



Transit Safety and Oversight Spotlight

Federal Transit Administration
Office of Transit Safety and Oversight

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State Safety Oversight Certification Update

April 2018
Vol. 3 No. 4

The [State Safety Oversight \(SSO\) rule](#), issued by FTA to strengthen and enhance states' authority to oversee their rail transit systems, requires states with FTA-funded rail transit to establish and obtain FTA certification of an SSO program by April 15, 2019. That deadline is now just a year away.

If a state misses the deadline, FTA is prohibited by law from obligating federal transit funds to public transportation agencies in the state, including bus, rail, and other transit modes, until they have achieved certification. The deadline cannot be waived or extended.

There are 30 states that must meet the SSO requirements, and as of April 19, the FTA has certified eight: Ohio, Minnesota, Utah, the District of Columbia, Hawaii, Massachusetts, Colorado, and Virginia. FTA's [certification status table](#) has updates on states' progress.

We are offering a variety of tools including conference calls, training workshops, webinars, guidance documents, one-on-one calls, monthly updates, and semi-annual stakeholder meetings to help SSO agencies meet the deadline. Our next SSO training workshop is scheduled for May 15-17 in Bethesda, MD, where SSO Program Managers, their staff, and contractors will participate in training critical to the certification process and rail transit safety oversight.

FTA will continue to work with the remaining states to support them in meeting this critically important deadline. We remain committed to improving and strengthening SSO programs for improved oversight of rail transit operations. For more information on certification, contact FTA's [Patrick Nemons](#).



Colorado's SSO Program, which obtained FTA certification on April 6, oversees the safety of the Regional Transportation District rail system (*Photo courtesy of RTD*)

Upcoming Safety 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 have three years to complete the requirements in their ITP.

Courses Required by the Interim Provisions (RAIL)*		
Effectively Managing Transit Emergencies	Arlington Heights, IL (reg. closed) Tampa, FL Seattle, WA Houston, TX	May 1-4 May 15-18 July 10-13 July 31-Aug. 3
Transit Rail System Safety	Minneapolis, MN Atlanta, GA	June 25-29 Aug. 27-31
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	Chicago, IL Boston, MA Portland, OR	May 21-25 June 4-8 Aug. 6-10
SMS Awareness (eLearning)	Go to tsi.dot.gov	Available 24/7
SMS Safety Assurance	Virtual-Live Training	May 17 June 19 July 19 Aug. 21
SMS Principles for Transit	El Paso, TX Washington, DC Houston, TX	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.

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Additional Courses Available in FY2018		
Bus & Rail Courses (In-Person)		
Transit Supervisor Certification Course	Oklahoma City, OK	June 4-8
Substance Abuse Management and Program Compliance	Largo, MD Richland, WA	June 26-28 July 18-20
Reasonable Suspicion and Post-Accident Testing Determination Seminar	Largo, MD	June 29
Transit Industrial Safety Management	Charlotte, NC Cleveland, OH	May 7-11 June 11-15
Transit Safety & Security Audit Course	Seattle, WA	May 9-11
Advanced Rail Incident Investigation	Philadelphia, PA	Apr. 23-27
Instructor's Course for Transit Trainers	Oklahoma City, OK Salt Lake City, UT Orange, CA Las Vegas, NV	Apr. 16-20 May 21-25 June 4-8 July 16-20
eLearning Courses (Web-Based)		
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	Fairfax, VA Boston, MA Denver, CO Clemson, SC	Apr. 30-May 4 May 14-18 June 11-15 June 25-29
Transit Bus System Safety	Charlottesville, VA Denton, TX Boston, MA	Apr. 30-May 4 July 9-13 July 30-Aug 3
Advanced Problems in Bus Collision Investigation	Landover, MD	July 16-20

Q & A: Corrective Action Plan Webinar for SSOAs

On February 27, FTA hosted a webinar for State Safety Oversight Agencies (SSOAs) about managing Corrective Action Plans (CAPs). [Slides](#) from the session are available online, and a summary of the question and answer discussion is below. The webinar was the first in what FTA plans to be a series of technical assistance webinars for SSOAs. SSO Program Managers with suggestions for future webinars should contact their FTA Program Manager, or email: FTASafetyStakeholder@dot.gov.

Questions asked and answered during the webinar include:

- **Can the FTA require a rail transit agency (RTA) to develop a CAP if the agency is not currently under enhanced federal oversight?**

Yes, public transportation law permits FTA to require an RTA to develop and carry out a CAP (49 CFR § 670.21). However, FTA would typically work with the SSOA to address the safety risk or hazard rather than engaging with the RTA directly.

- **Can the hazard and CAP logs be the same document or do they have to be separate logs? Is there a prohibition against the logs being combined?**

RTAs are allowed to maintain separate logs to keep information organized, particularly for larger transit systems. Parts 659 or 674 do not prohibit an SSOA from combining hazard and CAP logs. However, as the logs grow, it's important to have a method in place for managing them.

- **I thought the hazard log is maintained and mitigated by the RTA, while the CAP log is maintained by the SSOA?**

The RTA maintains the CAP log. The SSOA typically reviews and approves the CAP before it is implemented. RTAs must also submit verification to the SSOA that the issue(s) the CAP addresses is mitigated or eliminated before the SSOA can approve closing a CAP.

- **Is FTA going to look at open CAPs to evaluate safety standards or issue rules?**

At this time, FTA does not plan to review open CAPs to evaluate the need for safety standards or rules. However, FTA is working on a long-term plan to develop safety standards.

