



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,

I hope that all of you who joined me in attending the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) Annual Meeting earlier this month had a productive week connecting with and learning from our transit colleagues from across the country.



FTA Associate Administrator Tom Littleton stands with Acting Administrator Carolyn Flowers, APTA Past President and LA MTA CEO Phil Washington, and other FTA Associate Administrators and Chief Counsel during the FTA General Session at the APTA Annual Meeting in Los Angeles, CA, September 12, 2016.

Our Transit Safety and Oversight team was well represented at this year's meeting. John Bodnar and Scott Giering, our two Division Chiefs from the Office of Program Oversight, presented on FTA's technical assistance and compliance training programs. They opened up their session to input from grantees about what type of technical assistance and training they'd like to see offered by the FTA. John and Scott received some great feedback from the audience about what would help our grantees address compliance review findings, and we're eager to see how we can apply these suggestions to our programs in the future. I was joined by our Policy Lead, Brian Alberts, to provide a Federal safety update, covering topics such as our recent rulemaking activities, the role of employee safety reporting in an effective safety management system, and the FTA Bus Safety Program review process. We appreciate those of you who made time in your conference schedules to hear these updates, participate in committee sessions, or stop by the FTA booth to introduce yourselves and ask questions. If you missed the FTA's presentations, they're [available online](#).

We're looking forward to seeing more of you next month during the FTA Mini-State Programs session as part of the Transportation Research Board (TRB) National Conference on Rural Public and Intercity Bus Transportation in Asheville, NC, on October 5. Joe Powell, FTA's Bus Safety Program Manager, will speak about the Bus Safety Program, and Scott Giering will provide a Program Oversight update. If your organization would like a speaker from our office for a future event, please contact FTA's [Donna Aggazio](#).

Sincerely,
Thomas Littleton, PhD

Register Now for Webinar: Mitigation Strategies for Reducing Transit Bus Incidents with Pedestrians

The FTA is offering a free webinar on Mitigation Strategies for Reducing Transit Bus Incidents with Pedestrians. This webinar, open to the bus transit industry and interested stakeholders, is being held on **Thursday, September 29, 2016, from 2:00 – 4:00pm ET.**

Preventing pedestrian incidents with transit vehicles is a safety priority for the transit industry, and mobile phone use has made pedestrians more distracted than ever. This webinar will discuss current bus-pedestrian incident trends and voluntary guidance on methods to mitigate the risk of pedestrian incidents through system design, policies, and procedures. The webinar will also discuss technological options that are available, including bus generated alerts to pedestrians and pedestrian detection systems. Participants should [register online](#) in advance.



Passengers board a Durham-Raleigh Express Bus.

ON-DEMAND TRAINING

Check out the FTA's e-learning courses, offered on-demand at no cost at <https://safety.fta.dot.gov/>.

SMS Awareness

Introduces participants to Safety Management Systems (SMS), describes the four main components of the FTA's SMS Framework, and identifies the importance of Employee Safety Reporting Systems to the success of SMS.

Rail Nomenclature

Teaches participants to identify the major terms and components used in rail transit systems, and shows participants how to use the FTA's glossary of terms and library of resources.

Upcoming Training

The FTA sponsors several safety-related training courses, including those listed below. Descriptions, prerequisites, fees, and registration information can be found on the [FTA's website](#). Additionally, there are two on-demand e-learning courses, [SMS Awareness](#) and [Rail Nomenclature](#).

SMS Safety Assurance

Virtual—Live Training

October 13, 2016

Transit Rail System Safety

Denver, CO

October 17-21

Effectively Managing Transit Emergencies

Chicago, IL

October 18-21, 2016

SMS Principles For Transit

Brooklyn, NY

October 26-28, 2016

Transit System Security

St. Louis, MO

October 31-November 4, 2016

Deputy's Corner

Public Transportation Safety Program Final Rule Webinar and Reference Materials Available on FTA Website

After publication of the [Public Transportation Safety Program Final Rule](#) on August 11, the FTA hosted two webinars that provided an overview of the rule and gave participants a chance to ask questions about its content. In case you missed the webinars, the [recording](#) and [slides](#) are now available on our website, along with a [letter](#) from the Office of Transit Safety and Oversight's Associate Administrator, [fact sheet](#), and [frequently asked questions](#) about the rule. I encourage you to read these materials to gain more knowledge on our safety program.



Angela Dluger, Deputy
Associate Administrator

TRACS to Convene in November in Washington, DC

The next Transit Advisory Committee for Safety (TRACS) meeting is scheduled for November 29-30, 2016, at the National Association of Home Builders headquarters in Washington, DC.

The committee has been working on two safety tasks since their meeting in March 2016, when the group began the study of how transit agencies can establish strong safety cultures, and defining the functional requirements and data elements of a comprehensive safety data collection and analysis framework. The committee will discuss their draft findings at the fall meeting in preparation for making final recommendations to the FTA in the coming months.



A recent TRACS work group meeting in Washington, DC.

TRACS is a Federal advisory committee comprised of transit leaders from across the country. The US Transportation Secretary chartered the committee in 2009 to advise the FTA on public transportation safety matters.

