



# Speaker Biographies

2023 FTA Joint State Safety Oversight  
(SSO) and Rail Transit Agency (RTA)  
Workshop

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## Veronica Vanterpool

*Deputy Administrator, Federal Transit Administration*



Veronica Vanterpool was appointed Deputy Administrator in May 2022 after serving as Senior Advisor since August 2021. She works directly with the Administrator of the Federal Transit Administration and as a member of the FTA team to advance the policy objectives and goals of the Biden-Harris Administration.

Ms. Vanterpool came to FTA from Delaware Transit Corporation, where she served as the agency's first Chief Innovation Officer. During her time at the agency, she launched the state's first on-demand microtransit service in a rural community and oversaw the autonomous transit shuttle demonstration program. Her previous roles include being the Deputy Director of the national Vision Zero Network, executive director of the New York City based Tri-State Transportation Campaign and board member of the New York Metropolitan Transportation Authority.

Having served on a number of boards, commissions, task forces and working groups, Ms. Vanterpool has 16 years of experience in advocacy, policy, media communications, public outreach, coalition building and issue campaigns. She is also a member of the first cohort of the Biden-Harris Administration Presidential Leadership Workshop [July 2022-December 2022].

She is a native New Yorker born and raised in The Bronx.

## Joe DeLorenzo

*Associate Administrator and Chief Safety Officer, Office of Transit Safety and Oversight, Federal Transit Administration*



Joseph "Joe" DeLorenzo is FTA's Associate Administrator for Transit Safety and Oversight and Chief Safety Officer. The FTA Office of Transit Safety and Oversight administers a national transit safety program and monitors program compliance to ensure safe, reliable, and equitable transit service in accordance with FTA policy and regulatory requirements. The office implements and oversees safety standards for all modes of public transit in the United States.

Immediately prior to joining the FTA, Mr. DeLorenzo served as the Acting Associate Administrator for Enforcement for the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) and the Agency's Director of the Office of Enforcement and Compliance where he was responsible for policy and program development for the Agency's enforcement and compliance program.

Mr. DeLorenzo comes to the FTA with more than 30 years of experience in the transportation industry. Mr. DeLorenzo's career includes over 15 years in field experience and, also extends to managing training and education related to Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety and Security as Director of FMCSA's National Training Center. In that role he was responsible for a wide range of Commercial Vehicle Safety training for Federal, State and local law enforcement agencies in the areas of Commercial Motor Vehicle and Hazardous Materials Safety and Security, Criminal Interdiction and professional development. He holds a B.S. in Criminal Justice and Sociology, and a Master's in Public Policy and Management.

## **Dr. Melonie Barrington**

*Acting Deputy Associate Administrator, Office of Transit Safety and Oversight, Federal Transit Administration*



Dr. Melonie Barrington is the Acting Deputy Associate Administrator in the FTA Office of Transit Safety and Oversight (TSO).

Dr. Barrington has over 20 years of government experience spanning all aspects of transportation systems and programs. She began her Federal career in 2011 as a Transportation Specialist with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Office of Safety where she worked with FHWA Division Offices and State and local partners on safety and grant programs. Before joining FTA, Dr. Barrington spent the last five years leading the Transportation Training Development Section for the FHWA, National Highway Institute that provides technical training and resource materials to the transportation community across the country and U.S. territories in over

seventeen transportation areas.

She holds a Doctorate in Organizational Leadership from Northeastern University, M.A of Engineering in Project Management from the University of Maryland and B.S in Civil Engineering from the University of Florida. Dr. Barrington is a licensed professional engineer.

## **Gibran Abifadel**

*Transportation Data Analyst, Office of Transit Safety and Oversight, Federal Transit Administration*

Gibran Abifadel is a Civil & Environmental Engineer in Transportation Planning & Design and Safety. In the last 10 years, his professional experiences are focused in traffic engineering, geotechnical work, transportation planning & design, safety, and project management. Currently, he is the Transportation Data Analyst for the Federal Transit Administration's Office of Transit Safety and Oversight, where he conducts data analysis work focused on improving safety through coordination with programs and policy makers within FTA.

## **Brian Alberts**

*American Public Transportation Association (APTA)*

Brian Alberts is the Senior Director of Safety and Advisory Services at the APTA where he leads all safety-related policy and standards work for the association. He is the staff advisor for APTA's Rail Safety, Bus Safety, and Safety Coordinating Committees as well as the Commuter Rail Safety and Security Subcommittee.

