Responses to General Directive 24-1: Required Actions Regarding Assaults on Transit Workers

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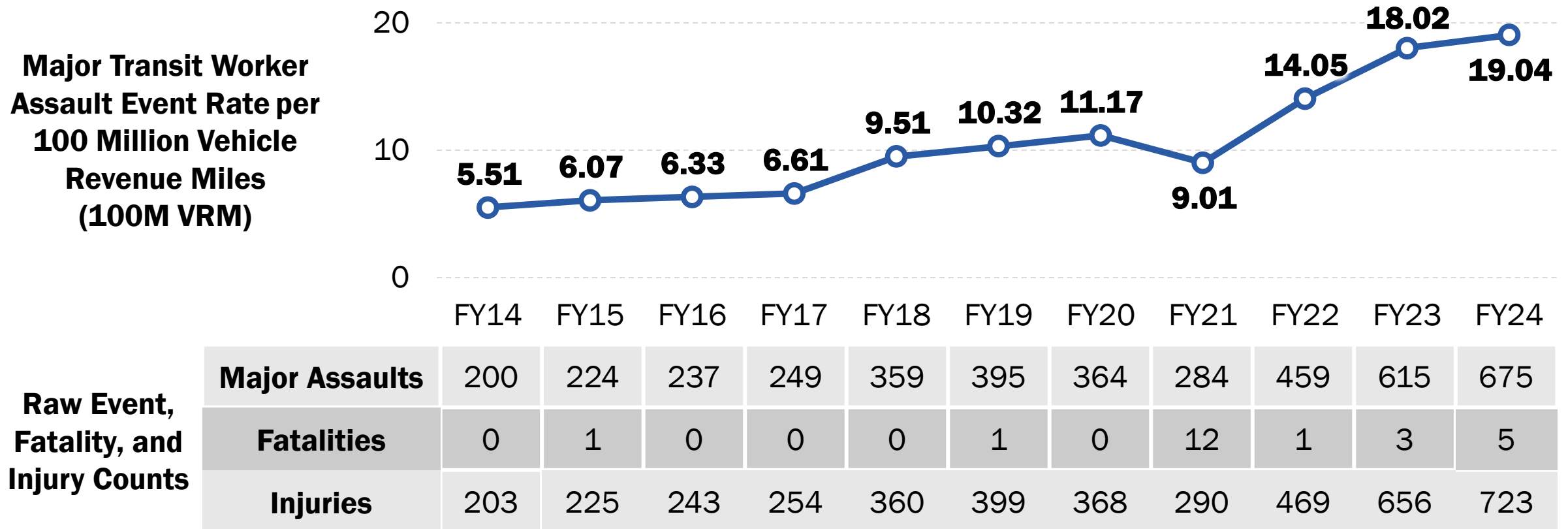
Purpose and Agenda

Purpose

The present recent data trends on assault on transit workers and review information attained from FTA's General Directive 24-1: Required Actions Regarding Assaults on Transit Workers.
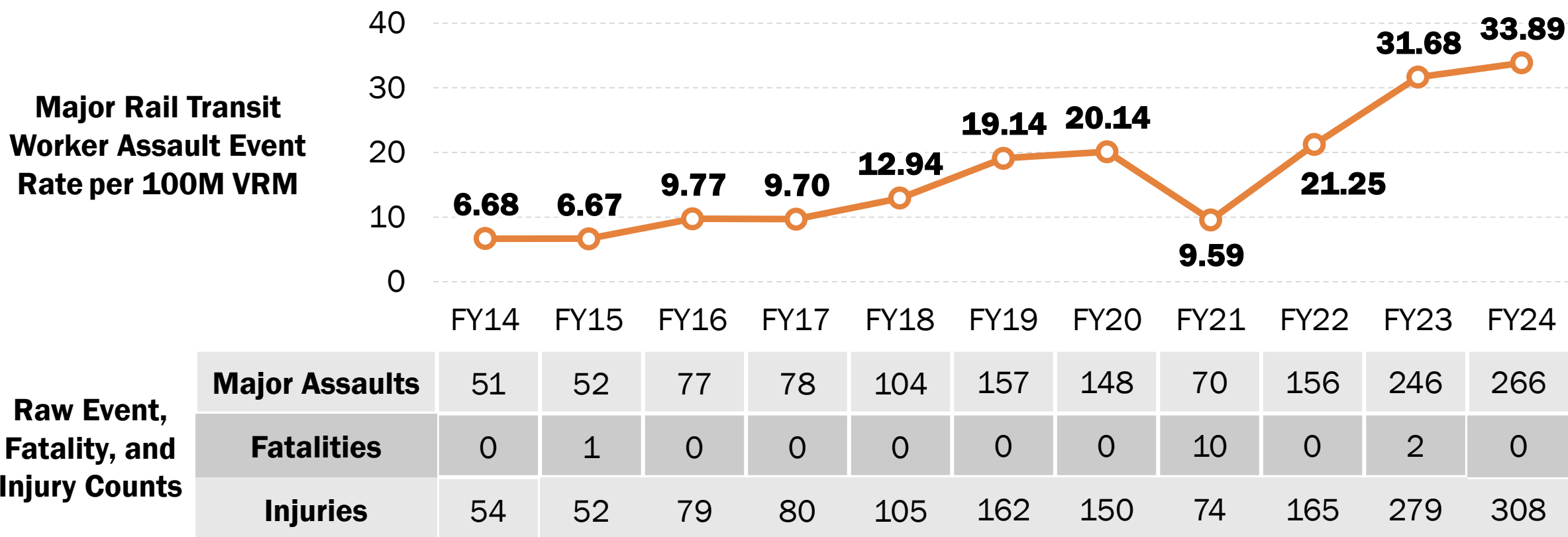
Agenda

