

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

**Federal Transit Administration**

**[Special Directive No. 24-5, Notice No. 1]**

**Special Directive Under 49 U.S.C. § 5329 and 49 CFR Part 670  
Required Actions to Strengthen Safety Oversight of the Southeastern Pennsylvania  
Transportation Authority's Rail Transit System**

**AGENCY:** Federal Transit Administration (FTA), U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT).

**SUMMARY:** FTA issues Special Directive (SD) 24-5 to require the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) to address findings documented in FTA's Safety Management Inspection (SMI) report released on July 5, 2024 to strengthen safety oversight of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority's rail transit system. FTA conducted this SMI of PennDOT and SEPTA between August 10, 2023 and January 31, 2024 to assess an escalating pattern of safety incidents and concerns on SEPTA's rail transit and fixed-route bus transit system and to assess the effectiveness of PennDOT's State Safety Oversight (SSO) program for SEPTA's rail transit system.

This Special Directive identifies 11 findings requiring actions that SEPTA must take to strengthen oversight of SEPTA's rail transit system.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** For program matters, Mr. Joseph DeLorenzo, Associate Administrator for Transit Safety and Oversight and Chief Safety Officer, telephone (202)-366-1783 or [joseph.delorenzo@dot.gov](mailto:joseph.delorenzo@dot.gov); for legal matters, Ms. Emily Jessup, Attorney Advisor, FTA, telephone 202-366-8907 or [emily.jessup@dot.gov](mailto:emily.jessup@dot.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

SEPTA is a regional public transportation authority created by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania that operates rail transit, bus, commuter rail, electric trolleybus and oversees paratransit services, for nearly four million people in Philadelphia and the four surrounding counties, Delaware, Montgomery, Bucks, and Chester. SEPTA is the sixth largest mass transit system in the U.S. by ridership, and the largest in Pennsylvania.

PennDOT's SSO Division is the State Safety Oversight Agency (SSOA) designated by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania as responsible for overseeing rail transit safety in Pennsylvania. PennDOT's SSOA was certified by FTA in April 2018 in accordance with the requirements of Federal transportation law (49 U.S.C. § 5329(e)) and FTA's SSO regulation (49 CFR part 674). PennDOT receives FTA grant funds to carry out its SSO program in accordance with Federal regulations.

This Special Directive addresses PennDOT's oversight of SEPTA's rail transit system, including

the Market Frankford Line subway-elevated, the Broad Street Line subway, the Norristown High Speed Line, and SEPTA's six subway-surface trolley and two suburban lines. PennDOT's safety oversight activities do not extend to SEPTA's bus transit system or other SEPTA transit modes.

In response to an escalating pattern of safety incidents and concerns on the SEPTA system, FTA initiated an SMI at SEPTA in August 2023. FTA also included PennDOT's oversight of SEPTA's safety program as part of the SMI, after an Immediate Action Letter to PennDOT in March 2023 failed to yield significant improvements in SEPTA's safety performance.

The SMI assessed the identified causes and contributing factors for recent safety events, the effectiveness of SEPTA's safety training programs, the level and quality of supervision provided for safety-critical activities, and the safety impacts of an increasing number of assaults on workers for SEPTA's workers and passengers. Additionally, the SMI evaluated the effectiveness of PennDOT's SSO program in overseeing and enforcing safety at a rail transit system of SEPTA's size and complexity, including a review of PennDOT's policies and practices for identifying areas of safety concern and compelling SEPTA to address rail transit safety concerns.

FTA published the SMI report on July 5, 2024. In the report, FTA issued a total of 14 findings and 17 required actions to PennDOT in two categories

- Category 4 – PennDOT SSO Program Resources
- Category 5 – PennDOT Safety Oversight of SEPTA's Rail Transit System

This Special Directive addresses Category 5 and identifies 11 findings requiring 14 actions that PennDOT must take to enhance its safety oversight of SEPTA's rail transit system.