Brian has over 15 years of experience in the transit and rail safety fields and is the manager of APTA's Safety Audit and Peer Review Programs, where he has led numerous safety audits and peer reviews both domestically and internationally. In addition, Brian leads standards working groups dealing with Safety and Security Certification, Bus Operator Training, and Cleaning and Disinfecting during the COVID-19 pandemic. Brian also plans multiple safety-related sessions at APTA's major conferences each year, including the Mobility conference, the Rail Conference, TRANSform/EXPO and the Mid-year Safety Seminar.

Prior to APTA, Brian was a Senior Program Analyst in the Federal Transit Administration's Office of System Safety. Brian received his M.A of Public Policy (MPP) degree from the George Washington University and is a graduate of the 2018 Leadership APTA Class and the 2020 Eno Transit Senior Executive Program. He also holds a WSO Certified Safety Executive Program (WSO-CSE) certificate, a Transit Safety and Security Program (TSSP) certificate, and a Public Transportation Safety Certification Training Program (PTSCTP) certificate.

## **J Bagley**

*Transportation Security Administration (TSA) Surface Operations*

J Bagley is the Branch Manager for Exercises and Training in the Operations Division of Surface Operations, Security Operations at TSA headquarters. In this role, Mr. Bagley provides program management for all programs supporting the development, completion and execution of exercises and training programs for Surface Transportation Security Inspectors and Specialists across Surface Operations. Prior to this, Mr. Bagley was a Program Analyst supporting the

Regional Security Director (RSD), Region 4 of Surface Operations. Prior to joining the RSD staff, he was a Surface Transportation Security Inspector for TSA and was responsible for ensuring security compliance of persons and transportation systems/entities regulated under Title 49 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) in the greater Houston, Texas area.

Mr. Bagley has a Bachelor of Science Degree in Border Security Science from Angelo State University and currently lives in Pearland, Texas with his wife, Beth.

## **Larry Barlow**

*Rail Transit Safety Specialist, Valley Metro*

Larry Barlow is a highly skilled Rail Transit Safety Specialist with an impressive track record of over 17 years of experience in transit and safety. Mr. Barlow has a deep understanding of the transit industry and has served in various senior roles, including as an Assistant Safety Manager and as the Manager of Safety and Training. During his tenure as Assistant Safety Manager, Mr. Barlow oversaw light rail safety. He ensured that all safety policies and procedures were strictly adhered to and that all employees were trained in safety best practices. Additionally, he worked closely with management to develop and implement safety programs to reduce accidents and injuries.

As the Manager of Safety and Training for the East Valley bus operations, Mr. Barlow was responsible for overseeing the implementation of safety policies and procedures as well as working closely with front-line staff, Executive management, and the local union to foster a positive safety culture.

Before moving into management, Mr. Barlow served as a bus operator, certified light rail operator, field supervisor, instructor, and line controller, which gave him a wealth of institutional knowledge. This experience has made him a well-rounded safety expert who understands the transit industry from the ground up. In addition to his extensive experience, Mr. Barlow is Occupational Safety and Health Administration-certified and holds a Public Transportation Safety Certification Training Program Certification. He is dedicated to creating a safe work environment for all employees and takes great pride in his work.

## **Steve Bethel**

*State Safety & Security Oversight Program Manager, Arizona Department of Transportation*

Steve joined the Arizona Department of Transportation SSO Office as a Program Manager in April of 2022. In 2006, Steve started his transit career as a track foreman building multiple line sections of Valley Metro's startup light rail system. As construction wrapped up in 2008, Steve went to work for Valley Metro, where he would spend the next 5 years in various roles in Maintenance and Operations. In 2012, Steve accepted a position with the Tucson streetcar system, where he assisted in its startup as the Maintenance Supervisor and eventually became



the Manager of Safety and Security. In 2017, Steve returned to Valley Metro where he served as the Lead Safety Specialist, until joining ADOT.

