Annual Report as required by 49 CFR Part 674. FTA also encourages SSOAs to add any additional documents that are relevant to their safety oversight program by creating a new document that they can label in the system as Document Type “Other,” and provide the document title. FTA may request additional documents from the SSOAs based on emergent needs and may require them to upload this documentation to their current reporting year in SSOR.

Your FTA SSO program manager may also ask for additional documentation during

routine monitoring calls. These documents should be uploaded to the SSOR. If you have any additional questions about the documents in SSOR, how to upload and what is required, please refer to the SSOR User Manual, or contact your assigned FTA SSO program manager.

Q: Are investigation procedures a required document for the Annual Report?

A: The Investigation Procedures document is currently a required document for the 2022 Annual Report. Please submit the version that you are using for your program. Some SSOAs submit these procedures as part of their Program Standard, but if needed, please add this document with the document type “Other,” and clearly note that the document contains your SSOA’s investigation procedures. If you have any additional questions, please reach out to your assigned FTA SSO Program Manager.

Q: Is there a way to upload multiple documents at once?

A: Yes. When you are adding documents to the SSOA’s profile page, select ‘Edit,’ and it will allow you to add documents at the bottom of the screen. Once you complete the upload and fill in the information for one document, you may add additional documents and click ‘Save.’ If you have any issues uploading documents, please contact the SSOR Help Desk, FTAITHelpDesk@dot.gov.

Q: How do you remove duplicate document entries under the profile tab?

A: If you are trying to delete a document on your 2022 annual report as you prepare for your March submission, you should first make sure to select 2022 from the year selector at the top of the profile page. Next, click the EDIT button near the top right of the page. Now you should be able to make changes to profile elements, including documents. If you scroll to the Documents table, you can click the red “X” to the right of a document to delete it. Please note that some documents are required and cannot be deleted. If you are unable to delete a document that you believe you should be able to, please send an email to FTASSORSupport@dot.gov and we will look into it for you immediately.

Q: What if the Triennial Audit Report is not completed prior to March 15th?

A: Please provide all available information in your annual report to the FTA. If the system requires you to upload a final Triennial audit report as part of the annual submission process, you can upload a placeholder document and explain the situation through your submission. TSO will work with you to get the final materials uploaded as they become available.

User Access to SSOR:

Q: What do I do if I no longer see the link for SSOR when I log in to the TriAD Platform?

A: The SSOR has recertification requirements every year and users must be recertified to remain in the system. The SSOA Program Managers and SSOR users must ensure they are recertified so that they do not lose their system access. If you cannot access SSOR, please reach out to Myesha Stephney, myesha.stephney@dot.gov, or to the SSOR Help Desk, FTAITHelpDesk@dot.gov.

Q: Can we grant read-only access to the SSOR to our Rail Transit Agency staff?

A: No. The SSOR is a system for the SSOAs and their contractors to enter, review and submit information related to their agency’s oversight efforts. FTA uses the SSOR for its oversight of States and will review information in the SSOR for responses to Safety Advisories and during its SSO Triennial Audits of the SSOAs.

However, if a State would like to share information from SSOR with their RTA representatives, they can use export functions built into the tool. SSOR export features will send to the user via email a link to download an Excel file of the exported data. The user can then share the Excel file with an RTA if needed. Please note that the emailed download links are valid for 24 hours. Please let your FTA SSO Program Manager know if you have any additional questions regarding the system’s restrictions and RTA access.

Q: Please explain why some fields are editable and others are not in SSOR.

A: The SSOR contains both historical and current SSOA and RTA data and some fields are editable while others are not. For example, users can view information from their past Annual Reports to FTA dating back to 2010, but the data points in the past Annual Reports are locked. The SSOR users are only able to change and edit information in the current reporting year.

Once an Annual Report is submitted to FTA, the data will also lock, and users will not be able to make changes to the information unless the FTA Validation team or their FTA SSO Program Manager creates an “issue” for a specific data field. The other information in the report will remain un-editable.

Additionally, the Events module contains some non-editable fields. The SSOR automatically pulls in events that RTAs report to the NTD if they meet FTA’s definition of accident. These event records from the NTD include many individual data points that your RTA included in its event report to the NTD. These data points are read-only and are not editable by SSOR users. The SSOA can only enter and edit data under the “SSOR Event Investigation Data” section of the event record. If you have any further questions, please feel free to reference the SSOR User Manual, or reach out to the SSOR Help Desk, FTAITHelpdesk@dot.gov.

Q: Do many of the SSO Programs request access to the NTD from the RTAs? How can we effectively use the NTD as a tool of oversight, without assuming more of the risk and responsibility that now is solely with the RTAs?

A: We do not have hard numbers on how many SSOAs have read-only safety data access in the NTD, however, over the past year we know several States have worked with RTAs to gain this access. Very often the benefit that SSOAs get is that they can see events that are not getting pulled into SSOR.

For example, an SSOA expected to see an event in SSOR, but the event never showed up. They assumed that the RTA didn’t report it to the NTD. They ask their RTA, and the RTA says, “No, I reported it.” They then may assume that SSOR isn’t working properly. But with NTD access, the SSOA is able to confirm that yes, the event was reported by the RTA, but the RTA reported a non-serious injury when the SSOA understood the injury to

be a serious injury. That was why it wasn't getting pulled into SSOR.

With this type of information, some SSOAs have been able to have much more informed conversations with their RTA.

Q: Is it possible to modify entries if I do not have admin access?

A: SSOR uses three SSOA user roles: Primary Reporter, Secondary Reporter, and Viewer.

The Primary Reporter is the SSOA Project Manager assigned the responsibility of reporting all safety oversight activity data to the FTA for their respective State. This includes adding and editing data and submitting the annual report to the FTA for review.

