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# Transit Safety and Oversight Spotlight Newsletter

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U.S. Department of Transportation  
Federal Transit Administration

## Message from the Associate Administrator

Dear Transit Colleagues:

The holiday season is here and I am hoping you can spend it with your loved ones. It is important we take time to mentally recharge, so we can be ready for all that lies ahead for transit safety in the new year.

I recently attended the [American Public Transportation Association's Safety & Risk Management Seminar](#) in Austin, TX and had the opportunity to provide the latest safety updates. If you attended the event, I hope that you were able to engage with other FTA speakers and attendees. FTA values opportunities to hear directly from the transit community.

Throughout the year, FTA has published three Notices of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) and one Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPRM). The [Public Transportation Safety Certification and Training Program NPRM](#), [Transit Worker Hours of Service and Fatigue Risk Management ANPRM](#), [State Safety Oversight NPRM](#) are all open for public comment. In addition, the comment period deadline has been extended for the [Transit Worker Hours of Service and Fatigue Risk Management ANPRM](#) and [State Safety Oversight NPRM](#). We value your opinion, so please consider submitting comments on these rulemakings.

In addition, FTA published a [proposed General Directive on Required Actions Regarding Assaults on Transit Workers](#) in response to the significant and continuing safety risk of assaults on transit workers, and FTA's concern about the need to address this risk. This is a significant step to reduce assaults on our nation's transit workforce. Learn more about the proposed general directive on page 6.

Looking ahead to next year, FTA will participate in the Transportation Research Board Annual Meeting in early January. In April, FTA will host the 17th Annual Drug and Alcohol Conference in Atlanta, GA. I, along with FTA staff, look forward to seeing you at these events as they are other opportunities for us to connect.

In addition, we will continue our rulemaking activities such as considering your feedback from the NPRM open comment periods. As communication is the key to safety, FTA will continue to openly engage with the transit industry in 2024. Please do not hesitate to reach out if you have any questions, safety concerns or ideas on how FTA can better assist you. Thank you for your cooperation and I look forward to our continued work in 2024.

Sincerely,

Joe



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

## FTA at Transit Industry Events



Clockwise from top left: Senior Inspection Specialist Cyrell McLemore, Associate Administrator Joe DeLorenzo, Office of System Safety Director Paulina Seider and Senior Program Analyst Stewart Mader at APTA Safety & Risk Management Seminar.

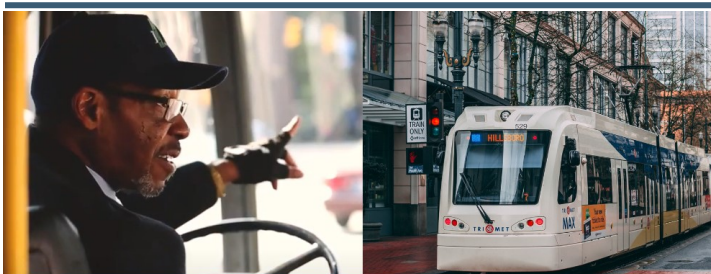
In late November, Associate Administrator Joe DeLorenzo attended the [Federal Railroad Administration's Rail Share Conference](#) in Kansas City, MO. He provided an overview on rail transit safety data and FTA resources related to rail transit.

Recently, FTA attended the [American Public Transportation Association's Safety & Risk Management Seminar](#) in Austin, TX. Associate Administrator Joe DeLorenzo spoke about the latest FTA safety updates and Senior Program Analyst Stewart Mader presented at the "Transit Worker Assaults: Data Collection, Crime Prevention and Mitigation Strategies" session. Senior Inspection Specialist Cyrell McLemore discussed the Risk-Based Inspection Program at the Rail Safety Committee and Office of System Safety Director Paulina Seider highlighted [Safety Advisory 23-1: Bus-to-Person Collisions](#) at the Bus Safety Committee.

See presentations from these events and other FTA conference presentations on FTA's [webpage](#).