## **Loretta Bomgardner**

*Division Chief, Program Management, Office of Transit Safety and Oversight, Federal Transit Administration*

Loretta leads FTA's State Safety Oversight (SSO) program and Drug and Alcohol review and compliance program. Loretta joins FTA with over 28 years of safety experience spanning multiple modalities and aspects of transportation. Her experience includes working on the Federal, state, local and industry level where she advanced transportation programs and initiatives. She most recently served as Chief of Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA)'s Commercial Passenger Carrier Safety Division, where she grew the program through partnerships with various entities. During her time at FMCSA, Loretta has also served as a Transportation Specialist with the Office of Enforcement and Compliance in the Hazardous Materials Division and as the Chief of the Commercial Enforcement Division. In her free time, Loretta enjoys traveling with her husband and spending time with her children and grandchildren.

## **Tim Braxton**

*Program Manager, Office of Transit Safety and Oversight, Federal Transit Administration*

Timothy Braxton is a Program Manager at the US Department of Transportation and has worked at the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for over 17 years. He is responsible for providing Part 674 regulatory direction to State Safety Oversight Agencies (SSOA) including technical assistance on federal rule compliances to ensure effective program implementation of safety management systems (SMS).

Prior to FTA he worked at the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) for over 10 years as a Transportation Engineer responsible for developing project planning impact studies for major metropolitan areas within central and southern Maryland. Timothy has an MBA degree and is currently pursuing a Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) degree in Business Intelligence (BI) at Marymount University. He enjoys karaoke, watching Netflix and traveling with his wife and kids.

## **Brian Brinkley**

*Arizona Department of Transportation*

Brian Brinkley is the lead State Safety and Security Oversight Program Manager for the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT). Brian joined the ADOT SSO Office in February of 2017. Prior to ADOT, Brian was with Valley Metro Rail (VMR) from 2008-2017. During his time with

VMR he served in several roles in the Operations/Maintenance and Safety/Security Departments with an emphasis in Training, Safety, and Train Control.

While at VMR, Brian played crucial roles in the opening of the original 2008 20-mile Central Phoenix, East Valley light rail system, the 2015 Central Mesa Extension, and the 2016 Northwest Extension I. Since his transition as an SSO, he has had direct oversight in the opening of four other major capital projects, with three more currently underway.

Brian graduated from Northern Arizona University (NAU) with a bachelor's degree in Public Administration and is currently attending NAU for a Master's in Organizational Leadership. In addition, Brian holds a Certification in Safety Management from Gateway College. He has also completed all requirements for the Bus/Rail Public Transportation Safety Certification Training Program (PTSCTP) Certificates, as well as the Bus/Rail Transit Safety and Security Program (TSSP) Certificates.

## **John Chism**

*Program Manager, Office of Transit Safety and Oversight, Federal Transit Administration*

John P. Chism is a Program Manager within the Office of Transit Safety and Oversight and oversees State Safety Oversight Programs at eight (8) State DOTs. John worked for 22 years at the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) in Traffic Safety and Transit Rail Safety. John represented DDOT and the District of Columbia as a State Safety Oversight Program Manager on the Tri-State Oversight Committee with direct safety oversight of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) Metrorail system. In his most recent position before joining FTA, John served as a Safety Oversight Officer for the DC Streetcar and DC Circulator.

John is a native Washingtonian with an Associate of Applied Science Degree in Computer Information Systems from Prince George's Community College and a Bachelor of Science in Industrial Technology from North Carolina A&T State University.

## **Matthew DeDonato**

*Program Analyst, Office of Transit Safety and Oversight, Federal Transit Administration*

Matthew DeDonato is a Program Analyst in the Federal Transit Administration's Office of Transit Safety and Oversight. Matthew has worked within transportation for the past eighteen (18) years performing regulatory compliance and reporting, as well as data collection and data management for both federal and state agencies. Prior to joining FTA, Matthew worked for the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) in the Boston Security Coordination Center and at the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority's (MBTA), where he oversaw safety data tracking and reporting to local and federal stakeholders. Matthew has worked for the FTA since August of 2022.

## **Andrew Ennis**

*Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation*

Mr. Ennis joins us from the Virginia Department of Rail & Public Transportation (DRPT). Mr. Ennis originally hails from the Pacific Northwest, spending most of his time growing up in Seattle, Washington and Portland, Oregon where we met his spouse in culinary school. After living the kitchen life for a bit, Andrew went back to school for Environmental Sciences and Geographic Information System at Portland State University. After a few years of working in the environmental research world, Andrew entered the transportation professional space by taking a position at BNSF Railway working on their Positive Train Control (PTC) program. Mr. Ennis started his SSO career at DRPT in late-2015 as the Program Manager. Today Andrew is the SSO program Administrator. Aside from enjoying SSO work, Andrew spends most of his time outside with his family.

