



U.S. Department  
of Transportation

**Federal Transit  
Administration**

Headquarters

1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

JAN 19 2017

Dear State Safety Oversight Stakeholder:

Please be informed that on January 17, 2017, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) issued [Proposed General Directive 17-1](#) to address Stop Signal Overruns at rail fixed guideway public transportation systems. This proposed directive would require rail transit agencies (RTAs) and State Safety Oversight Agencies (SSOAs) to work together to understand the significant risks of death, injury and property damage associated with stop signal overruns, establish mitigations to reduce those risks, and monitor the implementation and effectiveness of the mitigations. This proposed directive would also establish a definition for stop signal overrun.

In accordance with the Public Transportation Safety Program rule (Safety Program Rule), 49 CFR Part 670, the Federal Transit Administrator may issue a general directive if an unsafe condition or practice, or combination of, presents a risk of death or personal injury, damage to property or equipment. FTA has proposed General Directive 17-1 to address the dangerous combination of unsafe conditions and practices in the rail transit industry that lead to stop signal overruns. This proposed directive would require RTAs to use Safety Management System (SMS) principles to identify, evaluate, and mitigate the risks associated with stop signal overruns.

FTA is issuing proposed General Directive 17-1 in response to findings from [Safety Advisory 16-1](#), issued in April 2016, which sought information from RTAs and SSOAs on stop signal overruns as a means to help us better understand the prevalence of stop signal overruns within the rail transit industry. Our review of the submitted information indicated that most SSOAs do not actively investigate reported stop signal overruns and also revealed a wide range of definitions, practices and requirements on stop signal overruns across the rail transit industry. We concluded that a general directive was needed to address this issue and to mitigate risk of death, personal injury, or damage to property or equipment.

Specifically, proposed General Directive 17-1 would require an RTA to (1) conduct a safety risk evaluation regarding the potential for stop signal overruns on its system, and determine whether any deviations in operating practices or changes in operating parameters that may have occurred over time, have negated the effectiveness of mitigations in place to prevent stop signal overruns or the consequences of stop signal overruns; (2) evaluate its operational activities to monitor the implementation and effectiveness of those mitigations; and (3) develop a corrective action plan, as necessary. The proposed General Directive would require you to participate in the safety risk evaluations of the RTAs that you oversee; review and approve the safety risk evaluations, including, specifically, the effectiveness of mitigations; and review, approve, and monitor the

corrective action plan, if necessary. You also would be required to report the status of the corrective action plan in your annual report to us.

We strongly encourage you to review and comment on the proposed directive during the 60-day notice-and-comment period ending on March 20, 2017. Comments may be submitted to FTA through the docket at [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov), U.S. Mail, fax, or hand delivery. Please identify your submission by Docket Number [FTA-2016-0041]. Detailed directions for submission can be found in the Federal Register. If you have any further questions related to program matters, please contact Candace Key, Acting Director, Office of System Safety, (202) 366-9178 or [Candace.Key@dot.gov](mailto:Candace.Key@dot.gov); Aloha Ley, Chief, Safety Assurance and Risk Management Division, (202) 366-4979 or [Aloha.Ley2@dot.gov](mailto:Aloha.Ley2@dot.gov); or Patrick Nemons, Acting Director, Office of Safety Review, (202) 366-4986 or [Patrick.Nemons@dot.gov](mailto:Patrick.Nemons@dot.gov).

Sincerely yours,



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Associate Administrator  
Office of Transit Safety and Oversight