### **Finding 1. PennDOT Has Not Ensured SEPTA's Compliance with Public Transportation Safety Certification Training Program Requirements**

Per FTA's Public Transportation Safety Certification Training Program (PTSCTP) regulation at 49 CFR § 672.13(a), SEPTA must designate its personnel and contractors who are directly responsible for safety oversight and ensure their compliance with the training requirements set forth in the regulation. The PTSCTP regulation defines *directly responsible for safety oversight* as "public transportation agency personnel whose primary job function includes the development, implementation, and review of the agency's safety plan, and/or the [SSOA] requirements for the rail fixed guideway public transportation system pursuant to 49 CFR part 674."

Also, per 49 CFR § 672.21(a), "Each recipient shall ensure that its designated personnel are enrolled in the PTSCTP. Each recipient shall ensure that designated personnel update their individual training record as he or she completes the applicable training requirements of this part."

SEPTA's Rail Agency Safety Plan (ASP) states that the Authority meets or exceeds PTSCTP

requirements.<sup>7</sup> However, FTA identified at least one SEPTA System Safety Division representative directly responsible for safety oversight at SEPTA who has been designated but has not met the PTSCTP criteria. The omission of a key SEPTA individual creates concern that other SEPTA safety individuals may also not be registered in the PTSCTP as necessary.

Per its obligations under Part 674 to ensure SEPTA rail transit implements a program in compliance with FTA safety regulations, PennDOT must ensure SEPTA meets the requirements of the PTSCTP regulation.

## **Finding 2. PennDOT Must Expand Activities to Address SEPTA's Lagging Safety Management System (SMS) Implementation**

FTA's safety regulations mandate that SEPTA must develop and implement an ASP in accordance with 49 CFR Part 673, Public Transportation Agency Safety Plans. SEPTA must annually certify its compliance with Part 673 requirements. SEPTA has two ASPs, one for its rail transit system, the Rail ASP, and one for its non-rail transit, the Bus ASP. PennDOT's SSO Division does not, and is not required to, oversee SEPTA's Bus ASP.

Per 49 CFR § 674.25(b), PennDOT is responsible for reviewing and approving SEPTA's Rail ASP. PennDOT must oversee SEPTA's execution of the Rail ASP and enforce its implementation through corrective action plans or other means, as necessary. PennDOT must ensure that SEPTA's Rail ASP aligns with the requirements specified in 49 U.S.C. § 5329(d), including SMS requirements in Part 673.

PennDOT has not yet approved SEPTA's 2023 Rail ASP, due largely to SEPTA's inability to meet PennDOT's program requirements for Safety Assurance activities, like corrective action plan management and accident investigation, in a timely and quality manner, and to SEPTA's lack of an effective and systemwide Safety Risk Management program. Safety Assurance and Safety Risk Management are two elements of the SMS required in Part 673. Further, as addressed in Special Directive 24-2 and Category 2 of the SMI report, PennDOT recognizes that SEPTA's System Safety Division does not have the resources to execute the Authority's implementation of SMS.

More direct action from PennDOT is needed to ensure timely and effective implementation of key SMS processes, including establishing the necessary structures to ensure effective SMS implementation.

## **Finding 3. PennDOT Has Not Expedited Action to Ensure SEPTA's Program for On-Track Safety Is Sufficient to Ensure Worker Safety**

Since 2019, SEPTA has experienced two major accidents involving collisions with workers on the rail transit right-of-way, resulting in the death of one worker and the serious injury of three others. Since 2020, SEPTA also has experienced 16 near misses involving workers on the right-of-way, including four near misses in 2023.

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<sup>7</sup> See: <https://www.transportation.gov/tsi/public-transportation-safety-certification-training-program-ptsctp-certificate>.

SEPTA's on-track safety program incorporates several industry-leading practices and generally complies with the regulations outlined in the Federal Railroad Administration's 49 CFR part 214. SEPTA's on-track safety training and certification program features comprehensive discussions on protection methods and field demonstrations.