## **Ryan Frigo**

*National Transportation Safety Board*

Ryan Frigo is a system safety expert with over 18 years of experience. Before coming to the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), Mr. Frigo was employed by New Jersey Transit (NJT) as the Deputy Chief Safety Officer. He led NJT's development and implementation of a multi modal System Safety Program, established an agency wide safety data analytics initiative, accident investigation division and led a team of safety professionals in day-to-day risk identification and mitigation activities. Additionally, he led staff in the development of a safety internal control and process review system for operating and capital improvement projects and directed safety certification activities for major capital projects. Mr. Frigo's Federal career began at FTA, working with the Rail State Safety Oversight Program, including auditing, providing guidance, and technical assistance to State Agencies and Rail Transit Properties for System Safety Program Plan (SSPP) and Safety and Security Management Plan (SSMP) capital project oversight efforts. Mr. Frigo developed program metrics to assist States in developing internal strategies to push for technical capacity improvements, funding, and enforcement authority. Additionally, he served as Party Spokesperson on several NTSB investigations and participated in program funding and grant management reviews for Safety and Security Capital Projects. Mr. Frigo started his career at the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) in Chicago, Illinois investigating accidents involving customers with disabilities. Mr. Frigo has a Master of Public Administration from DePaul University in Chicago, Illinois.

## **Jeremy Furrer**

*Division Chief, Safety Policy and Promotion, Office of Transit Safety and Oversight, Federal Transit Administration*

Jeremy Furrer serves as the Chief for the of Safety Policy and Promotion Division within the FTA Office of System Safety. Jeremy first joined FTA in 2013 as a Presidential Management Fellow in the Office of Civil Rights. He served as Special Assistant to the FTA Administrator from 2014-2018 and later Acting Deputy Associate Administrator, Office of Civil Rights in 2020. Jeremy served as the Senior Policy Analyst in the Office of Budget and Policy from 2019-2022, where he led teams to oversee the review and development of Federal public transportation policy, including the implementation of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and relevant Presidential Executive Orders. Jeremy has served as Chief for Safety Policy and Promotion since July 2022.

## **Daren Gilbert**

*California Public Utilities Commission*

Daren Gilbert is the Program Manager of the Rail Transit Safety Branch with the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC). Daren has been working at CPUC since 2001, first as a Utilities engineer, then as Supervisor of the CPUC Rail Crossings Engineering Section. In 2011 he was promoted to Program Manager of the Rail Transit and Crossings Branch, which subsequently was divided into a transit safety Branch and a rail crossings Branch.

Daren is responsible for a staff of 32 inspectors, engineers and analysts that provide oversight for 15-transit agencies, including eight (8) that receive federal funding.

Daren started his career with the State of Missouri - Public Service Commission as a staff engineer. He relocated to Nevada in 1993 to work with the Nevada Public Utilities Commission, where he became manager of the Safety Division, with jurisdiction over gas pipeline and railroad safety programs. In 2001 he joined the California Public Utilities Commission.

Daren lives and works out of the Sacramento, California area. Daren is originally from St. Louis and is happy to be here to see the SSOA group and FTA folks as we work toward compliant RBI program, (and to squeeze in a family visit.)

## **Ivey Glendon**

*Safety Data Program Manager, Office of Transit Safety and Oversight, Federal Transit Administration*

Ivey Glendon is the Safety Data Program Manager in FTA's Office of Transit Safety and Oversight, where she focuses on optimizing use of safety data sources and making safety data more easily accessible. Prior to joining FTA, Ivey was a project manager and subject matter expert in data and metadata management at the University of Virginia and the Library of Congress.

## **Joe Gordon**

*National Transportation Safety Board*

Joe Gordon is a safety advocate with over 23 years of industry experience. After starting his railroad career with CSX Transportation, he began working with their Train Accident Prevention team. While at CSX, he spent time in the track and engineering, signal and train control and the mechanical departments. In 2009, he joined the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) as a track safety inspector. While with FRA, he led several accidents as the investigator in charge. His first investigation conducted jointly with the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) was in 2014. Following the on-scene phase of this investigation, he accepted a position with the NTSB and since that time has been assigned to over 40 accident investigations with the Safety Board working as Investigator in Charge, technical working group chairman, or subject matter expert. In 2019, Mr. Gordon was recognized as a Certified Safety Manager with the World Safety Organization. He has received numerous awards during federal service including a Distinguished Investigative Service Award and two Superior Achievement Awards for advancement of safety in the rail industry. In 2019, he received NTSB's Nall-Raskin Public Service Award in recognition of significant impacts on transportation safety and demonstrated exceptional public service through support of NTSB programs.