1. Assaults on Transit Workers Data and Trends

2. Background and High-Level Takeaways from General Directive 24-1

3. Effective Assault Mitigation and Examples

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Major Transit Worker Assaults: FY 2014–24

Major Transit Worker Assault Event Rate per 100 Million Vehicle Revenue Miles (100M VRM)

Chart data points:
- FY14: 5.51
- FY15: 6.07
- FY16: 6.33
- FY17: 6.61
- FY18: 9.51
- FY19: 10.32
- FY20: 11.17
- FY21: 9.01
- FY22: 14.05
- FY23: 18.02
- FY24: 19.04

Raw Event, Fatality, and Injury Counts

	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24
Major Assaults	200	224	237	249	359	395	364	284	459	615	675
Fatalities	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	12	1	3	5
Injuries	203	225	243	254	360	399	368	290	469	656	723

- **Source:** National Transit Database (NTD)
  FY 2024 data are preliminary.

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Major Rail Transit Worker Assaults: FY 2014–24

Major Rail Transit Worker Assault Event Rate per 100M VRM

	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24
Rate	6.68	6.67	9.77	9.70	12.94	19.14	20.14	9.59	21.25	31.68	33.89

Raw Event, Fatality, and Injury Counts

	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24
Major Assaults	51	52	77	78	104	157	148	70	156	246	266
Fatalities	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	10	0	2	0
Injuries	54	52	79	80	105	162	150	74	165	279	308

- **Source:** National Transit Database (NTD)
  FY 2024 data are preliminary.

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All Transit Worker Assaults by Severity: April 2023–January 2025

<0.1% Fatality Events (6)

4.5% Injury-Only Assault Events (1,248)

29.7% Physical Assault Events* (8,297)

65.8% Non-Physical Assault Events* (18,348)