Given the high speed of trains and equipment on the SEPTA system, the double track system on the Broad Street Line, the inherent challenges of working on the rail transit right-of-way in year-round weather conditions, and SEPTA's current resource constraints, work crews with limited supervision may not be able to follow all on-track safety procedures, may be more likely to take shortcuts, or may not have the expert supervision required to ensure their safety.

Through interviews and records reviews, FTA confirmed that PennDOT participated in investigations of all near misses related to the on-track safety program since CY 2020. PennDOT has conducted audits of SEPTA's on-track safety program components during its triennial audits of other programs in 2021 and 2022, as well as field inspections in 2023. However, PennDOT has not conducted a triennial audit that sufficiently assesses this safety-critical program.

#### **Finding 4. Expedited Safety Oversight Is Required for SEPTA's Control Center**

During interviews and records reviews, FTA confirmed that PennDOT conducts biweekly inspections of the rail transit Control Center, and routinely monitors the performance of the controllers and Assistant Directors as they dispatch service. However, additional safety oversight is needed to assess the rail transit Control Center's capabilities, strengths, and areas for safety improvement for the Control Center's Light Rail and Market Frankford Line and Broad Street Line subway desks and to ensure proper resources and capabilities to support safe operations, monitor rules compliance and performance, and respond safely to accidents and emergencies.

#### **Finding 5. PennDOT Must Expand Activities to Ensure that SEPTA's Emergency Communication Devices Are Operable**

An emergency call box (ECB) is a communication device available for passenger use to call a central control center in the case of immediate or emergency assistance. During the SMI, FTA tested multiple ECBs on SEPTA's rail transit station platforms and found the devices did not work as intended. Over a six-month period from June 2023 to December 2023, PennDOT also identified non-functioning emergency callboxes at SEPTA stations on seven separate occasions.

On December 15, 2023, PennDOT directed SEPTA to take immediate action to assess the state of this system, including "conducting a thorough safety risk assessment that will rely on a full investigation of emergency callboxes, to include onsite inspections and interviews to answer questions regarding emergency callbox ownership, overall condition, proper safety communication, and current maintenance activities." PennDOT also "expects that SEPTA will produce a full itinerary of existing emergency callboxes with a current assessment of the functionality of each callbox."

PennDOT must do more to use its authority to ensure the repair or replacement and proper

functioning of this critical safety system in a timely manner.

#### **Finding 6. PennDOT Has Not Ensured SEPTA Meets Agency Safety Plan and Commonwealth Automated External Defibrillators (AED) Requirements**

AEDs are portable, potentially life-saving devices that deploy and electric shock to an individual's heart when experiencing an abnormal heartbeat or sudden cardiac arrest. There are 110 AEDs placed throughout SEPTA in areas such as administrative buildings, maintenance facilities, passenger stations, specific utility fleet vehicles, and other locations.

SEPTA's 2022 Rail ASP states that SEPTA's System Safety Division is responsible for the maintenance, testing, and tracking of the AEDs on SEPTA property in accordance with manufacturer's operational guidelines.<sup>8</sup> This activity is managed by SEPTA's System Safety Division with the help of a third-party vendor.

Through interviews, FTA found that the contract to perform AED inspections and maintenance services changed as of December 2023 to a month-to-month contract. However, it was unclear to what level any group is inspecting and maintaining AEDs for the agency. PennDOT must do more to oversee SEPTA's management of this critical equipment whose maintenance and inspection is specified in the ASP.

#### **Finding 7. PennDOT Must Do More to Require SEPTA's Rail Equipment Engineering & Maintenance Department (REE&M) to Control Safety-Critical Documents**

Rail transit vehicle maintenance plays a critical role in ensuring the safety of SEPTA's rail transit system. Procedures set forth instructions for correctly completing a task in a productive, consistent, and safe manner. SEPTA's Rail ASP lists maintaining safety documentation and maintenance procedures as a specific goal of the plan.<sup>9</sup> PennDOT monitors SEPTA's rail maintenance procedures and practices through triennial audits and field observations.