## **Frank Hackett**

*Program Manager, Office of Transit Safety & Oversight, Federal Transit Administration*

Frank manages FTA's Safety Risk Management processes for identifying, assessing, prioritizing, mitigating, and monitoring safety concerns impacting the transit industry. Frank joined FTA in early 2021 from the Defense Contract Management Agency (DCMA) where he remodeled the agency's global continuity program and provided emergency management support to the organization's headquarters components and Western Region. Prior to joining DCMA, Frank held roles in the private sector, local government, and on active duty in the US Coast Guard focusing on operations, safety, security, emergency management, and continuity. He has a bachelor's degree in Operations Research and Computer Analysis from the US Coast Guard Academy, an MA in Emergency and Disaster Management from American Military University, an MPA from the Maxwell School of Citizenship at Syracuse University, and an MS in Cybersecurity from Kennesaw State University.

## **Polly Hanson**

*American Public Transportation Association (APTA)*

To strengthen and improve public transportation, Ms. Hanson coordinates with APTA stakeholders to develop transit security, risk and emergency management standards and policies. She performs peer reviews and assists with safety audits and serves as an advocate for transportation security as well as a source matter expert on transit security, risk and emergency management issues and concerns. Ms. Hanson serves as the Vice-chair of the Transportation Security Administration Surface Transportation Security Advisory Committee and represents passenger rail and mass transit on the Department of Homeland Security cross-sector coordinating council.

Previously Ms. Hanson was the Chief of Police for Amtrak where she led a national police department responsible for protecting over 30 million passengers and 20,000 employees.

Polly began her career at the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) where she progressed through the ranks of the Metro Transit Police Department. As the Chief of the Metro Transit Police, Polly led a tristate police department and directed the response to the terrorist attacks in Madrid and London.

Polly received her Master's degree in Applied Behavioral Science from Johns Hopkins and her Bachelor's degree in Communications from Temple University. Polly has her FTA Transit Safety and Security Program and Public Transportation Safety Certification Training Program certifications.

Polly is the recipient of WMATA's Carmen E. Turner Award, was a Conference of Minority Transportation Officials (COMTO) Women Who Move the Nation. Ms. Hanson is a member of the Operation Lifesaver, Inc Board of Directors.

## **Robert Hanson**

*Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities*

Robert Hanson was hired as the Director of Rail Transit Safety in January 2023. Prior to joining the DPU Hanson was a Detective with the Amtrak Police Department assigned to oversee criminal investigations at Amtrak across New England. Mr. Hanson worked hundreds of fatal trespassing and other criminal investigations impacting rail safety across the New England Region. During his time with Amtrak, he served on several National Transportation Safety Board investigative teams and strived to make rail transportation safer for both customers of Amtrak and the communities they operated through. While at Amtrak, Mr. Hanson traveled across the country to serve as a transportation expert in working to reduce impacts of rail transportation accidents and increased safety. Additionally, Mr. Hanson worked on numerous projects to improve safety during new corridor development programs in accordance with the Bi-Partisan Infrastructure Law. Hanson worked closely with the Federal Railroad Administration and other regulatory groups to develop a comprehensive approach to rail safety.

Mr. Hanson earned a Master of Science degree on Investigations from the University of New Haven, along with an undergraduate degree.

## **Emily Jessup**

*Attorney-Advisor, Office of Chief Counsel, Federal Transit Administration*

Emily is an attorney with FTA's office of Chief Counsel, specializing in regulatory and legislative matters with an emphasis on transit safety and technical assistance. Emily joined FTA in 2019 after completing the DOT Honors Attorney program following her graduation from the

University of North Carolina School of Law. As an Honors Attorney, Emily completed rotations with FTA, the Office of Aviation Consumer Protection, and the Office of Inspector General.