This New Data Collection Started April 2023
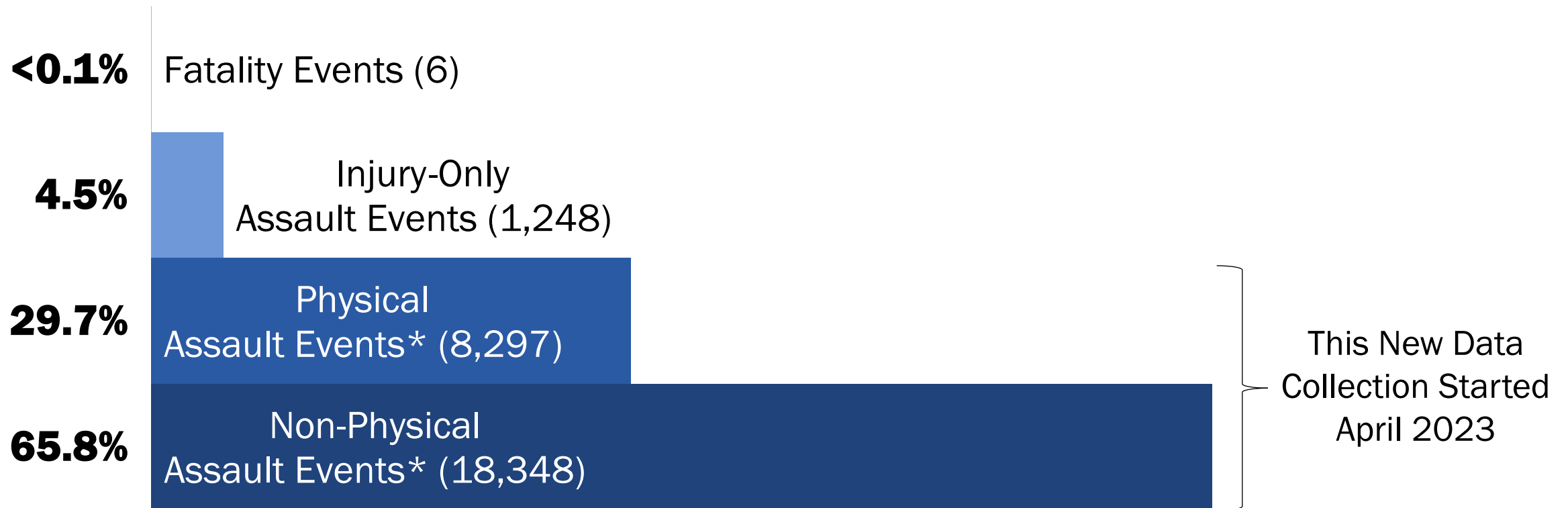
- **Source:** National Transit Database (NTD)
  Starred categories are events that do not result in a transit worker fatality or injury.

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Background

Following FTA issuing a General Directive to address the significant and continuing safety risk associated with assaults on transit workers nationwide, the agency conducted an initial analysis of how transit agencies are responding.

The directive, issued in September 2024, requires more than 700 transit agencies nationwide – those subject to FTA's Public Transportation Agency Safety Plans (PTASP) regulation at 49 CFR part 673 – to:

1   **Conduct a safety risk assessment** related to assaults on transit workers using the Safety Management System (SMS) processes documented in their Agency Safety Plan (ASP), unless the agency conducted a safety risk assessment related to assaults on transit workers in the twelve months preceding the date of issuance of the General Directive.

2   **Identify safety risk mitigations** or strategies necessary as a result of the safety risk assessment.

3   **Provide information to FTA within 90 days** of issuance of the General Directive on how they are assessing, mitigating, and monitoring the safety risk associated with assaults on transit workers.

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Timing of Safety Risk Assessments