Per 49 CFR § 673.27, "(b) A transit agency must establish activities to: (1) monitor its system for compliance with, and sufficiency of, the agency's procedures for operations and maintenance." Also, per 49 CFR § 673.31, "A transit agency must maintain documents that are included in whole, or by reference that describe the program, policies, and procedures the agency uses to carry out its Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan."

During field reviews, FTA observed that some maintenance facility locations had outdated manuals at workstations. SEPTA interviewees explained that the Authority was in the process of removing outdated manuals. Having outdated printed procedures and manuals throughout the shops may cause confusion for workers on which procedures are the most up to date.

Additionally, during interviews FTA found that, although workers have access to the *Safety Awareness Manual for Yards and Shops* (July 25, 2018), information provided in the manual is

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<sup>8</sup> SEPTA 2022 ASP (current version for SEPTA's rail transit system), Under Chapter 18, Safety Communication, Sub-section 18.1.2.17 First Aid (Page 157 of 270).

<sup>9</sup> SEPTA's *Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan—Rail Transit* (2022), Section 1.4, page 18.

noted as having been modified for training purposes and interviewees indicated that the manual is not provided as a rulebook. While it is heavily used by maintenance workers, there is some uncertainty regarding its status as an authoritative and current voice on how to perform certain maintenance procedures.

REE&M's current document control process follows SEPTA's *Rail Equipment Engineering Procedure* (REE 3.0) dated April 1, 2026, details the process for initiating, approving, revising, distributing, and filing Engineering Change Notices (ECNs). These Notices go into effect, "following the expiration of the Carbuilder warranty, [at which time] Vehicle Engineering becomes responsible for railcar configuration management via the ECN program."<sup>10</sup>

During interviews, SEPTA stated that REE 3.0 will be replaced with a new procedure that identifies: who can initiate a change; the use of Engineering Change Requests; the engineering review process for cost effectiveness and feasibility; engineering and safety reviews to ensure new hazards are not introduced; and how the change is evaluated using a change control review board.

SEPTA's REE&M document control and management should be strengthened to include version and access control as well as clarifying stakeholders who may initiate ECNs. PennDOT needs to oversee enhancements to REE&M's document and management control practices to ensure maintenance workers are referencing current and authoritative maintenance procedures.

### **Finding 8. PennDOT Has Not Ensured that SEPTA's REE&M Department Implements a Formal Safety Rules Compliance Program**

Per 49 CFR § 673.27(a), transit agencies must develop and implement a Safety Assurance process. Further, 49 CFR § 673.27(b) requires agencies to establish activities for monitoring system compliance with agency procedures for operations and maintenance, and evaluating if those procedures are sufficient. While SEPTA's Rail ASP outlines rail rules compliance programs focused on operations and system safety, it lacks clear reference to a formal set of procedures for monitoring compliance with rail vehicle maintenance procedures and evaluating the sufficiency rail vehicle maintenance procedures.

During SMI interviews and field observations, SEPTA confirmed that the Authority does not have a formal rules compliance procedure for REE&M and that rules and procedures compliance for REE&M workers is presently carried out through random supervisor observation and shadowing. There is no scheduling to ensure each worker receives a routine assessment and results are not formally documented.

Although facility bulletin boards include REE&M maintenance safety protocols and procedures in facility bulletin boards. SEPTA representatives indicated that formal rulebooks are not furnished to REE&M workers. As such, safety protocols and procedures appear to be largely communicated through postings to bulletin boards and information available through the Vehicle Technical Information Library system. Evidence of robust, regular training or independent verification of procedural compliance was lacking. Moreover, the absence of clearly documented

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<sup>10</sup> *Rail Equipment Engineering Procedure* (REE 3.0), April 1, 2026, Section 1, page 2

REE&M standards for various maintenance tasks renders methodical, reliable compliance verification impractical.