## **Ruth Lyons**

*Senior Program Manager, Office of Safety Review, Federal Transit Administration*

Ms. Lyons currently holds the position as Senior Program Manager in the Office of Safety Review at the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). In this role, Ms. Lyons leads and oversees SSO Triennial safety audits and maintains transit safety policy compliance and monitoring compliance of technical assistance to transit industry stakeholders. Ms. Lyons has been in this position since 2018. Prior to that position, Ms. Lyons served as a Transit Safety and Security Training specialist in the Office of Transit Safety and Oversight and held that position at FTA since entering Federal service in 2005.

Ms. Lyons has over 20 years of safety experience in mass transit. Ms. Lyons received her Bachelor of Science in Education at Northeastern University in Boston, MA (1992) and her Master of Science in Safety Management from West Virginia University (1996).

Ms. Lyons' career in mass transit began in 1998 as a Safety Officer at WMATA in Washington, DC. Ms. Lyons also served as Acting Manager of Safety and Training where she developed and established the WMATA Safety Training Program. Ms. Lyons was promoted to Executive Safety Officer to the Assistant General Manager of System Safety in September 2002. Ms. Lyons has also served as a Transportation Safety Institute Instructor from 2001-2005 teaching Transit Industrial Safety Management.

Ms. Lyons began her professional career as a Teacher in Jersey City, NJ (1992) and then later served as an Adjunct Professor at the West Virginia University's (WVU) Graduate School - School of Engineering and Mineral Resources. She taught Safety Compliance and Legislation (1998).

## **Stewart Mader**

*Senior Program Analyst, Office of Transit Safety and Oversight, Federal Transit Administration*

Stewart Mader is Senior Program Analyst for Safety Policy at the Federal Transit Administration. He leads the Public Transportation Agency Safety Plans (PTASP) regulation and Technical Assistance Center, and FTA's actions to address assaults on transit workers. Mr. Mader's public transportation experience spans public engagement, customer experience, and safety. Before joining FTA, he served as the first Chief Customer Officer for New Jersey Transit, and as chair and chief spokesperson for the Port Authority of New York & New Jersey's Port Authority Trans Hudson Riders Council. He also founded and led the VaxTransit initiative to promote more than 580 transit agencies connecting communities to vaccines to accelerate COVID-19 recovery.



## **Chris McKay**

*Transportation Security Administration (TSA) Surface Operations*

Christopher T. McKay joined the Department of Homeland Security, Transportation Security Administration in October 2002 and currently holds the position of Industry Engagement Manager, Mass Transit and Passenger Rail within the TSA Surface Division. Mr. McKay is responsible for working with Chiefs of Police and Security Directors of public transportation agencies to assist them in preventing and protecting transit systems from terrorist attacks. In this position he is responsible for the oversight of security programs for passenger railroads including programs that address physical security, cybersecurity, employee training, and security technology development.

Prior to his employment with the Department of Homeland Security, he held various positions at the Department of Transportation, Department of Justice and the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Mr. McKay holds a Bachelor's and Master's Degrees with a concentration in Finance from Loyola University in Baltimore, MD and resides in Odenton, MD.

## **Cyrell McLemore**

*Senior Inspection Specialist, Office of Transit Safety and Oversight, Federal Transit Administration*

Cyrell R. McLemore has 23 years of experience managing grant programs, conducting program oversight and managing transit projects on the State and Federal level. He currently serves as a Senior Inspection Specialist for FTA's Office of Transit Safety and Oversight, Office of Safety Review. Previously, Mr. McLemore served as a General Engineer in FTA's Region 5 Chicago office and was responsible for several major capital investment projects throughout the Region.

## **Cameron Phelps**

*Ohio Department of Transportation*

Cameron Phelps works as the SSO Program Manager at the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT). He is a graduate of The Ohio State University with a Bachelor of Science in Psychology and Criminology. Prior to joining ODOT in October of 2022, Cameron worked in compliance in the Child Welfare industry for three years. He was responsible for ensuring that safety regulations were followed. Cameron was first introduced to transit when he assisted the local transit agency in his hometown with compliancy concerns, grant writing, and drafting a tri-county transportation coordination plan during summers while in college.

