



## Transit Safety and Oversight Spotlight

Federal Transit Administration  
Office of Transit Safety and Oversight

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### Note from the Associate Administrator

Dear Transit Colleagues,

As a new administration prepares to take office, the US Department of Transportation is busy preparing for leadership changes. Despite the many unknowns that come with this type of change, the Office of Transit Safety and Oversight's (TSO's) mission remains the same. TSO will stay dedicated to improving transit safety and providing effective oversight programs. The FTA will continue its work to enhance citizens' mobility, accessibility, and communities' economic development—including its administration of grant programs. Meanwhile, we will continue to update you on any safety or oversight-related news that affects the transit industry.

We recently concluded our TSO Spotlight reader survey, and I want to thank all of you who took time to respond. We are still reviewing responses, but I wanted to share a few trends.

We learned that many of you work for bus agencies and are interested in receiving more news that affects smaller, bus-only systems. Many readers would like to hear news from the regions, not just from FTA headquarters. We also received requests for information that will help you comply with Federal safety regulations. We will continue to review your input and update our newsletter in 2017 in response to this feedback.

Additionally, many of you asked for news from FTA's Drug and Alcohol program. The program has its own newsletter, FTA Drug and Alcohol Regulation Updates, which we will be sure to highlight in the TSO Spotlight whenever a new issue is available. Please see page 8 for more information on the current Drug and Alcohol Program newsletter, as well as information about the 2017 national conference taking place in April.

Even if you did not have a chance to take the newsletter survey, your feedback is always welcome. Please email your comments to [FTAsafetystakeholder@dot.gov](mailto:FTAsafetystakeholder@dot.gov).

Thank you for your continued commitment to safety throughout 2016.

Sincerely,

Thomas Littleton, Ph.D.



Thomas Littleton, Ph.D.,  
Associate Administrator,  
Transit Safety and  
Oversight

## Upcoming Safety Training

The FTA's 2017 safety training schedule is now available! Below, check out some of the first courses to be offered in the new year. The FTA's training website is temporarily unavailable for maintenance until further notice, but you may contact [Radonna Snider](#) at the FTA-sponsored [Transportation Safety Institute \(TSI\)](#) at (405) 954-4799 for safety training registration and courses.

### eLearning Self-Paced Online Courses

Curbing Transit Employee Distracted Driving	Visit <a href="http://www.tsi.dot.gov">www.tsi.dot.gov</a> for more information
Fatigue and Sleep Apnea Awareness for Transit Employees	Visit <a href="http://www.tsi.dot.gov">www.tsi.dot.gov</a> for more information

### General Transit Safety Courses

SMS Safety Assurance	Virtual-Live	January 10
Transit Supervisor Certification Course	San Mateo, CA	January 23 - 27
SMS Safety Assurance	Virtual-Live	January 24
Substance Abuse Management and Program Compliance	Los Angeles, CA	January 24 - 26
Reasonable Suspicion and Post-Accident Testing Determination Seminar	Los Angeles, CA	January 27
SMS Safety Assurance	Virtual-Live	February 8
SMS Principles for Transit	Los Angeles, CA	February 22 - 24
SMS Principles for Transit	Atlanta, GA	February 28 - March 2
Substance Abuse Management and Program Compliance	Jacksonville, FL	February 28 - March 2

### Bus Transit Courses

Fundamentals of Bus Collision Investigation	San Bernardino, CA	January 9 - 13
Transit Bus System Safety	Las Vegas, NV	January 9 - 13
Instructors Course for Transit Trainers	Kansas City, MO	January 23 - 27
Fundamentals of Bus Collision Investigation	St. Petersburg, FL	January 30 - February 3
Instructors Course for Transit Trainers	Los Angeles, CA	February 13 - 17
Fundamentals of Bus Collision Investigation	Dallas, TX	February 27 - March 3

### Rail Transit Courses

Transit Rail Incident Investigation	Dallas, TX	January 9 - 13
Transit Rail System Safety	Chicago, IL	February 6 - 10
Transit Rail Incident Investigation	Oakland, CA	February 13 - 17

### Transit Crime Prevention and Emergency Management Courses

Transit System Security	Atlanta, GA	January 9 - 13
Transit System Security	Seattle, WA	February 6 - 10
Effectively Managing Transit Emergencies	Washington, DC	February 7 - 10

## Upcoming Events: Transportation Research Board Annual Meeting

FTA's Office of Transit Safety and Oversight will present two panels at the [Transportation Research Board's 96<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting](#) at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center, in Washington, DC. Session details are below. We hope to see you there!

