

Transit Safety and Oversight Spotlight

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Message from the Acting Associate Administrator

Dear Transit Colleagues,

Last month, FTA hosted representatives from all 31 State Safety Oversight (SSO) programs and 45 rail transit agencies (RTAs) at the 2018 Joint SSO and RTA Workshop in Washington, DC.

During the workshop, FTA Acting Administrator K. Jane Williams announced that California and Oklahoma have obtained FTA certification of their SSO programs in advance of the April 2019 deadline, making them the 26th and 27th states to do so. To the remaining states that have submitted applications but are still uncertified, I emphasized that FTA will continue to work with them to make sure they have what they need to get to the finish line.

Because our SSO and RTA workshop participants are working toward compliance with the Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP) final rule, we hosted a five-hour Safety Management System training course tailored to both groups. Many participants said that the training was one of the workshop’s highlights, and we hope that they are able to apply what they learned within their organizations.

We are reviewing participant feedback to see how we can make future workshops even better. We have posted presentations from the workshop on [our website](#).

2018 has been an active year for FTA’s safety program, and we look forward to keeping you informed on work that lies ahead for the entire transit safety community.

Sincerely,
Henrika Buchanan



Henrika Buchanan, Acting Associate Administrator for Transit Safety and Oversight (second from left) and FTA Acting Administrator K. Jane Williams (second from right) catch up with workshop participants Juan Morrison of Houston METRO (far left) and Eric Madison of Dovetail Consulting (far right)—both former FTA SSO Program Managers

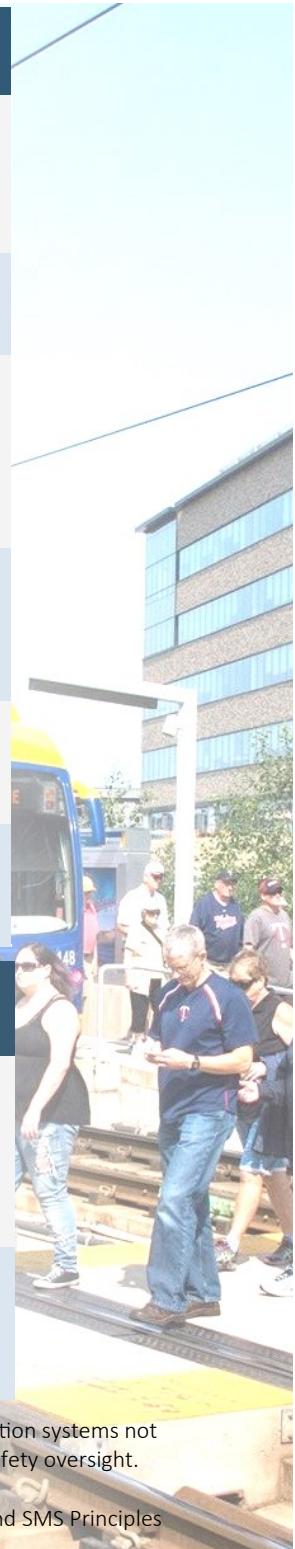
Upcoming Safety Training

FTA sponsors several safety training courses, including those listed below. The [complete schedule](#) of training courses offered in FY 2019 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 FTA's Safety Promotion Team at FTASafetyPromotion@dot.gov to request an [Individual Training Plan](#) (ITP). Participants in the Public Transportation Safety Certification Training Program have three years to complete the requirements in their ITP.

Courses Required by the Public Transportation Safety Certification Training Program (RAIL)*		
Effectively Managing Transit Emergencies	Boston, MA	Dec. 4-7
	Honolulu, HI	Jan. 14-17
	Miami, FL	Feb. 12-15
SMS Awareness (eLearning)	On demand at tsi.dot.gov	Available 24/7
SMS Principles for Transit	Baltimore, MD	Nov. 28-30
	Charlotte, NC	Dec. 12-14
	Seattle, WA	Feb. 25-27
	Seattle, WA	Feb. 27-Mar. 1
SMS Safety Assurance	Virtual live training	Nov. 29
		Jan. 16
		Feb. 21
Transit Rail Incident Investigation	San Francisco, CA	Dec. 3-7
	Los Angeles, CA	Feb. 25-Mar. 1
Transit Rail System Safety	Los Angeles, CA	Jan. 14-18
	Landover, MD	Feb. 4-8
Voluntary Courses for the Public Transportation Safety Certification Training Program (BUS)**		
Fundamentals of Bus Collision Investigation	San Francisco, CA	Dec. 10-14
	Miami, FL	Jan. 7-11
	San Antonio, TX	Jan. 28-Feb. 1
	Pomona, CA	Feb. 11-15
Transit Bus System Safety	Landover, MD	Dec. 10-14
	Phoenix, AZ	Jan. 7-11
	Houston, TX	Feb. 25-Mar. 1