## Availability of Mental Health Resources for Transit Workers

Research has shown that the holidays can be a difficult time of year for those struggling with mental health challenges. FTA has compiled [mental health resources for transit workers](#) in support of transit workers who may be struggling with their mental health. In addition, transit agencies should review [Safety Advisory 22-4: Suicide Prevention Signage on Public Transit](#). FTA issued the safety advisory to recommend that transit agencies apply best practices to their suicide prevention signage and messaging campaigns to reduce suicide attempts, and to advise transit agencies to assess suicide event data to monitor the impact of signage. Mental health affects everyone, and FTA acknowledges its impact on the transit community.



Transit Worker Hours of Service and Fatigue Risk Management  
Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking

**Deadline Extended: 1/29/2024**



State Safety Oversight  
Notice of Proposed Rulemaking

**Deadline Extended: 2/15/2024**



## 2023 Office of Transit Safety and Oversight (TSO) Accomplishments

### Proposed Rulemakings

FTA published three Notices of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) and one Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPRM) in the Federal Register. The [Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan NPRM](#) was published in April and the comment period closing in June. The [Public Transportation Safety Certification Training Program NPRM](#) and [Transit Worker Hours of Service and Fatigue Risk Management ANPRM](#) were published in late October and are open for comments. The [State Safety Oversight NPRM](#) was published in mid-November and is open for comments.

### National Public Transportation Safety Plan & Safety Advisory

FTA published proposed updates to the [National Public Transportation Safety Plan](#) in late May. The public comment period closed in late July and FTA is currently working on a finalized, updated National Public Transportation Safety Plan and response to public comments.

In September, FTA issued a [safety advisory on bus-to-person collisions](#) to recommend that transit agencies that provide bus services consider mitigation strategies to reduce bus-to-person collisions.

### Webinars

FTA hosted over 15 webinars on topics including [cybersecurity](#), [human trafficking prevention](#), [suicide prevention signage](#), [transit rail grade crossing](#), [community-based public safety programs](#), and more. In addition, TSO held webinars to further explain rulemaking activities, updated safety guidance and safety advisories. The 2023 webinars are available on the [TSO webinar webpage](#) and [PTASP TAC webinar webpage](#).

### Joint State Safety Oversight & Rail Transit Agency Workshop

FTA successfully hosted the annual Joint State Safety Oversight and Rail Transit Agency Workshop in St. Louis, MO. The workshop is FTA's annual event dedicated to advancing rail transit safety. The workshop had nearly 400 participants, with both in-person and virtual attendees. Read more about the workshop on page 5.

### Oversight Tracking System (OTrak)

The [OTrak](#) pilot program concluded as FTA prepares to rollout recipient access to OTrak. The pilot program included 24 recipients comprised of a combination of large and small transit agencies and State Department of Transportation from all 10 FTA regions.

### Transit Advisory Committee for Safety

The [Transit Advisory Committee for Safety \(TRACS\)](#) convened three times. For the 2022-2024 charter, TRACS focused on advancing rider and worker safety, reducing bus collisions and cybersecurity and data management.



## Meet the Transit Advisory Committee for Safety Members: Reggie Reese, Adam Sharkey and Justin Sobeck

The [Transit Advisory Committee for Safety \(TRACS\)](#) provides information, advice and recommendations on transit safety to the U.S. Secretary of Transportation and FTA Administrator. TRACS is comprised of a diverse panel of professionals representing a variety of stakeholders and interests to address transit safety issues cooperatively.

### Reggie Reese

Chief Safety Officer, Pierce Transit

**What made you interested in pursuing a career in public transportation safety?** I am a proudly retired US Army tank commander, an extremely safety-sensitive job. I have seen the consequences of mishaps I would not even dare to describe to you here. Once I got into public transportation, I was mentored by amazing top-level industry professionals in safety and risk management who wanted to teach me how, what and why accidents happened, and the system creation, deployment, and controls of safety system. Our industry does not operate within walls. We are everywhere people are. The potential for long lasting, life changing consequences of unsafe behaviors, equipment and system procedures is a reality of public transportation. Any event could change any person's life trajectory in a second. Employees, passengers, pedestrians families and the general public deserve safety to be the number one priority of every operation. My interest in public transportation has always been the prevention of those events which cause harm.



