

The NTD Validation Process and Clearing Issues

This guide provides an overview of how National Transit Database (NTD) system users navigate their annual report package to save data and address validation issues. It also provides the standardized timelines for report revisions and closeout deadlines.

Entering Data Into the Reporting Forms

As shown in Figure 1, you have two options for saving your data on a given report package form: **Save** and **Save and Validate**.

“Save” Option

Select the **Save** button when the form is not yet ready for validation.

Figure 1: Form Actions—Save



On the Form Summary page, a saved form is represented by a red square in the Validated column as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Annual Report Form Validation Status—Red

Open Issues	Total Issues	Validated
3	3	
1	1	
0	0	
0	0	
0	0	
0	0	
0	0	

Note: Use the **Save** option only when filling out the Original Submission of your report. Selecting **Save** during the revision process will ignore previous comments and result in validation issues refiring.

“Save and Validate” Option

Select the **Save and Validate** button when all form data have been entered and you are ready to apply validation to the form.

Figure 3: Form Actions—Save and Validate



Saving and Validating—Next Steps

No Issues Present

On the Form Summary page, a saved and validated form without open issues is represented by a green square in the Validated column as shown in Figure 4.

Figure 4: Annual Report Form Validation Status—Green

Open Issues	Total Issues	Validated
3	3	
1	1	
0	0	
0	0	

After the form’s name, the following text will appear (as shown in Figure 5): “There are currently no open issues on this form.”

Figure 5: Form Without Open Issues

Revenue Vehicle Inventory (A-30) - CB DO
80967 - Transit Agency Demo (Small Systems Reporter) - RY23 Original Submission (Working Data)

[View Previous Year Data](#)
There are currently no open issues on this form.

Validation Issues Present

On the Form Summary page, a saved and validated form with open issues is represented by a yellow square in the Validated column as shown in Figure 6.

Figure 6: Annual Report Form Validation Status—Yellow

Open Issues	Total Issues	Validated
3	3	
1	1	
0	0	
0	0	
0	0	
0	0	
0	0	

The top of the form will display a red banner with an exclamation point. The banner reads, “There are currently [number] open issues on this form” (Figure 7).

Figure 7: Form With Open Issues Alert

Federal Funding Allocation Statistics (FFA-10) - VP PT - Summary

80967 - Transit Agency Demo (Small Systems Reporter) - RY23 Original Submission (Working Data)

[View Previous Year Data](#)

 There are currently 5 open issues on this form.

Note: Agencies are unable to submit their report package until all issues are fully addressed on all forms.

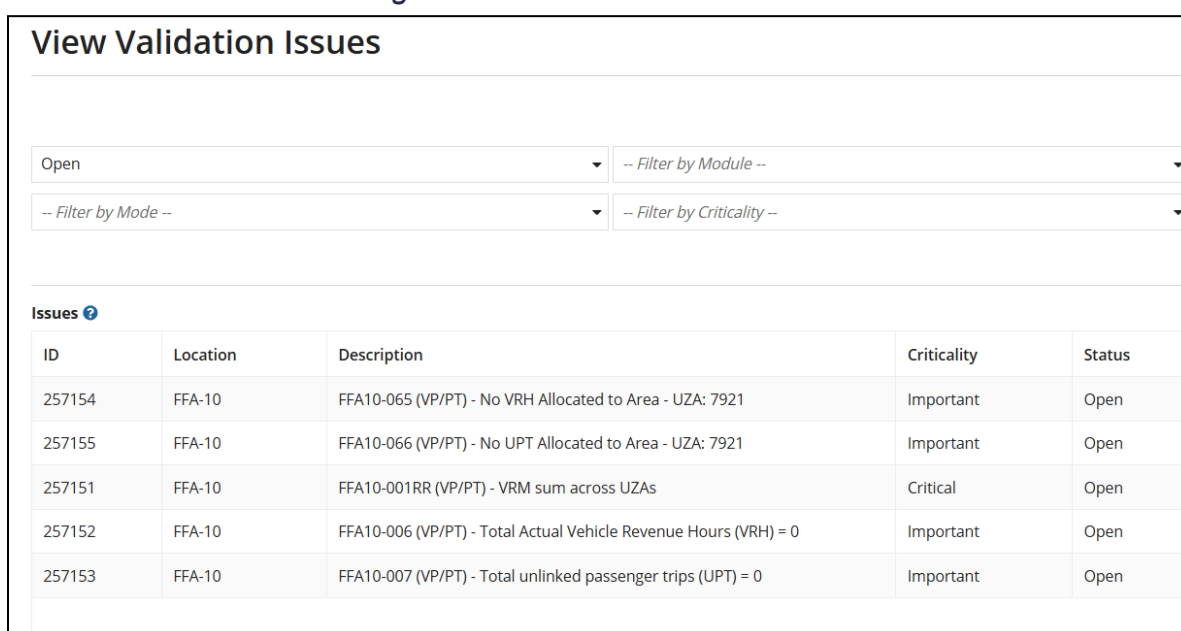
Addressing Validation Issues

- Select the View Issues button (Figure 8) located on the form. This step takes you to a table listing the validation issues. Please note, there is one row per validation issue (Figure 9).