Enhancing the formality and rigor surrounding SEPTA's REE&M rules and procedures compliance would bolster SEPTA's overarching SMS. PennDOT is generally aware of REE&M's approach to rules compliance for its vehicle maintenance personnel. Given recent safety events, FTA finds that PennDOT must take steps to ensure the REE&M function develops and executes a formal rules compliance program.

**Finding 9. PennDOT Can Do More to Ensure Independence of REE&M Department's Quality Assurance (QA)/Quality Control (QC) Program for Safety-Critical Inspections and Maintenance**

SEPTA's Rail ASP cites the Vehicle Engineering Maintenance (VEM) Rail Quality Assurance Materials Inspection Guidelines, which "establish a scope and procedure for materials inspections performed by (VEM-Rail) Quality Assurance (QA) personnel... The QA group is responsible for performing receipt inspections on Purchased Materials delivered to SEPTA rail storerooms and material warehouse locations."

Through interviews, FTA found that SEPTA's current QA/QC program centers primarily on vendor surveillance for parts procurement. At present, there is no independent examination of the execution of core rail vehicle preventive and corrective maintenance activities from a quality standpoint. These maintenance functions directly impact vehicles' safe operating conditions.

Oversight of maintenance quality is delegated to frontline maintenance managers who sporadically inspect vehicles that recently underwent preventive maintenance. They assess whether mandated protocols were implemented. Inspection volumes vary based on the number of vehicles assigned to each facility. Checklist-based inspection outcomes are documented, archived, and tracked on the Vehicle Technical Information Library system for review by upper management.

REE&M representatives stated that SEPTA intends to create a dedicated QA/QC group to conduct third-party quality verification of maintenance practices. However, the exact timeline, resources, and structure to stand up this group remain undefined.

SEPTA's current REE&M QA/QC program is incomplete and lacks rigor to ensure safety-critical parts, equipment, and systems are inspected and maintained as required. To ensure SEPTA establishes a robust, comprehensive quality inspection program for rail vehicle maintenance, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation must maintain effective oversight.

**Finding 10. PennDOT Must Expand Activities to Oversee Tool Calibration**

Transit infrastructure and equipment, including rail vehicles, require specialized tools for effective maintenance. Some tools, such as torque wrenches and meters need special care and calibration to confirm the equipment is performing precisely and/or found within acceptable tolerance related to its specific application. With use, certain tools may lose accuracy or present

inaccurate measurements. A calibration program keeps tools and equipment reliable and within specifications.

Based on interviews and observations, FTA found that some tools, such as meters and terminal crimping tools, are not being routinely tracked and checked for calibration. Based on field observations, FTA verified that SEPTA had a calibration program in CY 2019. According to interviewees, that program was interrupted by a malware attack in August 2020. The attack affected software, files, and records agency-wide and destroyed calibration records. Interviewees stated that SEPTA has been working to restore or replace the corrupted files and is in the process of restoring the calibration program.

PennDOT needs to ensure steps are taken by SEPTA to institute a comprehensive program for tool calibration.

### **Finding 11. PennDOT Must Enhance Oversight of REE&M Department to Ensure Capability to Perform Safety-Critical Functions**

#### REE&M Personnel Resources

The Rail Equipment Engineering & Maintenance Department is responsible for the maintenance of over 500 rail vehicles in nine shops and carhouses, new rail vehicle procurement, rail vehicle overhaul initiatives, rail vehicle data analysis, vehicle modifications and modernization, and other rail equipment tasks.

During interviews, REE&M representatives listed staffing shortages as one of their top concerns. Based on data SEPTA provided to FTA, as of October 2023, there were 40 rail vehicle maintenance vacancies, or a vacancy rate of 7.2 percent. Interviewees further stated that senior transit workers with significant institutional knowledge, technical skillsets, and mentoring capabilities were retiring at a rate that outpaced onboarding qualified candidates. Through interviews and document reviews, FTA found that REE&M representatives anticipate a high level of turnover in the next one to three years, particularly from their experienced craftsmen and skilled positions.