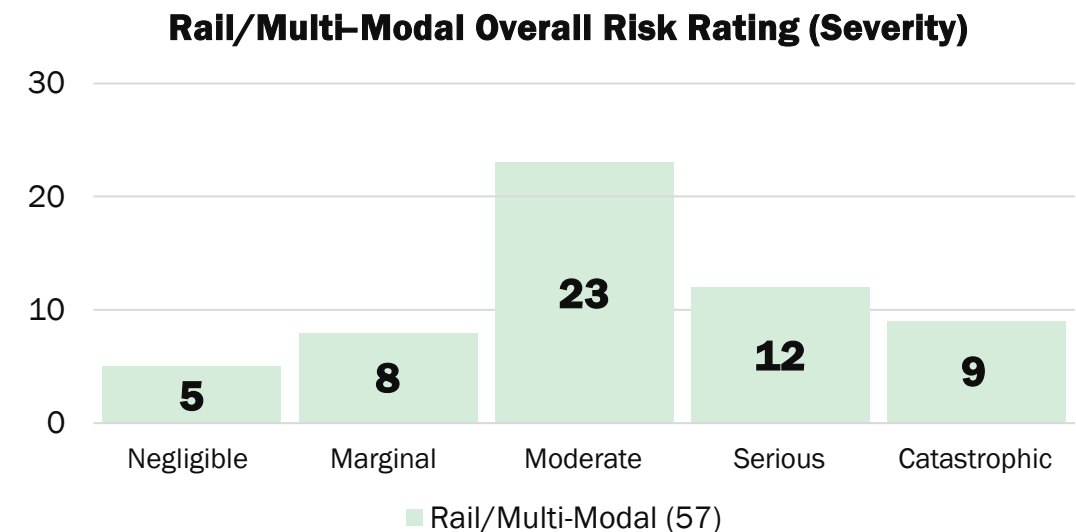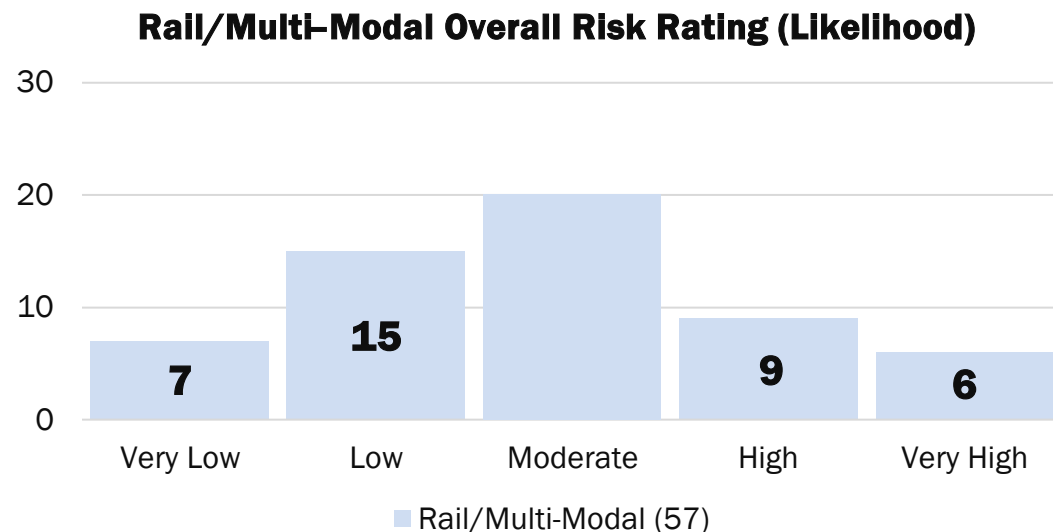**Did the General Directive result in transit agencies conducting a safety risk assessment?**

- Yes.

  - 90% of transit agencies that submitted reports (602 transit agencies) conducted a safety risk assessment *as a result of the General Directive.*

  - 10% (66 transit agencies) reported that a safety risk assessment on this topic had been completed *in the twelve months prior* to the date of issuance of the General Directive.

■ As a result of General Directive

■ 12 months preceding General Directive

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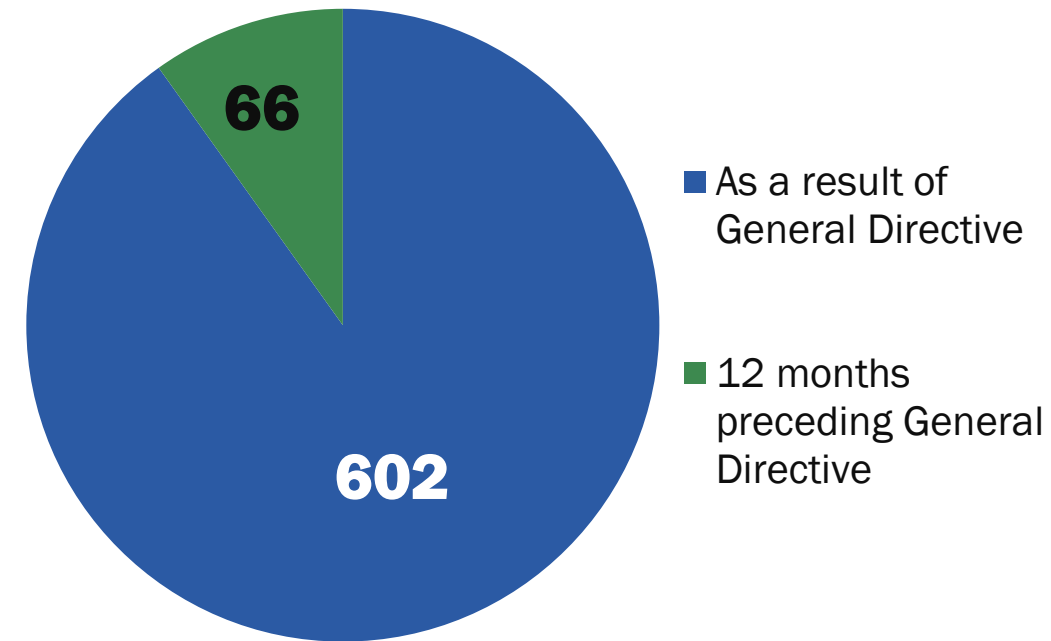
Rail/Multi-Modal Agencies and the Overall Risk Rating

How are rail/multi-modal transit agencies rating the risk of the potential consequences of assaults on transit workers?

