



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,

One of our top priorities for 2018 is to ensure that all 30 State Safety Oversight Agencies (SSOAs) are advancing through the application process and will be certified by the April 15, 2019 deadline. Five states (IL, MI, NY, OK, TN) still require state legislative or executive action.

In late January, FTA Deputy Administrator K. Jane Williams sent letters to those states which have advanced through three of the four stages to encourage their momentum and urge submittal of their application to FTA.

With the certification deadline now nearly one year away, we cannot underscore enough the importance of obtaining certification prior to the April 15, 2019 deadline. States continue to make progress through the application process and many have submitted their applications to FTA. In January alone, five states advanced to Stage 3 and several others submitted applications. On February 14, we held our quarterly conference call with the SSOAs and shared updates on certification, training and other related issues, in addition to regular ongoing communication with FTA Program Managers.

We look forward to seeing State Safety Oversight personnel and their contractors at the upcoming workshop, May 15-17 in Washington, D.C. This annual workshop will provide valuable technical assistance on all facets of compliance and certification. More details will be sent to the SSO program managers very soon.

Please check the [certification status table](#) often for updates. If there is anything FTA can do to assist your state's readiness for certification, do not hesitate to let me know. We are committed to working with you to keep public transit safe.

Sincerely,

Thomas Littleton, PhD



Thomas Littleton, PhD,
Associate Administrator, Office of
Transit Safety and Oversight

Upcoming Training

The FTA sponsors several safety training courses, including those listed below. The [complete schedule](#) of training courses offered in FY2018 is available on FTA's safety website. Please contact the FTA-sponsored [Transportation Safety Institute \(TSI\)](#) at (405) 954-3682 for safety training registration and course information. Individuals may contact [Dakisha Spratling](#) to request an [Individual Training Plan \(ITP\)](#). Participants in the Interim Provisions, a rule requiring training for rail safety personnel, have three years to complete the requirements in their ITP.

Courses Required by the Interim Provisions (RAIL)*		
Effectively Managing Transit Emergencies	Phoenix, AZ Arlington Heights, IL (reg. closed) Tampa, FL Seattle, WA Houston, TX	Mar. 13-16 May 1-4 May 15-18 July 10-13 July 31-Aug. 3
Transit Rail System Safety	Boston, MA Minneapolis, MN	Apr. 23-27 June 25-29
Transit System Security	Orange, CA Las Vegas, NV Ft. Worth, TX Cleveland, OH	Apr. 23-27 May 21-25 June 25-29 July 9-13
Transit Rail Incident Investigation	New Orleans, LA Landover, MD Chicago, IL Boston, MA	Mar. 5-9 Apr. 9-13 May 21-25 June 4-8
SMS Awareness (eLearning)	Go to tsi.dot.gov	Available 24/7
SMS Safety Assurance	Virtual-Live Training	Mar. 13 Apr. 10 May 17 June 19 July 19
SMS Principles for Transit	Newark, NJ (reg. closed) Seattle, WA Brooklyn, NY Atlanta, GA Oklahoma City, OK El Paso, TX Washington, DC Houston, TX	Mar. 7-9 Mar. 19-21, Mar. 21-23 Apr. 4-6 Apr. 18-20 Apr. 25-27 May 21-23 June 6-8 June 20-22

*Applies to FTA, SSOA, and rail transit agency personnel/contractors who conduct safety audits and examinations of public transportation systems not subject to Federal Railroad Administration regulation, as well as rail transit system employees who are directly responsible for safety oversight.

Training, cont. from pg. 2

Additional Courses Available in FY2018		
Bus & Rail In-person Courses		
Transit Supervisor Certification Course	Sacramento, CA Oklahoma City, OK	Apr. 23-27 June 4-8
Substance Abuse Management and Program Compliance	Kansas City, MO Charlottesville, VA Largo, MD Richland, WA	Mar. 13-15 April 3-5 June 26-28 July 18-20
Reasonable Suspicion and Post-Accident Testing Determination Seminar	Kansas City, MO Charlottesville, VA Largo, MD	Mar. 16 Apr. 6 June 29
Transit Industrial Safety Management	Charlotte, NC Cleveland, OH	May 7-11 June 11-15
Transit Safety & Security Audit Course	Columbia, SC Seattle, WA	Apr. 18-20 May 9-11
Advanced Rail Incident Investigation	Philadelphia, PA	Apr. 23-27
Instructor's Course for Transit Trainers	Boston, MA Oklahoma City, OK Salt Lake City, UT Orange, CA Las Vegas, NV	Mar. 26-30 Apr. 16-20 May 21-25 June 4-8 July 16-20
eLearning Courses		
Curbing Transit Employee Distracted Driving	Go to tsi.dot.gov	Available 24/7
Fatigue and Sleep Apnea Awareness for Transit Employees	Go to tsi.dot.gov	Available 24/7
Rail Nomenclature	Go to tsi.dot.gov	Available 24/7
Transit Asset Management Training: Calculating Performance Measures and Setting Targets	Go to tsi.dot.gov	Available 24/7

Voluntary Interim Provisions Courses (BUS)		
Fundamentals of Bus Collision Investigation	Honolulu, HI Fairfax, VA Boston, MA Denver, CO Clemson, SC	Mar. 12-16 Apr. 30-May 4 May 14-18 June 11-15 June 25-29
Transit Bus System Safety	Tampa, FL St. Louis, MO Charlottesville, VA Denton, TX Boston, MA	Mar. 19-23 Apr. 9-13 Apr. 30-May 4 July 9-13 July 30-Aug 3
Advanced Problems in Bus Collision Investigation	San Bernardino, CA	Apr. 9-13

District of Columbia Obtains State Safety Oversight Program Certification

On February 22, the District of Columbia obtained [FTA certification](#) of its State Safety Oversight (SSO) program that oversees the safety of the DC Streetcar. This certification applies to the DC Streetcar only and the FTA is working separately with DC, MD and VA on a State Safety Oversight Program for WMATA Metrorail.