REE&M is faced with more work and projects than before, yet budgeted staffing totals have been reduced. PennDOT's SSO program monitors this situation, but PennDOT needs to do more to ensure that SEPTA's rail vehicle maintenance group is sufficiently resourced to maintain SEPTA vehicles in safe condition.

#### Training

The Training Department responsible for vehicle maintenance technical training provides training courses for technical topics such as: overhead crane safety, air brake systems, door systems, propulsion, high and low voltage systems, fasteners and hand tools, cab controls, carbody interior, carbody exterior, welding, and more. Training courses and materials are largely developed in-house by SEPTA instructors. Training programs include initial and refresher trainings, mentorship programs, on-the-job training, and return to service trainings. SEPTA's



Training Department provides full certifications and recertification training for Annual State Inspection.

During interviews, training staff stated that SEPTA vehicle maintenance instructors were overworked, and the Authority needs more technical instructors for all vehicle modes. They further stated that, because of challenges in hiring fully skilled maintenance workers, the required level of training is higher as the Authority hires individuals with different or lesser skill sets. This increases the resources necessary to train new maintenance workers and impacts instructor availability for other trainings. During interviews, REE&M management confirmed that they have many new and inexperienced workers that need regular training and interaction. They stated that, for example, approximately 70 percent of the vehicle maintenance workers for the Market Frankford Line are inexperienced.

Through interviews and records reviews, FTA found that, as a function of being under resourced, training staff have not been able to maintain follow-up activities with new hires and field reviews on other technical topics. SEPTA representatives stated that three to five additional instructors would be greatly beneficial in addressing the challenges and demands.

REE&M is faced with more work and projects than before, yet technical training instructors knowledgeable in rail vehicle maintenance are limited while demand increases. PennDOT needs to do more to ensure that SEPTA's rail vehicle maintenance group is sufficiently resourced and capable to maintain SEPTA vehicles in safe condition.

#### **DIRECTIVE AND REQUIRED ACTIONS:**

In accordance with 49 U.S.C. § 5329 and 49 CFR part 670, FTA directs PennDOT to take the following actions:

Category 5 – PennDOT Safety Oversight of SEPTA’s Rail Transit System			
Findings		Tracking #	Required Actions
Finding 1	PennDOT Has Not Ensured SEPTA’s Compliance with Public Transportation Safety Certification Training Program Requirements	FTA-24-5-001	Within 30 days of issuance of this report, PennDOT must provide FTA with the list of SEPTA’s designated personnel enrolled in the PTSCTP (49 CFR § 672.21(a)). Thereafter, PennDOT must provide quarterly updates documenting that designated SEPTA personnel are completing the applicable training requirements within three years of their designation and, thereafter, complete refresher training every two years (49 CFR § 672.13(c)).
Finding 2	PennDOT Must Expand Activities to Address SEPTA’s Lagging SMS Implementation	FTA-24-5-002	Within 90 days of issuance of this report, PennDOT must require SEPTA to develop a detailed and expedited milestone schedule for its SMS implementation plan, including new resources to support its SMS program as specified in SD 24-2 and oversee its implementation. Within 90 days of issuance of this report, PennDOT must begin to provide monthly status reports to FTA. PennDOT must submit the SMS implementation plan with assigned resources and monthly status reports to FTA for review, approval, and implementation monitoring.
Finding 3	PennDOT Has Not Expedited Action to Ensure SEPTA’s Program for On-Track Safety Is Sufficient to Ensure Worker Safety	FTA-24-5-003	PennDOT must conduct an audit of SEPTA’s on-track safety program to occur no later than 60 days after the issuance of this report. This audit must thoroughly assess SEPTA's implementation of its RWP program, with a focus on the adequacy of on-track safety standards, the effectiveness of job briefings and personal protective equipment, the comprehension of on-track responsibilities and communication by workers, and the proper execution of levels of protection, including rules for Qualified Protection Employees, Flagpersons, and Watchpersons and Advanced Watchpersons. Additionally, PennDOT must review the