## **Mike Pineau**

*Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities*



Mike Pineau is the Principal Safety and Risk Management Analyst for the Rail Transit Safety Division of the Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities (DPU). Prior to joining the Rail Transit team, Mike developed and launched the rideshare auditing program for the DPU's Transportation Network Company Division, making Massachusetts the first state in the country to conduct quarterly audits of rideshare companies like Uber and Lyft. Mike has been a public servant in Massachusetts for over a decade in a variety of technical roles. Prior to his time in public service, Mike worked for global technology company Apple. Mike is also a big technology nerd, lover of music, and avid world traveler

## **Erin Powell**

*Senior Regional Safety Officer and Safety Management Inspection Coordinator, Office of Transit Safety and Oversight, Federal Transit Administration*

Erin Powell serves as FTA's Senior Regional Safety Officer and Safety Management Inspection (SMI) Coordinator within TSO's Program Operations Division. Currently, she leads the FTA's safety enforcement efforts (SMIs) in Boston and Philadelphia. Erin came to FTA after 6 years of service as a Civil Engineering Officer in the US Air Force. She joined the FTA in 2014 as an engineer overseeing the construction of major transit systems. In 2017, Erin transitioned to FTA's Office of Transit Safety and Oversight and has led a variety of initiatives including: certification of several SSOs under 674, development of the SSO Audit Manual, and creating the initial guidance and Special Directives for the Risk-Based Inspection Program. In her spare time, she enjoys spending time with her husband, three children, and dog.

## **Joseph Powell**

*Program Manager, Office of Transit Safety and Oversight, Federal Transit Administration*

Joseph has spent the last 15 years improving the safety and viability of America's critical transportation networks and infrastructure as an employee of the United States Department of Transportation. At present, he is an SSO Program Manager in FTA's Office of Safety and Oversight. This role aligns well with his desire to make the world around him a better place. He is a proud husband and father, amateur gardener, shade-tree mechanic, fairly decent cook, and general handyman. Joe suffers from the affliction of endless curiosity, digging relentlessly into whatever interesting topic his mind monkey puts in front of him. His most current endeavor is learning to play the guitar. Throughout his life he has been an athlete, a scholar, an outdoorsman, a soldier, a teacher, a bus driver, and an entertainer.

## **Richard Price**

*Program Analyst, Office of Transit Safety and Oversight, Federal Transit Administration*

Richard serves as a Program Analyst for the Office of Transit Safety and Oversight focusing on stakeholder engagement and communications. Prior to joining FTA, Richard was with the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), working on

transit policy and programs for the association. He is a self-appointed transit nerd. He currently resides in Arlington with his wife and two children.

## **Davis Rajtik**

*Washington Metrorail Safety Commission*

Davis leads the Washington Metrorail Safety Commission's (WMSC) Audits, Inspections, and Corrective Action Plans Programs. Before joining the WMSC, Davis practiced employment and labor law with a boutique law firm based in D.C. He also served on the Arlington County Transportation Commission for one three-year term. Davis has a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from Shippensburg University in Pennsylvania and a Juris Doctor from the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C.

## **Sharmila Samarasinghe**

*Deputy Chief Executive Officer and Chief Operating Officer, Washington Metrorail Safety Commission*

Sharmila leads a team of experts at the Washington Metrorail Safety Commission (WMSC) tasked with the day-to-day oversight of safety protocols and practices on the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Metrorail system. Sharmila has fifteen years of experience as a system safety, transportation and security professional. Sharmila has held a variety of important posts at state transportation agencies and at metropolitan and regional planning organizations. Before joining the WMSC, Sharmila served for over two years as chair of the Tri-State Oversight Committee (TOC), an organization that preceded the WMSC in overseeing WMATA Metrorail safety. Before her service at the TOC, Sharmila worked for the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation, Virginia Railway Express, the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission and the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments. Sharmila has a Bachelor of Science in Economics from Slippery Rock University in Pennsylvania.

## **Paulina Seider**

*Director, Office of System Safety, Office of Transit Safety and Oversight, Federal Transit Administration*

Paulina Seider is the Director of the Office of System Safety Office of Transit Safety and Oversight, at the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).

Mrs. Seider manages FTA's safety policy development and implementation, including efforts to support transit industry adoption of Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan regulation requirements. Mrs. Seider also oversees FTA's safety training development and delivery activities. Mrs. Seider holds a B.A from the George Washington University and a J.D. and a M.A of Laws from Duke University School of Law.