Figure 8: Form Actions



Figure 9: Form Validation Issues



ID	Location	Description	Criticality	Status
257154	FFA-10	FFA10-065 (VP/PT) - No VRH Allocated to Area - UZA: 7921	Important	Open
257155	FFA-10	FFA10-066 (VP/PT) - No UPT Allocated to Area - UZA: 7921	Important	Open
257151	FFA-10	FFA10-001RR (VP/PT) - VRM sum across UZAs	Critical	Open
257152	FFA-10	FFA10-006 (VP/PT) - Total Actual Vehicle Revenue Hours (VRH) = 0	Important	Open
257153	FFA-10	FFA10-007 (VP/PT) - Total unlinked passenger trips (UPT) = 0	Important	Open

- Select a specific row to load the check description and obtain details about the data point(s) in question, the reason it is being flagged, and recommended solutions to address the issue.

Note: If an issue listed that you already addressed in a previous submission of this year's report, the analyst has re-opened this item as a part of their review. The entire history of the validation issue, including any previous comments from you or the analyst, will be shown in the expanded information following the table. The most recent comment from the analyst should be first in the list of comments. Review the dates corresponding to the comments to ensure you are addressing the specific question or revision the analyst communicated in the most recent comment.

Issue Criticality

Each issue is assigned a “Criticality” identified in the table (Figure 10). Issues may be **Important** or **Critical**.

Figure 10: Validation Issue Criticality



ID	Location	Description	Criticality	Status
257154	FFA-10	FFA10-065 (VP/PT) - No VRH Allocated to Area - UZA: 7921	Important	Open
257155	FFA-10	FFA10-066 (VP/PT) - No UPT Allocated to Area - UZA: 7921	Important	Open
257151	FFA-10	FFA10-001RR (VP/PT) - VRM sum across UZAs	Critical	Open

Important Issues

To address **Important** issues, review the related data and, once you confirm the data are correct, enter a comment in the Comment box provided for that issue fully explaining the data changes in question.

When you address an **Important** issue, the status changes from “Open” to “Open with Explanation.”

***Tip:** If you revise the data to resolve an **Important** issue and the issue’s status does not change on the validation table, please first ensure that your changes were saved by closing and reopening the form. If the revised data are present, you may need to comment on the issue stating that you revised the data. The revised data may still be outside an expected range, and more information may be needed. The issue may also have been raised manually by the analyst rather than automatically by the reporting system, and thus, the system does not know if your change solved the issue. Commenting on the issue will allow the analyst to evaluate if the validation issue is sufficiently addressed once you’ve submitted the report.*

Critical Issues

Critical issues require a data change as they relate to logical impossibilities and data where values should match another value.

When you address a **Critical** issue, if your change completely resolves the issue, the status changes to “Closed with Data Revision” and the issue will disappear from the table after you select “**Save and Validate**” on that form again.

Annual Reporting Process and Timeline

After the NTD Chief Executive Officer (CEO) or CEO Delegate submits the Original Submission, the assigned analyst reviews the data, existing validation issues, and responses to those issues. The analyst either accepts the comments and closes the issue if sufficiently addressed or re-opens the issue, asking clarifying questions or providing guidance to revise the data on the forms.

The analyst may also add new validation issues based on external review of the agency's data and comparison to industry ranges and standards.

Once the report is fully reviewed, if there are open issues for you to address, the report is returned to you for revision and/or additional explanations.

Revision Timeframe

The following chart shows the standardized timeframes allowed for responding to the returned validation issues. By the end of the timeframe, the report must be resubmitted with all issues addressed.

Table 1: Revision Submission Timeline

Revision Count	Turnaround Time
Revision 1	2 Weeks
Revision 2	1 Week
*Revision 3	3 Days
**Revision 4+	1 Day

**Revision 3 is generally considered the final revision; most agencies can resolve all issues by this point.*

***Revision 4+ is for resolving final issues or making minor changes. These revisions are commonly handled on a phone call or meeting with your analyst to ensure any new issues that may pop up are able to be addressed with this revision and resubmitted immediately.*

Closeout Deadlines

All agencies have a published closeout deadline by which their entire report package must be closed or on the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA's) desk awaiting final signature. Table 2 shows the closeout deadlines based on fiscal year end date.

Table 2: Closeout Deadlines Based on Fiscal Year End Dates

Fiscal Year End Date	Report Due Date
January 1–June 30	October 31
July 1–September 30	January 31
October 1–December 31	April 30

Unresolved Validation Issues

If you are unable to fully explain variances or abnormalities in the reported data by your final revision, there are two main options for closing out your report.

Option 1: Request a Data Waiver

If you are able to provide a realistic estimate of the data (including an explanation of your calculations to confirm it is reasonable) or, if you can demonstrate that the data-collection problem is fixed, the FTA may consider waiving the requirement for accurate data for that data point. You should discuss this option with your assigned analyst if you believe a waiver is needed for your agency.

Option 2: Data Marked Questionable

If you are unable to provide valid data or a logical explanation for the data reported, the FTA may consider the data point questionable. Any data points marked questionable will be noted in your closeout letter as well as any data products which that data point appears in.

Recurring questionable data notations will result in escalation to FTA headquarters and regional offices to assist in bringing your agency into compliance.

Note: *There is a third potential option: FTA may delete the data point if it is egregiously incorrect or repeatedly not meeting NTD reporting requirements. This outcome is rare.*