The Secondary Reporter is typically an assistant SSOA Project Manager, or backup SSOA staff person designated to complete reporting for the SSOA in the event the primary reporter is absent or unable to complete and submit the report to the FTA.

The Viewer role does not have the ability to enter or edit data; they can only view the data.

If you need a role changed, your assigned SSOR User Manager can make this change. To find out who your user manager is, click your profile picture at the top right of your SSOR screen, and select "Profile." From there you can look at your user roles and see who is assigned as your SSOR User Manager. To make a role change, you will need to contact the SSOR User Manager listed to request the roles be updated. For more information, you can refer to Chapter 7 of the SSOR User Manual.

Q: How do I change who receives SSOR and NTD changes made by an RTA?

A: SSOA User Managers can manage SSOR users. This includes establishing new users, removing existing users, or changing roles for existing users. Regarding NTD access, you will need to coordinate with your RTA's User Manager to request "Safety Viewer" access for a specific user or users.

Issues Module:

Q: Our issues from a previous reporting year are locked. Can we address those issues?

A: Please discuss issues in SSOR with your assigned FTA SSO Program Manager and they will be able to assist you in either addressing an issue in the SSOR tool, or they will confirm that it must remain an issue as a record in the system. During their routine monitoring calls, users can discuss how to avoid repeating the issue in the current reporting year.

Profile Module:

Q: How should SSOAs report staff and contractor hours, annually, for work dedicated to RTA capital project reviews, which have not entered the engineering phase yet?

A: Please include all hours that your staff has dedicated to the oversight program. This may include SSOA oversight of RTA capital projects that may not be considered

“systems in engineering and construction.”

Q: If SSOAs need additional help entering contact changes, who should we contact?

A: Please send an email to FTASSORSupport@dot.gov. This is always a great first stop for your questions. We can help get you to the right individual if we can't solve your problem ourselves.

Events Module:

Q: When reviewing our SSOA event data, the number of events that we expected to see in our SSOR events module based on accident notifications from our RTA does not match up with what was imported into SSOR. Is this correct?

A: The SSOR will pull in all events that meet the 49 CFR Part 674 definition of an Accident based on FTA's Two-hour Notification Guide. If you are not seeing accidents that you believe meet those thresholds, you should reach out to your RTA to confirm that they have reported these events to the NTD and ensure all the fields in their event report are filled out correctly. If you have any additional questions, please contact your FTA SSO Program Manager.

Q: In previous reporting years, loading an investigation report to the events section was not mandatory. Will it be mandatory for 2022 to upload event investigation reports into SSOR for each reportable event?

A: Yes, please upload your final, adopted versions of the accident investigation reports to the SSOR. During validation, FTA's Validation Team will flag any accidents that do not have investigation reports uploaded. If you have any questions or concerns about uploading the investigation reports, please contact your FTA SSO Program Manager.

Q: When should an SSO Program work with an RTA to modify their NTD data to align with their final investigation report? When is it sufficient just to document it as a discrepancy within SSOR?

A: SSOAs can view RTA event data in SSOR for all events meeting a 674 threshold as soon as the event is reported to the NTD. If, during your review you note a discrepancy where the event information in SSOR does not match your records, you should contact the RTA to resolve the discrepancy. SSOAs may opt to use the discrepancy tab in SSOR to help them document this activity, but it is not required. As soon as the RTA updates the data in the NTD, you will see the change reflected in SSOR.

CAPs Module:

Q: Is the CAP Implementation Date the date that the Rail Transit Agency submitted the CAP to the SSOA for verification and closure?

A: Per Part 674, a CAP is “a plan that describes actions an RTA will take to minimize, control, correct, or eliminate risk and hazards and a schedule for taking those actions.” The SSOR captures a “Proposed Implementation Date” and an “Actual Implementation Date” for each individual action included in a CAP. The “Proposed Implementation

Date” defines when the action should be completed. The “Actual Implementation Date” is the date that the RTA completed the action. These are not the dates that an RTA submitted documentation to the SSOA for its review and approval.

If you have any further questions about the CAP process, implementation, and verification, please reach out to your assigned FTA SSO program manager and they can provide additional guidance.

Q: How do you input information, such as CAP implementation target dates, when RTAs miss deadlines?

A: For corrective action plans, SSOR captures projected implementation dates. At the time of annual reporting, if these dates have passed and the CAP is “overdue,” SSOR will ask SSOAs to enter a brief description of “issues preventing resolution.” In this field you should provide information regarding the challenges preventing the RTA from completing the corrective actions as planned.

Hazards Module:

Q: Do we report Hazards?

A: In the 2021 and 2022 Annual Report, Hazards module is grayed out and cannot be accessed by users. FTA is working to establish future guidance and requirements for collecting hazard data going forward. The PTASP regulation, 49 CFR Part 673, defines a Safety Management System approach that requires data different from what was previously captured through the SSO Annual Reporting process. FTA will develop a structured method to collect hazard information and related data in the future. SSOR users will be notified in advance of any changes to reporting requirements. Hazard data reported in previous years is still accessible in the system.

SSOR Training and General System Requirements:

Q: Can we access the SSOR Refresher Training Webinar recording and presentation if we were unable to attend the sessions in January and February 2023?

A: A copy of the SSOR Refresher Training Webinar presentation and a recording of the webinar is posted and available for download on FTA’s webpage:

<https://www.transit.dot.gov/regulations-and-programs/safety/state-safety-oversight-reporting-tool>

Q: We wanted to confirm that the calendar year 2022 Annual Report in SSOR due by March 15, 2023, covers the events and safety oversight actions in the calendar year 2022?

A: That is correct. The 2022 Annual Report, due to FTA on March 15, 2023, covers Calendar Year 2022.