## **Elliott T. Shepard**

*Division Chief, Program Operations, Office of Transit Safety and Oversight, Federal Transit Administration*

Elliott T. Shepherd is the Program Operations Division Chief. He is responsible for Accident Investigations, Inspections, Region Safety Officers, and Emergency Management. He previously worked for Longevity Consulting as a Program Manager. He managed multiple audit teams conducting Triennial Audits. This included reviewing all documents related to State Safety Oversight Reporting and using the 49 CFR Part 674 Certification Toolkit.

Working for the ABS Group, Elliott was a Principal Consultant supporting the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) with the review of Positive Train Control Safety Plans (PTCSP). His team of auditors reviewed documents related to the PTCSP for regulatory compliance. He provided expertise, guidance, and written opinions related to completeness of the PTCSP and its component parts.

As the Chief Operating Officer for SunRail, Elliott was responsible for the daily operation of the commuter rail line in Central Florida. Elliott's team successfully completed the installations of all Positive Train Control (PTC) system wide.

Elliott also held the position of Staff Director at the FRA leading Security, Emergency Preparedness, and Accident Investigation. His team directed FRA's response to National Transportation Safety Board recommendations, assigning investigations, and coordinating information from FRA Regions, and the railroads. He worked with FRA Regional staff in reporting and documenting of all FRA reportable accidents. Elliott received a B.S. in Civil Engineering from Northeastern University in Boston.

## **Brian Shiner**

*Federal Railroad Administration*

Brian Shiner began his railroad career in 1998 for Canadian Pacific Railroad as a freight conductor. He was promoted to the position of locomotive engineer in 1999 and worked as a Class I freight engineer up until 2015. During that time, he was elected Vice General Chairman for the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and was appointed co-chair for Canadian Pacific's safety committee, by management.

In 2015, Brian was hired as a Motive Power and Equipment Inspector for the Federal Railroad Administration. He is currently triple-certified as a Steam Locomotive Inspector, Motive Power and Equipment Inspector, and an Operating Practices Inspector.

In 2021, Brian was promoted to Chief Safety Inspector for Safety Management Team - 9. In 2023 Brian joined the Research, Development, and Innovation Team - 12 and is currently

serving in this role. Between 2015 until current, Brian continues to take data analysis classes and continues to develop data models for the Federal Railroad Administration.

## **Jerry Stenquist**

*Attorney-Advisor, Office of Chief Counsel, Federal Transit Administration*

Jerry is an attorney with FTA's Office of Chief Counsel, specializing in grant management requirements, with an emphasis on real property, government ethics, record management, and suspension and debarment. Prior to his work with FTA, Jerry practiced in the areas of real property and government regulation as an attorney for the Utah Transit Authority from 2017-2018 and an attorney in private practice for Parsons Behle & Latimer in Idaho Falls, Idaho.

## **Richard Wong**

*Attorney-Advisor, Office of Chief Counsel, Federal Transit Administration*

Richard is an attorney with FTA's Office of Chief Counsel. He provides legal support to FTA's Office of Transit Safety and Oversight and was involved in the writing of the Part 674 and the previous Part 659 State Safety Oversight regulations. His other regulatory roles include the drafting and enforcement of FTA's Buy America and Bus Testing regulations and the Department of Transportation's ADA regulation. In his spare time, he studies harbor fortifications and warship designs.

## **Rebecca Zepeda**

*Transit Safety Specialist, Valley Metro*

Originally from Washington State, Rebecca attended Arizona State University and graduated with a B.S. in Environmental and Resource Management with a focus on wastewater and hazardous materials management. Rebecca began her career in safety as an intern at an environmental consulting firm, where she conducted asbestos building sampling, air sampling, arsenic sampling, and mold monitoring. Rebecca's tenacity and fervor earned her the opportunity to become a full-time Industrial Hygienist Technician. Currently holding certifications in Asbestos Handling, Confined Spaces, Hazardous Waste Operations, and Emergency Response (HAZWOPER), Rebecca has earned the Public Transportation Safety Certification Training Program certificate (PTSCTP).

As a Rail Transit Safety Specialist, Rebecca ensures compliance with Valley Metro's internal safety programs and work diligently to enhance safety in the work environment. Long-term, Rebecca aspires to obtain multiple certifications such as the Associate Safety Professional (ASP), and Certified Safety Professional (CSP) and aims to become a Certified Industrial Hygienist (CIH). Such certifications will serve as an asset to Valley Metro as we continue to grow in connecting communities and enhancing lives.