*Applies to 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. Other safety personnel, including those from bus agencies, are encouraged to participate in training voluntarily.

**The voluntary bus program also includes Effectively Managing Transit Emergencies, SMS Awareness, SMS Safety Assurance, and SMS Principles for Transit. Please see the rail schedule above for course availability.



Additional Courses Available in FY 2019

Bus & Rail Courses (In Person)

Crime Prevention through Environmental Design	Seattle, WA	Feb. 20-21
Instructor's Course for Transit Trainers	St. Louis, MO Tampa, FL	Dec. 3-7 Jan. 28-Feb. 1
Reasonable Suspicion and Post-Accident Testing Determination Seminar	Montebello, CA	Feb. 8
Substance Abuse Management and Program Compliance	Montebello, CA	Feb. 5-7
Transit Industrial Safety Management	San Bernadino, CA	Feb. 4-8
Transit Safety & Security Audit Course	Landover, MD	Jan. 23-25
Transit Supervisor Certification Course	Tampa, FL Landover, MD	Dec. 3-7 Jan. 14-18
Transit System Security	Seattle, WA Tucson, AZ	Jan. 28-Feb. 1 Feb. 11-15

eLearning Courses (Web Based)

Curbing Transit Employee Distracted Driving	On demand at tsi.dot.gov	Available 24/7
Fatigue and Sleep Apnea Awareness for Transit Employees	On demand at tsi.dot.gov	Available 24/7
Rail Nomenclature	On demand at tsi.dot.gov	Available 24/7
Bus Nomenclature	On demand at tsi.dot.gov	Available 24/7

TRACS Meeting Announced for January 17-18, 2019

FTA has announced that the next [Transit Advisory Committee for Safety \(TRACS\)](#) meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 17 through Friday, January 18 at the National Highway Institute, located at 1310 North Courthouse Road, Suite 300, Arlington, VA. TRACS is FTA's federal advisory committee that provides information, advice, and recommendations on transit safety to the agency. This is the group's first meeting since FTA [re-established the committee](#) through a [new charter](#) and announced [new membership](#).

This year the committee will focus on providing advice and recommendations on transit safety innovations. The charter has tasked the committee with reviewing emerging technologies and recommending innovations in safety that FTA can implement in support of the public transportation sector.

TRACS meetings are open to the public. Members of the public wishing to attend the meeting should contact FTA's [Kara Waldrup](#) by January 10.

California and Oklahoma Obtain State Safety Oversight Program Certification

On October 23, 2018, FTA [announced](#) that California and Oklahoma have obtained federal certification of their State Safety Oversight (SSO) programs.

California's SSO Agency, the California Public Utilities Commission, oversees the safety of several rail systems throughout the state: the Bay Area Rapid Transit heavy rail, light rail, and automated guideway systems; the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority's light and heavy rail systems; the North County Transit District's light rail (trolley) system; the Sacramento Regional Transit District's light rail system; the San Diego Metropolitan Transportation System's light rail system; the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency's Muni Metro light rail, cable car and street car systems; and the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority's light rail system.

Oklahoma's SSO Agency, the Oklahoma Department of Transportation, oversees the safety of the Oklahoma City Streetcar system, which is currently under construction.

To date, all 30 states have submitted an application for certification and 27 of 31 SSO programs have been certified. 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.

To track states' progress, please refer to FTA's [SSO Program Certification Status Table](#). For more information, please contact FTA's [Kim Burtch](#).