Reggie Reese



Adam Sharkey

### Adam Sharkey

Deputy Director, River Cities Public Transit

**What is your background in the transit industry?** My career in transit started in 2012 when I became a driver for River Cities Public Transit. Looking back, I feel fortunate that I started as a driver, because now as a Deputy Director for the agency, I understand the challenges our drivers face throughout the year. Not only from a seasonal perspective, but also from a customer service perspective. I thoroughly enjoyed my tenure as a driver, and I took it seriously. After almost a decade in the industry, I was tapped to be a Deputy Director at River Cities Public Transit. My years of service in the agency, starting as a driver and performing safety training and technology installation services can only help me understand the requirements of this position better.

### Justin Sobeck

State Safety Oversight Manager and Passenger Rail Safety Specialist; Missouri Department of Transportation

**What made you interested in pursuing a career in public transportation safety?** I have been interested in anything rail related since I was a year-old, so a career in rail and transit system safety was a natural progression when the opportunity became available. Missouri Department of Transportation's mission is to provide a world-class transportation system that is safe, innovative and dedicated to a prosperous Missouri. I am happy to provide my talents based on these pillars to better serve Missouri's transit system users and hope that their positive experiences lead to safe journeys and more trips.



Justin Sobeck

## 2023 FTA Joint State Safety Oversight Rail Transit Agency Workshop Recap

From November 14 to November 16, 2023, FTA hosted its annual safety workshop, the [FTA Joint State Safety Oversight \(SSO\) Rail Transit Agency \(RTA\) workshop](#) in St. Louis, MO.

### Day 1—Tuesday, November 14, 2023

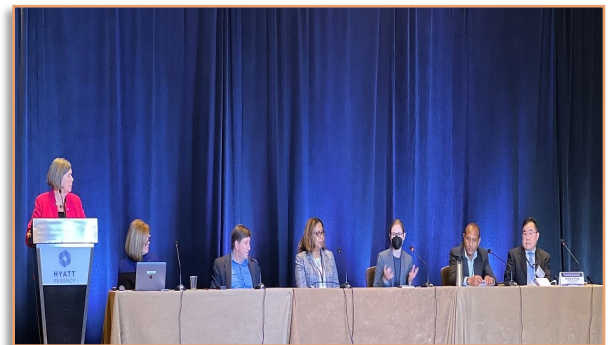


State Safety Oversight Agencies in-person attendees work together during the triennial safety audit case study breakout session.

This year, the first day of the workshop was for State Safety Oversight Agencies (SSOA) only and offered in-person sessions, including multiple panel discussions on the risk-based inspection program, an interactive Triennial Safety Audit case study and a session on FTA and SSOA enforcement. The day also included an optional office hours session focused on the risk-based inspection program which gave SSOAs an opportunity to meet with FTA's risk-based inspection team one-on-one for 15 minutes. The change to the workshop structure of an SSOA-only day was in response to feedback from the 2022 workshop. SSOAs capitalized on the in-person component of the workshop to ask questions about the risk-based inspection program.

### Day 2—Wednesday, November 15, 2023

Beginning on the second day, both SSOAs and RTAs were in attendance, and virtual options were available for certain sessions. FTA Deputy Administrator Veronica Vanterpool provided remarks as did Associate Administrator Joe DeLorenzo. SSOAs and RTAs learned about how to use safety data in the National Transit Database and safety issues involving rail grade crossings. In addition to the risk-based inspection panel, attendees heard from their peers on how they launched a capital project over a summer holiday. The day ended with a general question and answer session. The questions asked during this session centered around assaults on transit workers and customer care.