Category 5 – PennDOT Safety Oversight of SEPTA’s Rail Transit System			
Findings		Tracking #	Required Actions
			implementation of SEPTA's right to challenge rules and evaluate the sufficiency of staffing, including instructors and supervisors responsible for overseeing program effectiveness. PennDOT must issue findings requiring corrective action as necessary. PennDOT must submit the report (and corrective actions if applicable) to FTA for review, approval, and implementation monitoring.
Finding 4	Expedited Safety Oversight Is Required for SEPTA’s Control Center	FTA-24-5-004	Within 90 days of issuance of this report, PennDOT must conduct an audit of rail operations to focus on the SEPTA Control Center. The audit must examine staffing, training, hours of service and fatigue, radio discipline, rules compliance, and issue findings requiring corrective action as necessary for MFL/BSL desks as well as Light Rail/NHSL desks and management. PennDOT must submit the audit report (and corrective actions if applicable) to FTA for review, approval, and implementation monitoring.
Finding 5	PennDOT Must Expand Activities to Ensure SEPTA’S Emergency Communication Devices Are Operable	FTA-24-5-005	PennDOT must audit all emergency communication devices on SEPTA's BSL within 90 days and require and verify corrective action to repair or replace defective equipment. PennDOT must submit the audit report (and corrective actions if applicable) to FTA for review, approval, and implementation monitoring.
Finding 6	PennDOT Has Not Ensured SEPTA Meets ASP and Commonwealth AED Requirements	FTA-24-5-006	Within 30 days of issuance of this report, PennDOT must direct SEPTA to assess the current condition of its AED inspection and service program and make any changes or require corrective actions as needed to ensure compliance with Pennsylvania statutes and SEPTA’s ASP. PennDOT must submit the assessment (and corrective actions if

Category 5 – PennDOT Safety Oversight of SEPTA’s Rail Transit System			
Findings		Tracking #	Required Actions
			applicable) to FTA for review, approval, and implementation monitoring.
Finding 7	PennDOT Must Do More to Require SEPTA’s REE&M Department to Control Safety-Critical Documents	FTA-24-5-007-1	Within 60 days of issuance of this report, PennDOT must direct SEPTA REE&M to ensure the removal of outdated manuals and procedures located in the shops and garages. PennDOT must submit evidence verifying the removal of outdated information in shops and garages to FTA for review and acceptance.
		FTA-24-5-007-2	Within 90 days of issuance of this report, PennDOT must review REE&M's method for distributing SOPs or procedures as Notices on bulletin boards and direct SEPTA REE&M to formalize existing SOPs or procedures into a more trackable and comprehensive media available to the transit workers. PennDOT must submit the revised practices and supporting documentation to FTA for review, approval, and implementation monitoring.
		FTA-24-5-007-3	Within 150 days of issuance of this report, PennDOT must direct SEPTA REE&M to complete and issue its revision to SEPTA's document management, management of change, and configuration control procedures. PennDOT must submit both its direction to SEPTA and SEPTA’s revised procedures to FTA for review, approval, and implementation monitoring.
Finding 8	PennDOT Has Not Ensured that SEPTA’s REE&M Department Implements a Formal Safety Rules Compliance Program	FTA-24-5-008	Within 150 days of issuance of this report, PennDOT must direct SEPTA REE&M to formalize its safety rules compliance program. PennDOT must submit both its direction to SEPTA and the formalized program to FTA for review, approval, and implementation monitoring.

