



FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION

Proposed General Directive 17-1 Fact Sheet

[Proposed General Directive 17-1](#) will address the dangerous combination of unsafe conditions and practices that lead to stop signal overruns. The proposed directive would require rail transit agencies (RTA) to use Safety Management System principles to identify, evaluate, and help successfully avoid or reduce the frequency and severity of the consequences of stop signal overruns.

Under the Public Transportation Safety Program final rule, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Administrator may issue a general directive if there is a risk of death/personal injury or damage to property or equipment, or if a directive is necessary to avoid or mitigate a hazard or risk.

Proposed General Directive 17-1 will be the subject of a [60-day public notice-and-comment period](#) before a final directive is issued. Comments are due by **March 20, 2017**.

Key terms

A **General Directive** is issued to the entire transit industry, or a subset of the industry, to address a safety problem that applies to a large number of transit agencies.

A **Stop Signal Overrun** occurs when a rail transit vehicle fails to stop as required in advance of a stop signal, flag, or other indicator, as specified in an RTA's operating rules and procedures.

A **Safety Advisory** provides guidance and recommendations to the transit industry on safety hazards and risks, best practices for mitigation, technological matters, and other safety matters of general interest. A Safety Advisory does not impose requirements on the transit industry or any particular transit agency.

What are the potential consequences of stop signal overruns?

A stop signal overrun can potentially cause a derailment or collision of passenger trains and the striking of workers or equipment on the rail transit right-of-way. Due to the serious or potentially fatal consequences, FTA considers stop signal overruns to be significant safety events.

Why issue a general directive for stop signal overruns?

FTA previously issued [Safety Advisory 16-1](#) to better understand the prevalence of stop signal overruns. Safety Advisory 16-1 requested that State Safety Oversight Agencies (SSOA) coordinate with their RTAs to collect program information regarding stop signal systems and data for reported overruns during calendar year 2015.

FTA's review of the submitted information and data indicated that most SSOAs don't actively investigate reported stop signal overruns. General Directive 17-1 is needed to address the combination of unsafe conditions and practices that lead to the pervasive yet preventable problem of stop signal overruns in the rail transit industry.

To whom does the proposed general directive apply?

Proposed General Safety Directive 17-1 will apply to all RTAs across the United States, and the State Safety Oversight Agencies (SSOAs) that oversee the safety of those RTAs.

Rail transit agency requirements:

- Complete a safety risk evaluation of the potential consequences of hazards related to stop signal overruns within 90 days of the issuance of final General Directive 17-1;
- Evaluate the current safety performance monitoring activities in place to assess the effectiveness of stop signal overrun mitigations within 90 days of the issuance of final General Directive 17-1; and
- Develop a corrective action plan, as needed, within 150 days of the issuance of final General Directive 17-1.

State safety oversight agency requirements:

- Participate in the RTA's safety risk evaluation;
- Review and approve the evaluation within 60 days after its completion;
- Review and approve any needed corrective action plan within 60 days of its receipt; and
- Report the status of the corrective action plan to FTA, as part of the SSO Program Annual Report to FTA.

Questions: Please contact FTA's Candace Key at Candace.Key@dot.gov or (202) 366-9178.