Separately, the District of Columbia, together with Virginia and Maryland, are expected to jointly submit to the FTA a SSO Program certification application for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) Metrorail system, which will be overseen by the Metrorail Safety Commission. FTA continues to work closely with the jurisdictions as they work to achieve SSO Program certification and the resumption of state safety oversight of Metrorail.



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To date, DC, Ohio, Minnesota, and Utah have completed certification. By April 15, 2019, each eligible state must obtain certification or FTA will be prohibited by law from obligating any new grant funds until certification is achieved. By law, the deadline cannot be waived or extended.

The FTA encourages states to submit certification applications by April 15, 2018, to allow ample time for review and states should not assume that applications submitted after September 30 will receive a decision on certification by the deadline. To track states' progress, please refer to FTA's [SSO Program Certification Status Table](#).

FTA's 2018 Updated Comprehensive Review Guide Now Available

FTA's 2018 Comprehensive Review Guide has been [published online](#). This year's update to the review guide is the culmination of a "back to basics" exercise to identify the minimum compliance requirements to which recipients are expected to comply as well as optimal methods for assessing compliance. We anticipate that this year's changes will result in a more efficient process that provides our recipients with a clear understanding of what is expected during a Triennial or State Management Review, how FTA reviewers determine compliance, and the reasons behind a deficiency finding.

This new guide articulates what is expected of grantees and exactly how FTA determines compliance. While maintaining the overall intent of the reviews, all requirements are directly related to specific, citable, written requirements. The changes are in response to feedback from our recipients, review contractors, and colleagues.

The FTA is committed to improving consistency and transparency in its oversight reviews. Oversight is one of the most critical functions that the FTA performs. The FTA bears responsibility to prevent and identify improper payments, and ensure that every dollar spent counts toward improving public transit. Oversight also provides the FTA an opportunity to work with recipients to strengthen their programs. We are excited to implement these changes for fiscal year 2018 and we welcome and look forward to your feedback.

Click here for more information on [FTA's Triennial Review](#) and [State Management Review](#).

For more information, contact FTA's Scott Giering at Scott.Giering@dot.gov.

SMS Pilot Update: CTA Focuses on Employee Safety Reporting

Over the past two years, the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) has participated in FTA's Safety Management System (SMS) Implementation Pilot program, working with FTA on several SMS implementation activities. To date, CTA's accomplishments have ranged from sharing their safety management policy statement throughout their organization to beginning testing of new SMS procedures. In January, the pilot program took them to Chicago's O'Hare International Airport, where members of CTA's management and union leadership spent two days learning about one of the



Top row, from left to right: Gerald Manning (FAA), Marcin Kotarba (ATU 241), Jairo Naranjo (CTA), Tom McKone (CTA), Kamesha Hill (CTA), Dwayne Jones (ATU 241), Perry Thornton (ATU 241), John Ekblad (CTA), Ernesto Lasen (FTA), Steve Hansen (NATCA), Tara Zeck (FAA).

Seated, from left to right: Todd Ronne (FAA), Mike Blake (NATCA), Chris Kasmer (Carpenters Local 1027), Donald Polk (ATU 241), Mike Thompson (FAA)

aviation industry's employee safety reporting programs, the Air Traffic Safety Action Program (ATSAP).

FTA worked with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and National Air Traffic Controllers Association (NATCA) to coordinate the visit so CTA management and union leaders could see an effective employee safety reporting program in practice and learn how the program was established and continues to thrive. These insights will help CTA develop and implement an effective employee safety reporting program for their transit agency.

During the meeting, CTA representatives met with FAA and NATCA safety leadership to learn about the reporting program and to observe the Event Review Committee (ERC) at work. The ERC is a working group made up of labor, management, and experts that review and discuss ATSAP reports and analyze the reported hazards to evaluate risk.

Learning about the day-to-day operation and execution of the reporting program was a major point of interest for CTA, as NATCA's membership is similar in size to CTA's union membership. CTA learned that ERC members work full time previewing reports for each biweekly meeting, drafting responses, and collecting additional information. The program started with one ERC, but as it expanded, FAA and NATCA added three additional committees and divided them by service areas. CTA learned how they apply taxonomy to track trends, how they respond to reports based on the degree of seriousness and complexity, and what software they use. They also learned about the ERC's use of analysts to help manage reports and their timeframe for responding to them. Many reports carry over to subsequent meetings, and some require a coordinated response that can often take months. *(Cont. on pg. 6)*

(CTA, cont. from pg. 5) When CTA asked if the reporting program was considered successful, they were met with a resounding yes. FAA and NATCA actively manage safety issues that they previously would not have known existed. Additionally, report submitters feel comfortable providing detailed information because the reporting system is confidential and non-punitive.

FTA continues to develop practical guidance materials and tools based on the experiences of CTA and other transit agencies participating in the SMS Implementation Pilot Program to help the transit industry implement SMS. For more information, please contact FTA's [Paulina Orchard](#). You can read more about ATSAP in the [June 2017 TSO Spotlight](#).

Upcoming TSO Speaking Events

[13th Annual Drug and Alcohol Program National Conference](#)

Fort Lauderdale, FL

May 8-10, 2018

Registration open

State Safety Oversight (SSO) Training Workshop

Washington, DC

May 15-17, 2018

Open to SSO program managers and contract support. Additional details will be emailed soon.



U.S. Department
of Transportation

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