Division Chief Loretta Bomgardner, Associate Administrator Joe DeLorenzo, Acting Deputy Associate Administrator Dr. Melonie Barrington, Director Paulina Seider, Division Chief Elliott Shepard and Attorney-Advisor Richard Wong answer questions from workshop attendees.



Safety Risk Management Program Manager Frank Hackett discusses transit worker and customer assault.

### Day 3—Thursday, November 16, 2023

On the final day, workshop sessions included a panel discussion on the risk-based inspection program, transit worker and customer assault and safety challenges in managing securement of disabled trains and light rail vehicles. Federal partners like the National Transportation Safety Board and the Transportation Security Administration also presented.

# Notice of Proposed General Directive: Required Actions Regarding Assaults on Transit Workers Assessment

On December 20, 2023, FTA issued a request for public comment on a [proposed General Directive on Required Actions Regarding Assaults on Transit Workers](#). The proposed General Directive would require transit agencies subject to the Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP) regulation (49 CFR part 673) to conduct a safety risk assessment related to assaults on transit workers on their public transportation system and provide to FTA information about how they are assessing, mitigating and monitoring the safety risk associated with assaults on transit workers. This represents a significant step in reducing assaults on our nation's transit workforce using Safety Management System (SMS) principles and methods. The proposed General Directive is open for comment until February 20, 2024.

## Summary of the Proposed General Directive

FTA's proposed General Directive would require each transit agency subject to the PTASP regulation to take the following actions within 60 days of the issuance of the General Directive:

- Use the Safety Risk Management (SRM) process documented in its Agency Safety Plan to conduct a safety risk assessment related to assaults on transit workers on the public transportation system it operates, unless the agency has conducted a safety risk assessment related to assaults on transit workers in the twelve months preceding the date of the final General Directive;
- Identify safety risk mitigations or strategies necessary as a result of the agency's safety risk assessment;
- As required by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law at 49 U.S.C. 5329(d) (5), each transit agency serving a large urbanized area must involve the joint labor-management safety committee when identifying and recommending these safety risk mitigations;
- Provide information to FTA on how it is assessing, mitigating and monitoring the safety risk associated with assaults on transit workers, including
  - Likelihood and severity of potential consequences,
  - Risk rating(s), and
  - Information related to identified safety risk mitigations and data to monitor mitigation effectiveness.

This safety risk assessment approach to transit worker safety is grounded in the SMS principles and methods FTA has adopted to enhance the safety of public transportation. It will ensure that each transit agency is taking a formal look at the risk of assaults on transit workers on their system. It will contribute to agencies identifying mitigations that are scalable and effective across the range of services they provide and the situations that contribute to the risk of assault on transit workers.

### Resources

- [Using SMS to Protect Transit Workers from Assaults](#)
- [Addressing Operator Assault through Your Agency's SMS](#) (webinar recording)
- [An SMS Approach to Operator Assault](#)
- [Developing Mitigations in Response to a Safety Risk Assessment](#)
- [Enhanced Transit Safety and Crime Prevention Initiative](#)
- [Special Directives: Required Actions Regarding Transit Worker Assault](#)

### De-Escalation Training

- Assault Awareness and Prevention for Transit Operators: [Direct Delivery](#) or [On-Demand](#)
- Assault Awareness and Prevention for Transit Operators for Transit Agency International Staff: [Train the Trainer](#)
- Violence in the Transit Workplace – Prevention, Response and Recovery: [On-Demand](#) (for transit operators) or [Train the Trainer](#) (for instructional staff)

Continued from Page 6

## Technical Assistance and Resources

FTA has developed technical assistance resources to help agencies conduct a safety risk assessment for the risk of assaults on transit workers and develop mitigations based on the safety risk assessment.