### **The Role of Employee Safety Reporting in an Effective Transit Safety Management System**

*Monday, January 9, 2017, 8:00 am—9:45 am*

*Room: 143 C Convention Center*

This panel will discuss employee safety reporting programs for public transportation systems. The session will focus on how to develop, implement, and operate a robust, effective program and will provide insights into the benefits of a safety reporting program for public transportation systems as well as the role of labor unions in such programs. Panelists will also offer strategies to encourage employee use of a reporting program and discuss the role of discipline in an employee reporting program.

**Moderator:** Lynn Spencer, FTA, Office of Transit Safety and Oversight

**Speakers:** Jordan Multer, Volpe  
Ernesto Lasen, Voluntary Safety Reporting Program Manager, FAA  
Michael Blake, Voluntary Safety Reporting Program Representative, National Air Traffic Controllers Association  
Paulina Orchard, FTA, Office of System Safety, SMS Lead

### **How FTA's SMS Approach and its Research Investments are Shaping Transit Safety**

*Tuesday, January 10, 2017, 3:45 pm—5:30 pm*

*Room: 147 A Convention Center*

This panel will discuss the FTA's current safety-related research activities linking FTA's overarching SMS approach to its safety research program. This session will also provide an overview of available safety-related technical assistance and updates on safety rules and regulations.

**Moderator:** Candace Key, Acting Director for System Safety, FTA, Office of Transit Safety and Oversight

**Speakers:** Roy Chen, FTA Office of Research and Innovation  
Adrienne Malasky, FTA Program Analyst  
Lisa Staes, Director, Transit Safety and Workforce Development Programs, National Center for Transit Research, University of South Florida  
Jeffrey Bryan, Chief, Safety Information Systems Division, Volpe; and Transit Advisory Committee for Safety (TRACS) Facilitator

## Deputy's Corner

### Kimberly Burtch, Acting Deputy Associate Administrator for Transit Safety and Oversight Nigerian Delegation Visits FTA to Learn about Rail Transit Programs

Last month, the FTA hosted a delegation from Nigeria that was on a trade mission to learn about the FTA's rail transit regulations, policies, and financing mechanisms. As Nigeria undertakes a massive project to modernize their country's rail system, the delegation hoped to take home fresh ideas and best practices from the FTA, as well as share their experiences with us.

I had the opportunity to meet with the group to explain how the FTA's State Safety Oversight Program is structured and provide an overview of how our agency is implementing Safety Management Systems (SMS). The delegation was particularly interested in how to proactively manage safety risks through an SMS. The Office of Program Management and Office of the Administrator also participated.

As the FTA continues to strengthen its safety program, it was exciting to see how our lessons learned and accomplishments can serve as a model to transit systems outside the United States. I look forward to hearing more about the Nigerian rail modernization project as it progresses.



Kimberly Burtch, Acting Deputy Associate Administrator for Transit Safety and Oversight, addresses the Nigerian delegation

## TRACS Prepares Recommendations for FTA on Safety Culture and Data

On November 29-30, the Transit Advisory Committee for Safety (TRACS) met in Washington, DC, to discuss their progress on the [two safety tasks](#) they undertook in 2016. The committee discussed the effects of safety culture and safety data and performance management on the overall safety of a transit system. TRACS working groups have devoted months to researching these safety topics and presented their preliminary findings to the entire committee. The FTA will share TRACS' findings when reports are finalized in early 2017.



FTA's Associate Administrator for Transit Safety and Oversight Dr. Thomas Littleton (left) and Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Safety Oversight Team Director Angela Dluger (bottom) address the latest TRACS meeting on November 29-30, 2016



## Register Now for the 12th Annual FTA Drug and Alcohol Program National Conference



Registration is open for the [12<sup>th</sup> Annual FTA Drug and Alcohol Program National Conference](#), taking place April 18-20, 2017, at the Hilton New Orleans Riverside in New Orleans, Louisiana.

This free three-day conference will provide attendees with a background on Procedures for Transportation Workplace Drug and Alcohol Testing Programs (49 CFR Part 40) and Prevention of Alcohol Misuse and Prohibited Drug Use in Transit Operators (49 CFR Part 655).

Attendees may choose from a variety of conference sessions, allowing each participant to customize their experience for the specific needs of their employer and knowledge level of the regulations.

There is no charge for attending this conference. Attendees are financially responsible for all travel related expenses, including all meals.

Registration, hotel information, and additional details about the conference are available on the [FTA's Drug and Alcohol Program website](#).

Questions? Contact the FTA Drug and Alcohol Project Office at (617) 494-6336 or by email at [FTA.DAMIS@dot.gov](mailto:FTA.DAMIS@dot.gov).

## Read the FTA Drug and Alcohol Regulation Updates Newsletter

Did you know that FTA's Drug and Alcohol Program has its own newsletter, [FTA Drug and Alcohol Regulation Updates](#)? Current and archived issues are available on the [FTA's website](#).