For more information, contact FTA's [Adrianne Malasky](#).

Upcoming TSO Speaking Events

Office of Transit Safety and Oversight personnel will speak at the following industry events. Visit the FTA's [event calendar](#) to view additional upcoming events.

TRB Conference on Rural Public and Intercity Bus Transportation	Asheville, NC	October 5
Fire in Vehicles (FIVE) 2016	Baltimore, MD	October 6

Photos: 2016 State Safety Oversight Training Workshop

In July, State Safety Oversight (SSO) Agency personnel from across the country gathered in Washington, DC, to learn about the new [SSO Final Rule](#) and other topics critical to operating SSO programs.

Clockwise from top: FTA's SSO Program team addresses workshop participants; US Deputy Secretary of Transportation Victor Mendez delivers his opening remarks; workshop participants learn about the FTA's current rulemaking activities and priorities; FTA Acting Administrator Carolyn Flowers and Deputy Secretary Mendez meet workshop participants.



SAVE THE DATE

The next SSO Quarterly Call
is scheduled for

November 16, 2016
at 3:00 PM EST.

The next SSO Training Workshop
is tentatively planned for
April 24-28, 2017.

The next SSO Program
Managers Meeting is tentatively
planned for

October 23-28, 2017.

Rail transit agencies are invited
to attend the October meeting.



TSO Profiles

Q&A with Aloha Ley, Safety Assurance and Risk Management Division Chief, Office of System Safety



FTA's new Division Chief, Aloha Ley

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

before? We are the “architects” responsible for designing a safe transit system for the public. We ensure that the industry follows the architectural plans (rulemaking and orders) and provide them with tools and train them on the use of those tools (Safety Management System (SMS)). We engage and collaborate with industry (advisory committees, workgroups, etc.) to help make safety everyone’s number one priority.

What were you doing prior to this role? I started my career with DOT as an intern in the Office of Management Systems, and since then I’ve transitioned from working with and evaluating contracts to doing personnel and budget work as an office manager in the Office of International Aviation. From there I immersed myself into aviation and international affairs in the Office of the Secretary, and expanded my portfolio to grants and research management and landed my previous position in the Office of Aviation Safety at the Federal

Aviation Administration. Prior to this role, I built a breadth of experience to allow me to see the bigger picture, build a strategic view, and see beyond the stovepipes so that I can be an effective, efficient, and productive Federal employee.

What are some current projects or initiatives you or your team are working on? I currently have a team taking on three priority initiatives that could significantly affect the transit industry. Our team is working to ensure that we engage, teach, and train the transit industry on SMS principles, doing business that focuses holistically on building a safety culture within their agencies, states, and organizations. We’re also providing guidance and direction on accident investigation and taking proactive approaches for handling transit accidents and incidents. Finally, we’re developing a one-stop-shop approach to building a safety data system and seeking ways to collect safety information that will allow us to analyze data to ensure we apply intelligent risk-based decision-making that is data-driven.

How do you work with people outside of the FTA? How would you like to be working with them in the future? People are the crux of everything we do, whether they’re internal or external to our organization. We work with industry, contractors, state and local governments, and with other agencies, departments, and even with other industries and Congress. In everything we do, it’s a team effort; it’s a collaboration of government and industry partnerships as much as it is about FTA and TSO. I recently climbed Mt. Kilimanjaro and although it was a personal accomplishment, I couldn’t have done it without the aid of the porters and the guides. Similarly, in establishing SMS within the transit industry, we created a SMS Pilot Program with the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA). We reached out to United Airlines, who has an established and robust SMS, to solicit their assistance to share with CTA their SMS plan, experience, and how they effectively implemented their safety culture.

What is something you wish people knew about FTA or TSO? The FTA is going through a transformational change. We are evolving as an agency and as an industry into a new realm of safety-focused initiatives and direction. Congress gave us safety oversight authority in 2012 and established TSO in late 2013 with limited personnel and funding resources. Essentially, we’ve been asked to start up a whole new organization. The pace and the effort of doing something this significant, such as putting forth new policies, new rules and regulations, as well as a new framework for safety oversight is a huge undertaking and a foundational piece to effective safety oversight. We’re essentially building a new business while establishing safety-focused guidance and direction for the entire transit industry. I’m excited to work with such a hard-working and dedicated bunch!

Safety vs. Security: Who's Responsible for What?

Occasionally, the FTA's Office of Transit Safety and Oversight receives questions about security, ranging from who is responsible for overseeing transit security to where riders should report a security incident.

The short answer to these questions is this: the FTA does not directly oversee transit security, but does focus on transit *safety*. Meanwhile, the Transportation Security Administration (TSA), located within the [US Department of Homeland Security](#), is responsible for *security* oversight within our nation's transit systems.

Of course, delineating safety and security within a transit system can be complicated, as the two are often related. And if you seem to remember a time when the FTA was involved with security oversight, you're correct—the FTA had a very different set of security responsibilities immediately following the events of September 11, 2001.