To help develop their safety risk assessments, agencies can also use [National Transit Database \(NTD\) datasets](#). In August, FTA released the first datasets that include the new categorization for assaults on transit workers. Currently these are “year-to-date” values published 90 days after the close of the month. This means for example, that the December release includes events occurring through August 2023. This data is available in the following data products:

- [Safety & Security Major event Time Series Data](#)
- [Safety & Security Event Details](#):
  - [Major Safety Events](#)
  - [Non-Major Safety Events](#)

NTD’s [Monthly Modal Time Series](#) now publishes greater detail and gives data for Non-Major Physical Assaults, Non-Major Non-Physical Assaults, Major Physical Assaults and Major Non-Physical Assaults for the person types of “Operators” and “Other Transit Workers.” The series also calculates Total Assaults on Transit Workers.

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## Fiscal Year 2024 Transportation Safety Institute (TSI) Safety Training Available

[Registration](#) is open for the Transportation Safety Institute’s (TSI) Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 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. The FY24 safety training schedule offers some additional face-to-face deliveries.

- [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 FY24 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, training includes courses for bus, rail, general transit safety and transit crime prevention and emergency management. 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 Training](#) — 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.





## FTA Employee Spotlight: Ivey Glendon



**Ivey Glendon**

Safety Data Program Manager, Safety Assurance and Risk Management Division, Office of System Safety, Office of Transit Safety and Oversight, FTA

**How would you explain your job to someone you have never met?** I support the Safety Data Management Program in FTA's Office of Transit Safety and Oversight by participating in design and development of databases that contain transit safety data, coordinating with other FTA stakeholders on safety data collection, analysis and reporting and supporting other safety research efforts.

**What were you doing prior to this role?** Before coming to FTA, I most recently worked as a librarian at the Library of Congress to make research materials discoverable. I developed expertise in metadata standards, research data initiatives and project and program management — experiences that align with my new role at FTA. Prior to working at the Library of Congress, I was a librarian at the University of Virginia where I helped researchers manage and publish their own data.

**What is your favorite moment of your professional career so far?** Working in the National Digital Newspaper Program stands out as a great time in my career. I was part of the team that published the first one million pages in the freely available portal, Chronicling America, and now more than 20 million pages are available. Newspapers are interesting, data-filled resources that we can mine for knowledge beyond what is printed on the page.

**What is your favorite transit system in the US?** This is easy: Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) in Washington, DC. I have lived in the DC area for seven plus years and I feel very fortunate to have access to all the best things about DC — museums, historical sites, sports (go Nats and United!) — via WMATA.

**What was your first time using public transit like?** My first time using public transit was using the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority rapid transit during a school trip to Boston. Riding the "T" was very exciting because there was no such train option where I grew up and it was a horizon-broadening experience for me.

**What people or experiences have shaped you?** I have one sibling — a younger sister. As kids we were polar opposites, but today she's my best friend and the first person I ask for advice. She always encourages me and helps me not take everything so seriously.

**What movie or TV show could you watch on a loop? Why?** Sometime during the pandemic, to my husband's dismay, I discovered the entire run of "ER" is available to stream. Firing up an episode of "ER" is guaranteed to have him snoring minutes, but it takes me straight back to 1999, Thursday nights at 10 p.m., and watching with the volume low so I would not get in trouble for staying up too late on a school night.

**What are the saved weather locations in your phone?** My saved locations are Virginia Beach, VA and Berlin and Munich. Virginia Beach is my hometown, and I spent a marvelous week in Germany. I will remove Berlin and Munich at some point, but for now, I am still savoring the memory of an awesome vacation.

**What is your idea of a great day?** A great day for me would be exploring a state park with a long hike or bike ride and a picnic afterwards. I am working on the Virginia State Parks Trail Quest and have visited 16 of Virginia's 42 state parks, with more trips planned this year.

**What do you do to unwind after a hard day?** I have been an avid reader since I was a child. (True story: I once set up a library in my room, checked out books to my sister, and imposed late fines for materials not returned on time.) So, after a hard day, I will relax by reading a book from the latest stack I have picked up from the library.





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

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Access the [FTA Transit Safety and Oversight Spotlight Newsletters](#).

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## Upcoming FTA TSO Office Speaking Engagements

### [Transportation Research Board](#)

January 7 – 11, 2024 | Washington, D.C.

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