- **Under part 674, are SSOAs required to oversee RTA security?**

No, FTA does not require SSOAs to oversee RTA security, but SSOAs may choose to do so.

- **Where does the SSO final rule state that an SSOA must not only review and approve a CAP, but also monitor it?**

Please see Part 674.37, which states that, "The RTA must periodically report to the SSOA on its progress in carrying out the CAP. The SSOA may monitor the RTA's progress in carrying out the CAP through unannounced, on-site inspections, or any other means the SSOA deems necessary or appropriate."

For more information, contact FTA's Eric Madison at Eric.Madison@dot.gov.

Operation Lifesaver Shares Free Safety Resources; Requests Volunteers

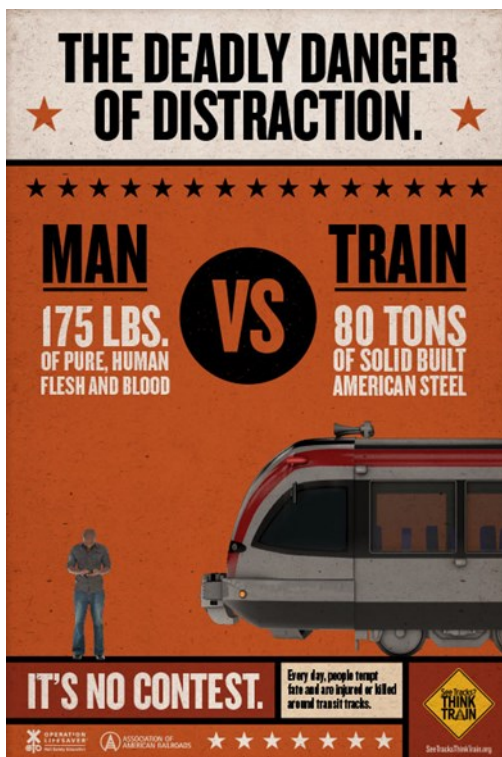
With support from the FTA, Operation Lifesaver, Inc. (OLI) helps transit agencies educate riders and the public about safe behavior around rail transit. Through its network of [state programs](#), OLI works directly with transit agencies, railroads, and communities across the country to spread awareness about the importance of rail safety. As part of these efforts, OLI makes a wide range of free, ready-to-use safety graphics and educational materials available for transit agencies to enhance their own safety education efforts.

Every transit agency's operating environment is unique, but some unsafe behaviors are common across all communities, such as distraction (e.g., wearing headphones), misinformation (e.g., thinking trains can stop quickly), and aggressive behavior (e.g., driving around lowered gates). OLI has developed educational messages targeting these and other behaviors, and they are available for transit agencies to download from [OLI's website](#).

As part of OLI's national [See Tracks? Think Train!](#) Campaign, transit agencies can download posters, graphics, videos, and radio ads, or purchase key chains or other giveaways with the campaign's yellow diamond logo. In addition, many [examples](#) of creative safety posters, videos, fact sheets, and other materials created by transit agencies with grants from OLI are also available on the website.



The logo for OLI's "See Tracks? Think Train!" campaign



Rail safety posters, graphics, and educational materials are available for transit agencies to download for free from OLI's website

Later this month, OLI will launch a new safety campaign for beginner drivers, which will complement existing learning resources targeted toward [first responders](#), [professional drivers](#), and [school bus drivers](#).

OLI is also [planning its second annual Rail Safety Week](#) for September 23-29, 2018. With support from FTA as well as the Federal Railroad Administration and Federal Highway Administration, OLI's [Rail Safety Week](#) includes special events and community outreach activities, coupled with social media, that call national attention to the need for rail safety education. During the first Rail Safety Week in 2017, OLI launched new digital [infographics](#) to highlight safety around street-running systems (light rail and streetcars) as well as commuter and freight rail. All Rail Safety Week graphics are available for [download](#) by any transit agency that wants to use them in their own social media outreach.

OLI encourages transit agency and State Safety Oversight Agency staff to get involved directly with their state program by becoming an Operation Lifesaver Authorized Volunteer (OLAV). OLAVs receive training from Operation Lifesaver state programs, and then have access to a variety of presentation materials for use in community meetings, classrooms, or other outreach activities. To start the training process, volunteers may contact the [state coordinator](#) for their state, or fill out the [form](#) on OLI's website.

For more information on OLI's rail safety education efforts and opportunities to partner, email transit@oli.org.

TSO Profile

Q&A with Dakisha Spratling, Program Analyst, Office of System Safety



Dakisha Spratling

How would you explain your job to someone you've never met before? I develop and manage FTA safety training for the transit industry.

What were you doing prior to this role? I was a contractor working for the United States Navy, assisting with training for their personnel. I helped determine what skill sets sailors needed in order to do their jobs and what training courses they needed to take.

Prior to that, I was on active duty in the U.S. Navy. I was a Hospital Corpsman and provided medical care and training to sailors and marines. While in the Navy, I had the opportunity to live in San Diego for three years, which reminded me a lot of my hometown of Miami.

What are some current projects or initiatives you or your team are working on? We are working on FTA's final Training Rule and assisting individuals with completing their Interim Provisions training requirements.

How do you work with people outside of the FTA? How would you like to be working with them in the future? I help those interested in participating in training determine what FTA safety courses they need to take, and answer their training-related questions. In the future, I am interested in learning more about what training gaps exist in the transit industry.

What are your interests or hobbies outside of work? I like to travel. My most memorable trips were traveling to Peru and Egypt.

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
For more information, contact FTA's [Ruth Lyons](#)

[SafeRail Conference](#)

Washington, DC
June 11-12, 2018



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