



## Transit Safety and Oversight Spotlight

Federal Transit Administration  
Office of Transit Safety and Oversight

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## Message from the Associate Administrator

Dear Transit Colleagues,

As we begin a New Year, public transportation safety enters a new phase at the FTA. Safety Management System (SMS) methods and principles remain the foundation for all FTA policies and regulatory initiatives, and in 2017 we plan to support the industry in understanding SMS. We now have SMS pilot programs underway in various stages at various-sized bus agencies and one large multimodal agency. Based on these pilots, we will develop technical assistance for the entire industry—both steel wheel and rubber tire—and provide a pool of peer-to-peer expertise. We look forward to sharing a number of SMS resources with the industry in 2017.

The FTA will complete the task of building the policy and regulatory foundation for the Public Transportation Safety Program authorized by federal public transportation law. The FTA anticipates publishing in the near future final rules for Public Transportation Agency Safety Plans and the Safety Certification Training Program. Our first [National Public Transportation Safety Plan](#), which provides guidance to the industry, was published this week.

We will build upon this foundation by addressing specific, critical safety issues. For example, the FTA will publish a report on our review of existing public transportation safety standards and protocols. The report includes a comprehensive set of recommendations to support a risk-based analysis of the safety performance of transit modes and identifies transit safety issues that may be mitigated through the issuance of additional safety standards. We also plan to issue a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NRPM) on protecting public transportation workers from the risk of assault that would establish requirements for mitigating these events.

Overall, the FTA's safety role continues to mature. I encourage you to visit the FTA's website, continue reading our [monthly newsletter](#), and view our [Safety and Oversight page](#) to stay up-to-date with the work we are doing to make a safe industry even safer for its passengers and employees.

Sincerely,

Thomas Littleton, Ph.D.



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

## Upcoming Training

The FTA sponsors several safety training courses, including those listed below. 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.

General Transit Safety Courses		
Reasonable Suspicion and Post-Accident Testing Determination Seminar	Los Angeles, CA	January 27
SMS Safety Assurance	Virtual-Live	February 8
SMS Principles for Transit	Arlington, VA	February 15 - 17
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
Reasonable Suspicion and Post-Accident Testing Determination Seminar	Jacksonville, FL	March 3
SMS Principles for Transit	Honolulu, HI	March 6 - 8
SMS Safety Assurance	Virtual-Live	March 8
Transit Supervisor Certification Course	Everett, WA	March 13 - 17
SMS Principles for Transit	Philadelphia, PA	March 15 - 17
SMS Principles for Transit	Fredericksburg, VA	March 22 - 24

Rail Transit Courses		
Transit Rail System Safety	Chicago, IL	February 6 - 10
Transit Rail Incident Investigation	Oakland, CA	February 13 - 17
Transit Rail Incident Investigation	San Francisco, CA	March 13 - 17
Transit Rail System Safety	Baltimore, MD	March 27 - 31

Bus Transit Courses		
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
Transit Bus System Safety	Oceanside, CA	March 6 - 10
Transit Bus System Safety	Honolulu, HI	March 13 - 17
Instructors Course for Transit Trainers	Charlotte, NC	March 20 - 24
Fundamentals of Bus Collision Investigation	Landover, MD	March 20 - 24

Cont. on pg. 3

Training cont. from pg. 2

### 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
SMS Awareness	Visit <a href="http://www.tsi.dot.gov">www.tsi.dot.gov</a> for more information

### Transit Crime Prevention and Emergency Management Courses

Transit System Security	Seattle, WA	February 6 - 10
Effectively Managing Transit Emergencies	Washington, DC	February 7 - 10
Transit System Security	San Juan, PR	March 6 - 7
Crime Prevention through Environmental Design	Honolulu, HI	March 9 - 10
Transit System Security	Tampa, FL	March 27 - 31
Effectively Managing Transit Emergencies	Denver, CO	March 28 - 31

## FTA Invites Public Comment on Proposed General Directive 17-1: Stop Signal Overruns on Rail Fixed Guideway Transportation Systems

The FTA recently issued a [proposed General Directive](#) requiring Rail Fixed Guideway Public Transportation Systems (RFGPTS) and State Safety Oversight Agencies (SSOAs) to take specific actions to mitigate safety risks associated with stop signal overruns. The FTA is proposing this directive after reviewing data submitted in response to [Safety Advisory 16-1: Stop Signal Overruns](#).