After 9/11, the United States bolstered its transportation security initiatives. As part of these efforts, the FTA received a one-time supplemental budget allocation to strengthen transit security and create a portfolio of security initiatives. However, the FTA did not intend for these initiatives to be permanent. The funding allowed the FTA to oversee transit security until TSA, created in November 2001, was ready to take over security responsibilities permanently. Those responsibilities continue today, as TSA works with state and local authorities and system operators on implementing strategic security solutions to prevent catastrophic terrorist events and protect nationally critical infrastructure.

The FTA's transition away from security oversight happened gradually, and some of the transition is still in progress. For example, under the FTA's State Safety Oversight (SSO) rule (49 CFR Part 659), SSO Agencies oversee various security activities within their rail transit systems, such as reviewing and approving rail system security plans and assessing security plan implementation. Under the [new SSO Rule \(49 CFR Part 674\)](#) that the FTA published in March 2016, it is no longer the responsibility of the SSO Agencies to oversee rail transit agencies' implementation of security measures (see "Summary of Comments and Section-by-Section Responses" for section 674.5, Policy).

While the FTA's focus remains on safety, we continue certain security activities that enhance safety for transit riders and workers. For example, the FTA recently wrapped up a [National Online Dialogue on Transit Worker Assault](#) to collect industry input on this critical issue. The FTA will use information submitted to the online dialogue when drafting an upcoming Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on protecting transit workers from assault. The FTA continues to offer training on select security topics through the [Transportation Safety Institute](#). And, recipients of the FTA's Urbanized Area Formula Grants must use one percent of funding on security projects—for example, lighting—unless they certify that it is unnecessary to do so.

Further, when a transit system experiences a security incident or other emergency, we want them to be prepared to respond to it safely. For example, during a fire or bomb threat, it is critical to have procedures in place that keep passengers safe while they evacuate, whether or not the emergency was caused by a security incident. (*cont. on pg. 7*)

Safety Resources

Ask a transit safety question to FTA:

<https://ftawebprod.fta.dot.gov/ContactUsTool/Public/FAQs.aspx>

Read FTA safety resources on the Transit Safety and Oversight website:

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

Security Resources

Request a counterterrorism guide for transit operators, or ask a security question to TSA:

tsa.masstransit@tsa.dhs.gov



Federal Transit Administration

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Office of Transit Safety and Oversight
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<https://www.fta.dot.gov/regulations-and-guidance/safety/transit-safety-oversight-tso>

(cont. from pg. 6) Because of the link between safety and security, the FTA maintains a strong working relationship with TSA. Our two agencies routinely communicate, coordinate, and collaborate on the harmonization of safety and security priorities.

Our TSA colleagues take a risk-based approach to protecting our nation's transportation systems with a focus on preventing incidents before they occur. Direct responsibility for securing surface transportation systems falls on system owners and operators, however TSA works with them to formulate policies and practices that improve day-to-day security operations. TSA also works with stakeholders to foster effective information sharing, assist with drills and exercises, assess system security, and oversee their compliance with voluntary industry standards.

If you have questions specific to transit safety, there are several resources on the [FTA's website](#), or you may submit a question through the [Contact Us tool](#).

If you have questions specific to transit security, TSA also has several resources available.

They have developed Mass Transit and Passenger Rail Counterterrorism Guides for surface transportation employees on a variety of topics including threats, indicators, and methods of terrorist attacks. The guides are "pocket size" to serve as a convenient reference resource and security awareness tool while employees are on duty. Additionally, a new Surface Cybersecurity Awareness Guide is available to help employees recognize the signs of possible cyber threat activity and keep them engaged in appropriate practices to avert potentially damaging cyber-attacks. Requests for Counterterrorism Guides, along with any questions specific to surface transportation security, should be emailed to TSA at tsa.masstransit@tsa.dhs.gov.

Inaugural Contractor Summit Helps FTA Improve Grantee Review Programs

The Office of Program Oversight's first-ever Contractor Summit was held in Washington, DC, on August 29-31, 2016. The Contractor Summit is part of the FTA's ongoing commitment to improve the transparency and consistency in its oversight review programs. To that end, approximately 50 contractors who conduct the FTA's [program oversight reviews](#) participated in a series of discussions and presentations with review program managers and representatives from FTA's program offices.

The FTA's Office of Program Oversight works to ensure that Federal funding recipients remain compliant with requirements of the FTA's assistance programs. Through contracted support, the office conducts oversight reviews to assess and promote grantee compliance with these requirements. The Contractor Summit brought together contractors responsible for four of the FTA's compliance review programs—Triennial, State Management, Procurement System, and Financial Management Oversight Reviews.

The event facilitated discussion and sharing of methodologies and best practices between contractors from different review programs. Participants heard directly from FTA policy makers about recent updates to Federal regulations and received clarifications on guidance in key topic areas that they will need to be aware of in the upcoming review cycle, such as the new [Buy America requirements](#). Participants also discussed the types of training and technical assistance they think would benefit grantees based on their observations during site visits.

Based on discussions during the summit, the Office of Program Oversight has begun to identify areas in which oversight review processes may need to be clarified and opportunities to improve education and communication between FTA, its review contractors, and grantees.

Please contact [Selene Faer Dalton-Kumins](#), FTA's Office of Program Oversight Director, with questions or comments.