- The General Directive required transit agencies to provide an overall risk rating (likelihood and severity) for the potential consequences of assaults on transit workers. The charts below illustrate the overall distribution of the likelihood and severity risk ratings submitted by rail/multi-modal agencies.

Rail/Multi–Modal Overall Risk Rating (Likelihood)

Category	Value
Very Low	7
Low	15
Moderate	20
High	9
Very High	6

Rail/Multi-Modal (57)

Rail/Multi–Modal Overall Risk Rating (Severity)

Category	Value
Negligible	5
Marginal	8
Moderate	23
Serious	12
Catastrophic	9

Rail/Multi-Modal (57)

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Mitigations and the Safety Risk Assessment

How many transit agencies and/or their Safety Committees determined mitigations were necessary through the agency's safety risk assessment?

- 68% (457 transit agencies and/or Safety Committees) determined that safety risk mitigations were necessary to reduce the hazard's assessed risk.

211

457

■ Yes

■ No

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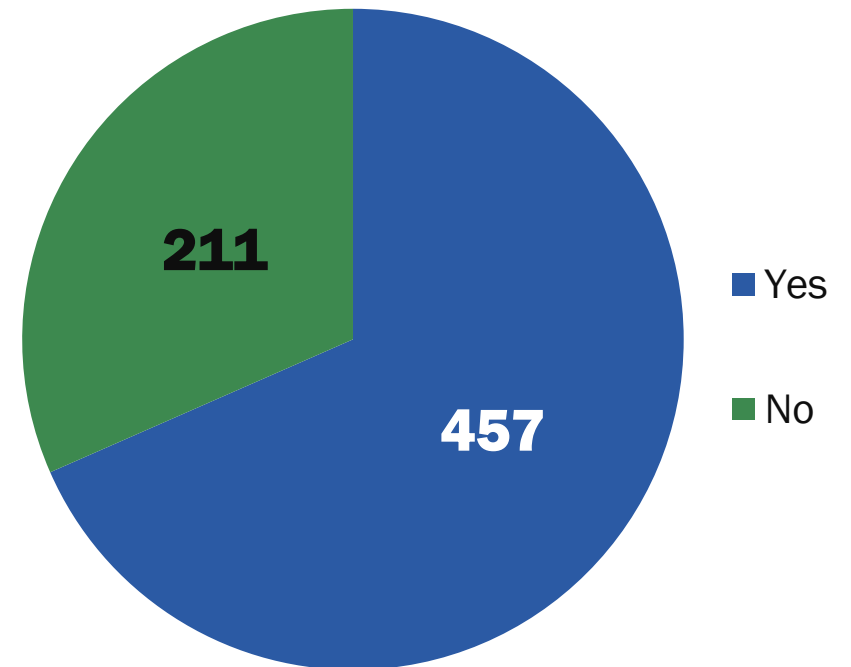
Mitigations

What mitigations are rail/multi-modal transit agencies deploying?

#1 De-Escalation Training

#2 Video/Audio Surveillance

#3 Operating Policies and Procedures

#4 Signage Informing Riders of Surveillance/Penalties

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Mitigation Effectiveness Evaluation – Rail/Multi-modal Agencies

RTAs told FTA if mitigations had been confirmed effective or ineffective, or if this had not yet been determined.

69% of RTAs confirmed **Video/Audio Surveillance** to be effective
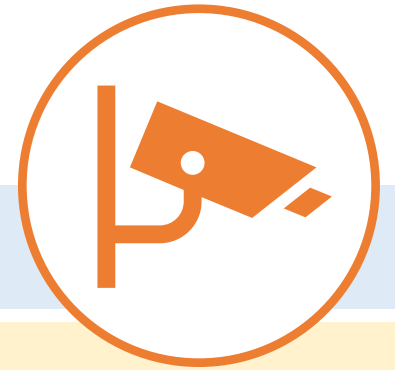
68% of RTAs confirmed **Automatic Vehicle Location** to be effective

66% of RTAs confirmed **Patrol Strategies** to be effective

53% of RTAs confirmed **Operator Area Protective Barriers** to be effective

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Mitigation Examples

Video/Audio Surveillance

RTAs confirmed this mitigation to be effective **69%** of the time and ineffective **3%** of the time (28% not yet determined).