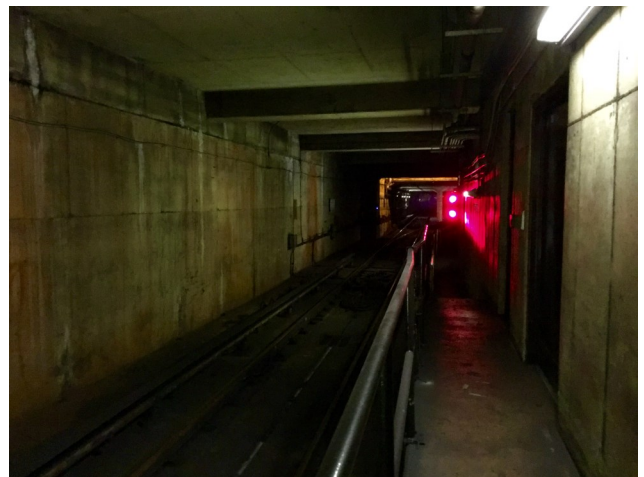
The proposed directive would require each RFGPTS to:

- Conduct a safety risk evaluation regarding the potential for stop signal overruns on its system.
- Determine whether any changes in operating practices 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.
- Evaluate its operational activities to monitor the implementation and effectiveness of those mitigations.
- Develop a corrective action plan as necessary.

The proposed directive would require each SSOA to:

- Participate in the safety risk evaluation for stop signal overruns conducted by each RFGPTS.
- Review and approve that safety risk evaluation, including the effectiveness of mitigations.
- Review, approve, and monitor the corrective action plan for a RFGPTS, if necessary.
- Report the status of the corrective action plan in its annual report to the FTA.

The FTA [invites public comment](#) on the proposed General Directive. Comments must be submitted by March 20, 2017. Please direct questions about the proposed General Directive to FTA's [Kimberly Burtch](#) or [Aloha Ley](#).

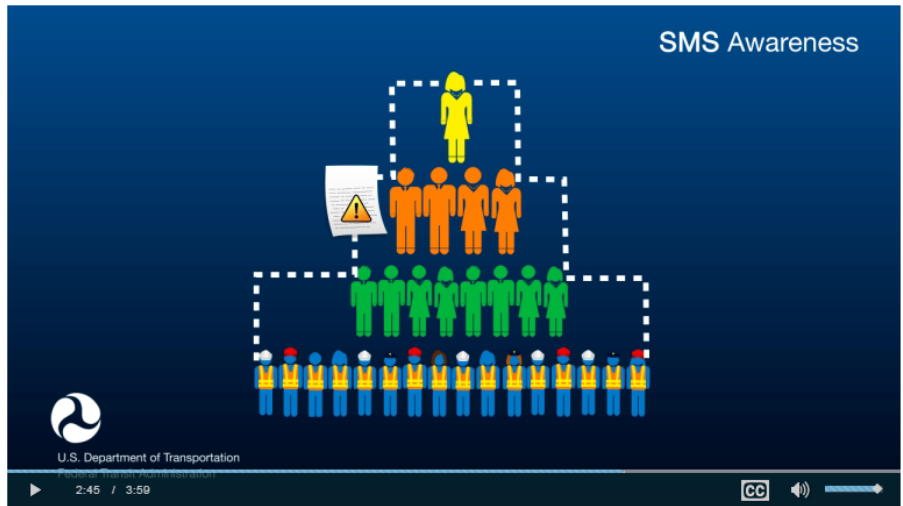


A stop signal in a subway tunnel

## SMS Awareness E-Learning Course Available

The FTA's Safety Management System (SMS) Awareness e-Learning course is once again available online. Access the course through the Transportation Safety Institute's (TSI's) Learning Management System (LMS) by following these steps:

1. Visit [www.tsi.dot.gov](http://www.tsi.dot.gov)
2. Click on "Course Catalog"
3. Log in to TSI's LMS, or [register](#) if you do not have an existing account
4. Click "Search Catalog"
5. Type "SMS Awareness" into the search box
6. Select "SMS Awareness" when it appears on the screen
7. Click the "Request" button
8. Click "Launch" and the course will load in a separate tab or window



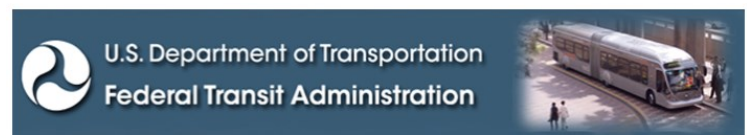
SMS Awareness e-Learning course

Pop-up blockers must be turned off for the course to load and play. Internet Explorer (IE) users need IE 10 or later for the course to work properly.