Category 5 – PennDOT Safety Oversight of SEPTA’s Rail Transit System			
Findings		Tracking #	Required Actions
Finding 9	PennDOT Can Do More to Ensure Independence of REE&M Department’s QA/QC Program for Safety-Critical Inspections and Maintenance	FTA-24-5-009	Within 180 days of issuance of this report, PennDOT must assess the adequacy of SEPTA REE&M’s QA/QC program, to include capital programs, supply chain acquisitions, operations, and maintenance, and determine if additional efforts are warranted and require corrective actions are needed. PennDOT must submit the assessment (and corrective actions if applicable) to FTA for review, approval, and implementation monitoring.
Finding 10	PennDOT Must Expand Activities to Oversee Tool Calibration	FTA-24-5-010	Within 180 days of issuance of this report, PennDOT must direct REE&M to formalize calibration practices for precision instrumentation/tooling. PennDOT must submit its direction to SEPTA and the formalized program to FTA for review, approval, and implementation monitoring.
Finding 11	PennDOT Must Enhance Oversight of REE&M Department to Ensure Capability to Perform Safety-critical Functions	FTA-24-5-011-1	Within 150 days of issuance of this report, PennDOT must review and assess REE&M staffing and determine if additional hiring efforts are warranted and require corrective action as needed. PennDOT must submit the assessment (and corrective actions if applicable) to FTA for review, approval, and implementation monitoring.
		FTA-24-5-011-2	Within 210 days of issuance of this report, PennDOT must review and assess the sufficiency of REE&M training and require corrective action as needed. PennDOT must submit the assessment (and corrective actions if applicable) to FTA for review, approval, and implementation monitoring.

In accordance with the timeframes specified above, PennDOT must submit the required plans to FTA which demonstrate the specific actions that PennDOT will take to address the required actions specified in this Special Directive and propose a milestone schedule for completing each activity; identify the responsible parties for each action and their contact information; and the verification strategy for ensuring the completion of required work.

FTA will review and approve (with revisions as necessary) PennDOT's plan(s) and will monitor PennDOT's progress in resolving each finding and required action. FTA will conduct scheduled meetings with PennDOT to review its progress until such time as FTA determines that these meetings are no longer needed or may be conducted with less frequency.

## **PETITIONS FOR RELIEF OR RECONSIDERATION**

As set forth in 49 CFR § 670.27(d), PennDOT has thirty calendar days from the date of this Special Directive to petition for reconsideration with the FTA Acting Administrator. The petition must be in writing and signed by the PennDOT Secretary and must include a brief explanation of why PennDOT believes the Special Directive should not apply to it or why compliance with the Special Directive is not possible, is not practicable, is unreasonable, or is not in the public interest. In addition, the petition may include relevant information regarding the factual basis upon which the Special Directive was issued, information in response to any alleged violation or in mitigation thereof, recommend alternative means of compliance for consideration, and any other information deemed appropriate. Unless explicitly stayed or modified by the Acting Administrator, this Special Directive will remain in effect and must be observed pending review of a petition for reconsideration.

Within 90 days of receipt of the petition, the Acting Administrator will provide a written response. In reviewing the petition, the Acting Administrator shall grant relief only where PennDOT has clearly articulated an alternative action that will provide, in the Acting Administrator's judgment, a level of safety equivalent to that provided by compliance with this Special Directive. In reviewing any petition for reconsideration, the Acting Administrator shall grant petitions only where PennDOT has clearly articulated legal or material facts not in evidence at the time of this Special Directive.

## ENFORCEMENT

Violation of this Special Directive or the terms of any written plan adopted pursuant to this Special Directive in accordance with FTA's authorities under 49 U.S.C. § 5329 may result in a determination by FTA that PennDOT's State Safety Oversight Program does not meet the requirements of 49 U.S.C. § 5329(e), and attendant actions, including: (1) withholding SSO formula grant funds from PennDOT; (2) withholding up to five percent of Pennsylvania's Urbanized Area Formula Funding authorized under 49 U.S.C. § 5307; or (3) requiring fixed guideway public transportation systems under PennDOT's SSO program to provide up to one hundred percent of Federal funding under 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53 only for safety-related improvements until PennDOT's SSO Program can be certified.

Issued on: July 5, 2024

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Matthew J. Welbes". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

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**Matthew J. Welbes**  
Executive Director  
Federal Transit Administration  
U.S. Department of Transportation