RTAs reported a range of strategies, including:

- Onboard cameras
- Cameras at facilities and platforms
- Footage regularly reviewed by assault working group to identify patterns and recommend additional strategies

Pros:

- Prevention: has allowed security personnel to communicate with potentially unruly patrons before de-escalation needed
- Footage has supported prosecution efforts
- Cameras have deterred criminal activity
- Footage supports training efforts

Cons:

- Cameras have helped record crimes and support investigations but have not deterred criminal activity

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Mitigation Examples

Automatic Vehicle Location

RTAs confirmed this mitigation to be effective **68%** of the time and ineffective **3%** of the time (29% not yet determined).

RTAs reported a range of strategies, including:

- Computer-Aided Dispatch/AVL

- Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) in Operations Control Center

- GPS trackers

- Train locations can be viewed by smartphone app

Pros:

- Supervisors and managers have been able to expedite any response for any issues on board the vehicle

- Control always knows vehicle location

- Decreased response times

- Location data used for all incident records to track operational and incident trends

Cons:

- While response time improved, AVL has not effectively reduced assaults

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Mitigation Examples

Patrol Strategies

RTAs confirmed this mitigation to be effective **66%** of the time and ineffective **5%** of the time (29% not yet determined).

RTAs reported a range of strategies, including:

- Patrol of rail vehicles and facilities by contracted security and local law enforcement

- Patrol deployment based on incident location data

- Dedicated transit police force

- Increased security officers

Pros:

- Operators have expressed gratitude for transit police presence and deterrence

- Decreasing worker assault rates

- Has helped address other crimes in addition to worker assault

Cons:

- Additional patrols have not addressed all needs in certain high-risk end-of-line terminals and platforms.

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Mitigation Examples

Covert/Overt Emergency Alarms

RTAs confirmed this mitigation to be effective **60%** of the time and ineffective **9%** of the time (31% not yet determined).

RTAs reported a range of strategies, including:

- Button in operator cab that alerts control center
- Button in operator cab that turns on a blue light on top of the streetcar
- Button changes LRV destination sign to a "Call Police" message alerting the public to a potential need for emergency assistance

Pros:

- Improved communications
- Can alert others without escalating situations
- Decreased response times

Cons:

- Alert light on streetcar not easily visible during the day and hard for the public to see
- While response time improved, the button did not effectively deter assaults
- Lack of training on use of button

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Safety Management Systems: Lessons Learned from GD 24-1

Safety Risk Management

- Identify hazards
- Assess risk
- Mitigate risk

"what's wrong?"
"how bad is it?"
"how will we fix it?"

Safety Assurance

- Monitor mitigations
- Measure performance

"are our fixes working?"
"are we meeting our safety objectives?"

Lessons Learned from GD 24-1

Agencies were able to leverage their **Safety Risk Management** processes

- *Only 10% of agencies had conducted safety risk assessments on the topic in 12 months prior to GD 24-1*

**Safety Assurance** processes proved more challenging for the industry

- *While agencies were generally able to assess safety risk, monitoring the effectiveness of mitigations proved more difficult*

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General Directive Resources

On January 16, 2025, FTA published *Responses to General Directive 24-1: Required Actions Regarding Assaults on Transit Workers*.

View FTA's GD Analysis

View FTA's GD Website

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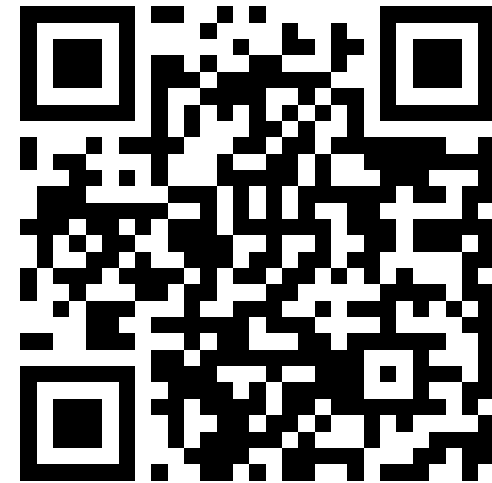
Thank you!

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