The SMS Awareness course introduces the participant to SMS, describes the main components of the FTA's SMS Framework, and identifies the importance of employee safety reporting systems to the success of SMS.

## Sign Up for TRACS Updates

To stay informed about DOT's Transit Advisory Committee for Safety (TRACS), we encourage you to subscribe to the agency's GovDelivery email system. FTA sends bulletins through GovDelivery to update subscribers about the latest activities in their interest areas. We have just added a topic about DOT's TRACS committee. Subscribe to that topic by clicking our [sign-up link](#), entering your email address, and selecting "Transit Advisory Committee for Safety (TRACS)" from the "Safety & Oversight" category. Please also review our full subscription list and consider what additional topics might be relevant. We send a few emails via GovDelivery each month, and you can opt out at any time.



### Email Updates

To sign up for updates or to access your subscriber preferences, please enter your contact information below.

Email Address \*

Your contact information is used to deliver requested updates or to access your subscriber preferences.

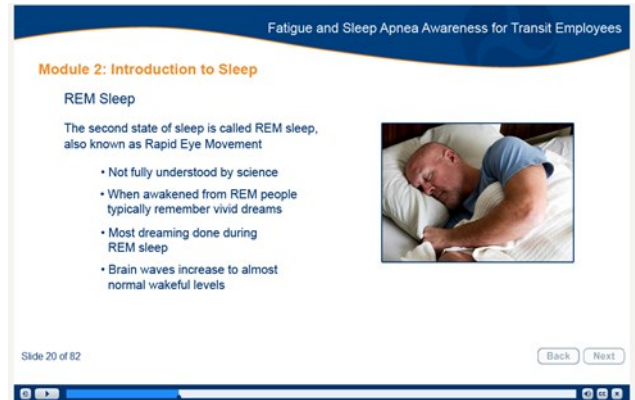
[Privacy Policy](#) - [Help](#)

Sign up for TRACS updates and other news at  
<https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/USDOTFTA/subscriber/new>

## Transit Agencies Bolster Safety Training Curriculum with Fatigue and Sleep Apnea Course

In partnership with the FTA's Office of Transit Safety and Oversight, the US Department of Transportation's [Transportation Safety Institute \(TSI\)](#) provides safety and security training courses to public rail and bus agencies nationwide, including those listed on pages 2-3. Several transit agencies have worked with TSI to incorporate existing FTA/TSI training lessons, modules, concepts, and courses into their internal agency training programs, alleviating the need to devote their own, often-limited resources to developing new training.

In response to a fatigue-related train accident in 2014 that injured 33 people and caused approximately \$9 million in damage, the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) required that all existing, new, and future employees complete the FTA/TSI's [Fatigue and Sleep Apnea Awareness for Transit Employees](#) course. This 50-minute e-learning course informs and guides transit operators regarding identification and treatment of individuals at high risk for obstructive sleep apnea and other sleep disorders, as well as general concepts about sleep and fatigue. CTA creatively leveraged this existing training resource into their new hire process at little to no cost to them.



Fatigue and Sleep Apnea Awareness for Transit Employees e-learning course

United States Department of Transportation  
OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY  
Transportation Safety Institute

Welcome to the USDOT's Transportation Safety Institute Learning Management System. Our continuing mission is to develop and provide world-class safety, security, and environmental training, products, and/or services for both public and private sectors.



Select your training topic to view course catalog or create a profile.

Aviation Safety  
Hazardous Materials or Motor Carrier Safety  
Highway Traffic Safety (NHTSA)  
Pipeline Safety  
**Bus/Rail Transit Safety & Security**

If you have created a profile since April 1, 2015 please login below.

Email or Username

Password

LOG IN

[Retrieve Username](#) | [Reset Password](#) | [Need help?](#)

From TSI's website (<https://tsi-dot.csod.com/client/tsi-dot/default.aspx>), pictured here, navigate to "Bus/Rail Transit Safety & Security," circled in red, to view the course catalog.

visit [TSI's website](#) and log in with an existing profile or visit the [Bus/Rail Transit Safety & Security](#) page to view the course catalog and create a profile.

Contact [transit@dot.gov](mailto:transit@dot.gov) or (405) 954-3682 to ask questions or request additional information about incorporating TSI/FTA training courses into your agency's training program.

Metro Transit in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and Orange County Transportation Authority in Los Angeles, California, have instituted similar programs which incorporate the Fatigue Awareness and Sleep Apnea Prevention for Transit Employees course into their existing new employee rail and bus operator training programs. Many agencies are utilizing other FTA/TSI classroom and virtual live training courses to bring together their stakeholders to learn about safety and meet their agencies' unique training needs.