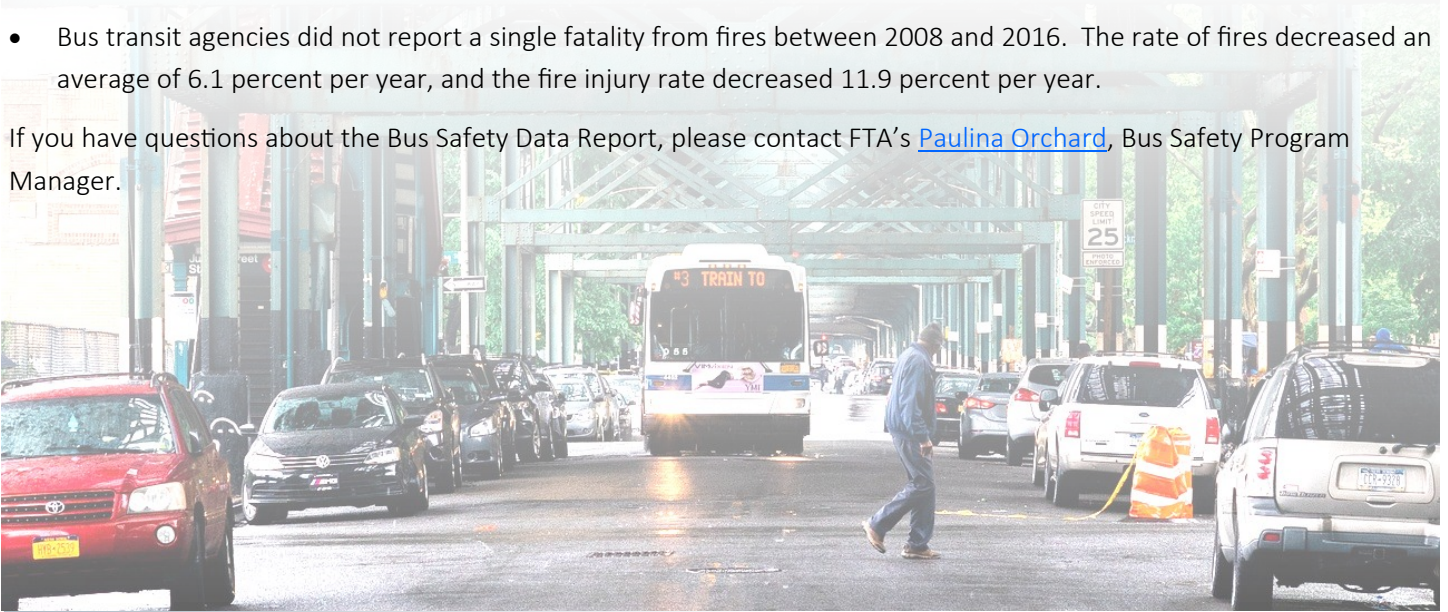
FTA Bus Safety Data Report Now Available

FTA has released its first-ever [Bus Safety Data Report](#), which analyzes bus transit safety and security event data submitted to the National Transit Database by transit agencies. The report provides a snapshot of the safety performance of the bus transit industry for 2008 to 2016, highlighting 2016 outcomes. It focuses on patterns and trends in events, fatalities, and injuries, and those same figures standardized by 100 million vehicle revenue miles of service to account for differing levels of service provided over time and between modes.

The report describes several notable trends in bus safety, including:

- Between 2008 and 2016, the total bus transit fatality rate decreased at an average rate of 0.4 percent per year. However, the rate increased 3.4 percent per year between 2008 and 2013 before falling back to levels similar to 2008 for 2014-2016.
 - The customer fatality rate followed this pattern, increasing 13.5 percent per year between 2008 and 2013 and then receding in later years.
 - In contrast, the public fatality rate (non-customer or worker) also increased 3.1 percent per year between 2008 and 2013, but then stayed at levels similar to 2013 in later years.
- The total bus transit injury rate has decreased an average of 0.9 percent per year between 2008 and 2016.
 - However, the bus worker injury rate increased at an average annual rate of 3.0 percent.
 - The customer injury rate decreased at an average annual rate of 0.4 percent.
- Between 2008 and 2016, collisions account for 83 percent of bus transit fatalities and 51 percent of injuries.
 - More than half (54 percent) of collision fatalities and the large majority (89 percent) of collision injuries resulted from collisions with non-transit vehicles. The rate of these collisions increased an average of 2.2 percent per year.
 - Somewhat less than half of collision fatalities (41 percent) resulted from collisions with individuals (pedestrians or bicyclists). While there was a slight 0.2 percent annualized increase in these collisions when comparing rates for 2008 and 2016, fluctuations in the intervening years meant that there was no clear trend across the entire nine-year period.
- Bus transit agencies did not report a single fatality from fires between 2008 and 2016. The rate of fires decreased an average of 6.1 percent per year, and the fire injury rate decreased 11.9 percent per year.

If you have questions about the Bus Safety Data Report, please contact FTA's [Paulina Orchard](#), Bus Safety Program Manager.





Joint SSO and RTA Workshop Focuses on SMS, Post-Certification Safety Efforts

State Safety Oversight (SSO) and rail transit agency (RTA) safety personnel from across the country gathered in Washington, DC, October 23-25 for the 2018 Joint SSO and RTA Workshop. Sessions focused on FTA's recently published safety rules, implementing a Safety Management System (SMS), operating an SSO program after obtaining federal certification, and sharing best practices in safety between SSOs and RTAs.

Pictured top to bottom, left to right: SSO personnel participate in the Safety Management System (SMS) for SSO Programs course; FTA Acting Administrator K. Jane Williams announces California's and Oklahoma's certifications; Acting Associate Administrator for Transit Safety and Oversight Henrika Buchanan welcomes workshop participants; SSO and RTA representatives discuss safety practices during a peer-to-peer exchange; RTA personnel participate in SMS training; FTA's Dr. Alfonz Ruth warms up the audience.

TSO Profile

Q&A with Cyrell McLemore, Regional Safety Officer



Cyrell McLemore,
Regional Safety Officer

How would you explain your job to someone you've never met? I'm a Regional Safety Officer for FTA's Office of Transit Safety and Oversight in Chicago, IL. I serve as a liaison between FTA Headquarters and Regional Offices as it relates to the program management and oversight of the State Safety Oversight (SSO) program.

What is your favorite part of your job? My favorite part of my job is when we are onsite with the states and rail transit agencies providing technical assistance and sharing best practices. When we are onsite with our stakeholders, not only does it show support, but it enables us to understand how federal programs are being implemented.

What were you doing prior to this role? I started my transit career as a Project Manager with the Illinois Department of Transportation in 1999. I worked with the suburban communities of Chicago, writing grants and managing transit-related projects for Metra Commuter Rail and Pace Suburban Bus. In 2003, I joined FTA Region V as a General Engineer where I managed major projects, conducted program oversight reviews, and managed and provided technical assistance on federal funding programs to state DOTs and transit agencies.

What are some current projects or initiatives that you or your team are working on? I'm working on SSO program certifications and a new reporting and oversight system for the SSO agencies. The new web-based system will allow for ongoing SSO reporting to the FTA. It will capture data for events, hazards, corrective action plans and audits. I'm also assisting with the update to the SSO program audit and implementation guides.

What is your favorite form of transportation and why? Walking. It provides me the opportunity to exercise and appreciate what's going on around me. We live in a fast-paced society and sometimes it's good to slow down and take in what's in front of you.

What are your hobbies and interests outside of work? Spending time with my family, working with the community through my church, and staying abreast of new technologies, whether that's transportation, communication, medical or other technology.



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

Upcoming Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan Webinar

FTA is hosting a series of technical assistance webinars for the transit industry on the Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP) final rule. Register to attend the final December technical assistance webinar by clicking on the link below. Recordings from the recent PTASP Bus Template and FAQ webinars can be found on [FTA's PTASP website](#).

[System Safety Program Plan to PTASP Roadmap](#)

Wednesday, December 5

2:00 PM Eastern Time

Upcoming TSO Speaking Events

[American Public Transportation Association \(APTA\) Mid-Year Safety Seminar](#)

Washington, DC

November 27-29