Topics from the [October 2016 issue](#) include:

- A recap of the 11<sup>th</sup> Annual FTA Drug and Alcohol Program National Conference
- What employers need to know about monitoring collection sites
- Ubers, Lyfts, and ride-sourcing: do the regulations apply?
- Upcoming training

You may [read the newsletter online](#), or [register through GovDelivery](#) to be alerted when new issues are available.



## TSO Profile

Q&A with Candace Key, Acting Director, Office of System Safety



Candace Key, TSO's Acting Director for the Office of System Safety

**How would you explain your job to someone you've never met before?**

I oversee the FTA's Office of System Safety, which is responsible for guiding the transit industry shift to a Safety Management System (SMS) approach. SMS brings management and labor together to build on the transit industry's existing safety foundation to control risk better, detect and correct safety problems earlier, share and analyze safety data more effectively, and measure safety performance more carefully. The Office of System Safety is also responsible for transit accident investigation, safety data collection, developing and implementing transit safety policy and rulemaking, and developing and delivering training and technical assistance to transit industry stakeholders.

**What were you doing prior to this role?** I joined the FTA in 2010 as an intern in the Office of the Chief Counsel while in law school at Howard University. After finishing my law degree, I stayed on with the FTA as an attorney. In this role, I supported the FTA's mission in a number of ways such as framing policies to implement the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Act (MAP-21); drafting surface transportation legislation, regulations and guidance; providing legal support to FTA regional offices; and providing

advice and counsel on fiscal and appropriations law issues. Before joining the Office of System Safety as Acting Director, I had been detailed there previously as a Division Chief, where I focused on delivering the FTA's safety rulemakings as required by MAP-21.

**What are some current projects or initiatives that you or your teams are working on?** In coordination with the FTA Office of Research and Innovation, my office is working on a public transportation safety standards development program. Earlier this year, we reviewed existing transit safety standards and gathered input from the public on the effectiveness of those standards and the need for new standards. We're getting ready to publish a final report with our findings.

We are working on a number of projects to support the industry in implementing SMS. We have been conducting an SMS implementation pilot program with the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA), and at the end of September launched a bus pilot program with the Maryland Transit Administration working with Charles, Montgomery, and Frederick Counties' bus agencies, representing small, large and rural transit providers. Through these pilot programs, we provide technical assistance to transit agencies on developing and operating an SMS, while transit agencies provide opportunities for the FTA to test the effectiveness of SMS implementation tools in diverse transit operating environments.

We are also working on a research demonstration project with the US DOT's Volpe Center to help transit agencies implement effective employee safety reporting programs. Employee reporting is a primary source of safety data. The project will identify criteria for a successful employee reporting program and their integration into the larger process of managing safety as part of an SMS.

**How do you work with people outside of the FTA? How would you like to be working with them in the future?** My office works closely with the Transit Advisory Committee for Safety (TRACS), which is comprised of transit professionals from across the country and industry. We met with them last month as they (Cont. on pg. 7)

(Cont. from pg. 6) were finalizing recommendations on two critical safety topics—improving safety culture within transit agencies and collecting and analyzing safety data. TRACS members draw on their varied industry experience to provide valuable input to the FTA’s safety program, policies, and regulations. For example, their report on transit operator assault is helping inform the proposed rule we’re currently drafting. Going forward, we will continue to rely on TRACS to make recommendations on safety issues from an on-the-ground perspective.

We also engage with the industry as the FTA rolls out new safety rules. We’re preparing some important safety rulemakings that we hope to see published in early 2017, including the Public Transportation Safety Certification Training Program Final Rule, Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan Final Rule, Transit Worker Assault Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, and National Safety Plan guidance. We’ll continue to look for ways to communicate with members of the industry about how the rules will affect them and what support the FTA can offer as they work toward implementing the new requirements.

**What is something you wish people knew about the FTA or TSO?** The FTA and TSO recognize that new safety requirements have and will continue to require transit agencies to make changes, and that transit agencies are eager to learn how these requirements will impact them. The FTA is developing and implementing the Public Transportation Safety Program in a manner that is both flexible and scalable. We have taken into consideration the vast diversity amongst our transit stakeholders in size, operations, technical capacity, and resources. We are committed to providing the necessary technical assistance and guidance to the industry as we continue to lay the foundation for the Public Transportation Safety Program to ensure that transit remains the safest form of surface transportation.



## Federal Transit Administration

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<https://www.fta.dot.gov/regulations-and-guidance/safety/transit-safety-oversight-tso>

### SAVE THE DATE



### 2017 STATE SAFETY OVERSIGHT QUARTERLY CALLS

February 15

May 17

August 16

November 15

QUESTIONS? CONTACT YOUR  
FTA SSO PROGRAM MANAGER