For more information about the Fatigue Awareness and Sleep Apnea Prevention for Transit Employees course, including registration,



## FTA Talks Safety Management Systems – the Future of Public Transportation Safety – at TRB Annual Meeting



From left to right: FTA's Candace Key, Roy Chen, Lisa Staes, Jeff Bryan, and Adrienne Malasky participate in a panel about SMS and FTA's research programs

The goal of every public transportation operator is to run a safe, efficient transit system. At the FTA, we know that a reactive approach to safety causes us to fall short of this goal. Last week, FTA participated on panels at the Transportation Research Board's (TRB) 96<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting, where we discussed the importance of an organization-wide, proactive approach to safety.

The Office of Transit Safety and Oversight moderated two sessions: "The Role of Employee Safety Reporting in an Effective Transit Safety Management System," and "How FTA's SMS Approach and its Research Investments are Shaping Transit Safety." These panels discussed the role of

safety reporting in an Safety Management System (SMS), and the value of adopting SMS in the transit industry.

Panelists stressed that a robust employee safety reporting program that is voluntary and non-punitive is a key component of an effective SMS. Employee reporting yields useful and data-rich safety information from front line employees, and provides management with pertinent, timely information on safety gaps. The FTA is funding research on safety reporting programs at several transit agencies, and we will evaluate the effectiveness of the varied approaches used.

The employee reporting panel discussed how the aviation industry abandoned a punitive approach to human error events, absent willful misconduct or illegal activity, which resulted in an industry-wide, robust safety reporting system. The Federal Aviation Administration's proactive approach to SMS has been critical to keeping managers informed of safety shortfalls in need of attention and mitigation. This approach to safety reporting will similarly be the key to identifying and resolving systemic safety issues in our nation's transit systems.



From left to right: FTA's Paulina Orchard, Jordan Multer, Ernesto Lasen, Mike Blake, and Lynn Spencer discuss employee safety reporting

Our transit safety panelists also discussed how FTA's research program shares a common goal with our SMS implementation efforts—to reduce transit injuries and fatalities. As part of our efforts, the Transit Advisory Committee for Safety (TRACS) is drafting reports on safety culture and safety data and performance measures in transit. The committee's recommendations to FTA will include how to improve reporting platforms; desired data and reporting outputs; and use of confidential, close-call reporting systems within transit agencies. Final reports will be available on the [TRACS website](#) in the coming months.

Thank you to TRB for the opportunity to discuss SMS and the crucial role of employee safety reporting and research investments in transit safety.

## Deputy's Corner

### Transit Agencies Share Safety Solutions at APTA Mid-Year Meeting

*Kimberly Burtch, Acting Deputy Associate Administrator for Transit Safety and Oversight*

One of the most valuable parts of attending events such as last month's American Public Transportation Association (APTA) Safety Committees Joint Mid-Year Meeting is the opportunity to hear transit colleagues across the country discuss innovative ways they are addressing safety in their public transportation systems.

For example, transit worker assault—particularly as it affects bus operators—was a major concern among participants at this year's meeting. As the FTA prepares a notice of proposed rulemaking on transit worker assault, I was interested in hearing what transit agencies were doing to address the issue. One participant described how moving security cameras to conspicuously face bus passengers seemed to be reducing altercations. Many participants found that non-paying passengers were the number one cause of assaults on bus operators in their systems, and one participant described his agency's implementation of off-board fare collection.

As another example, our event hosts from Miami-Dade County described their [Transit Watch app](#), which allows passengers to easily and anonymously report suspicious activities and ride quality problems. While the app's main focus is security, it is still an innovative solution that a transit agency has implemented to make a safe mode of transportation even safer. If your agency has adopted a new or innovative approach to safety like Miami-Dade's app, [I'd love to hear about it](#).

If you missed APTA's mid-year meeting, the FTA's presentation is [archived on our website](#).



Kimberly Burtch, Acting  
Deputy Associate  
Administrator



## Federal Transit Administration

Federal Transit Administration  
Office of Transit Safety and Oversight  
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE  
Washington, DC 20590

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

## Rail Safety Statistics Report Now Available

A new [Rail Safety Statistics Report](#) is now available on the FTA's website. The report analyzes the safety performance of the rail transit industry by examining data collected through the State Safety Oversight and National Transit Database programs from 2007 to 2013. The report focuses on the types of events that occurred, their likely causes, and resulting fatalities or injuries. Please contact FTA's [Richard Gerhart](#) with questions.