

Transit Safety and Oversight Spotlight

U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Transit Administration

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Upcoming Safety
Training

2-3

Reminder:
Upcoming TRACS
Meeting

4

SSOAs Participate in
First Session of SMS
Training

4

Safety Data
Spotlight: Rail
Transit Fatalities
and Injuries

5

TSO Profile

6

Upcoming TSO
Speaking Events
and PTASP
Webinars

6

Message from the Acting Associate Administrator

Dec. 2018
Vol. 3 No. 12

Dear Transit Colleagues,

Since FTA announced in a [“Dear Colleague” letter](#) that the minimum rate of random drug testing will increase to 50 percent of covered employees effective January 1, 2019, we have received a lot of questions from the transit industry. For those employers covered by FTA’s drug and alcohol regulation, I realize that a requirement change such as this may cause concern, and I appreciate that some of you have taken the time to share those concerns with us.

First, let me clarify that the change is not arbitrary. FTA’s random drug testing regulation (49 C.F.R. § 655.45) sets the default testing rate at 50 percent. In 2007, FTA lowered the rate to 25 percent in response to a low violation rate reported by the industry. However, the regulation also mandates that when the violation rate increases to 1 percent or greater—as it has now, to 1.06 percent—FTA is required to increase the random drug testing rate to 50 percent.

The safety of transit riders and workers remains our focus. To that end, we do not have the authority to issue waivers for the testing requirement. However, we are committed to providing you with technical assistance in implementing the forthcoming testing rate increase.

On December 18, we hosted a webinar to help address concerns about the rate change. If you missed it, we will post a recording on our website and host a second session in the new year. Additionally, we are creating a Frequently Asked Questions document from the questions that many of you have sent us, and we will post it on our [Drug and Alcohol Program web page](#) soon. You may also direct questions to FTA’s Drug and Alcohol Program Manager, [Iyon Rosario](#).

The Office of Transit Safety and Oversight is also preparing for the Transit Advisory Committee for Safety (TRACS) meeting in early 2019, where I look forward to welcoming our new committee members. Additionally, on January 14, representatives from our office will present at the Transportation Research Board’s Annual Meeting in Washington, DC, on Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan implementation. We have many opportunities around the corner to engage in our collective work to strengthen safety. I look forward to every step of the journey with you.

Sincerely,
Henrika Buchanan



Henrika Buchanan, Acting
Associate Administrator for
Transit Safety and Oversight

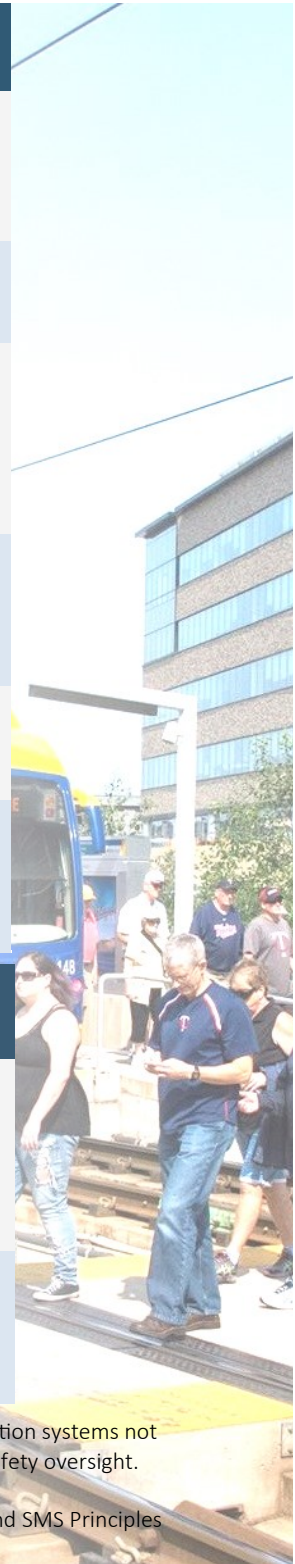
Upcoming Safety Training

FTA sponsors several safety training courses, including those listed below. The [complete schedule](#) of training courses offered through September 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	Honolulu, HI	Jan. 14-17
	Miami, FL	Feb. 12-15
	Atlanta, GA	Mar. 12-15
SMS Awareness (eLearning)	On demand at tsi.dot.gov	Available 24/7
SMS Principles for Transit	Seattle, WA	Feb. 25-27
	Seattle, WA	Feb. 27-Mar. 1
	Alexandria, VA	Mar. 20-22
	San Antonio, TX	Mar. 27-29
SMS Safety Assurance	Virtual live training	Jan. 16
		Feb. 21
		Mar. 28
Transit Rail Incident Investigation	Los Angeles, CA	Feb. 25-Mar. 1
	Tampa, FL	Mar. 4-8
Transit Rail System Safety	Los Angeles, CA	Jan. 14-18
	Landover, MD	Feb. 4-8
	Fort Worth, TX	Mar. 18-22
Voluntary Courses for the Public Transportation Safety Certification Training Program (BUS)**		
Fundamentals of Bus Collision Investigation	Miami, FL	Jan. 7-11
	San Antonio, TX	Jan. 28-Feb. 1
	Pomona, CA	Feb. 11-15
	Seattle, WA	Mar. 11-15
Transit Bus System Safety	Phoenix, AZ	Jan. 7-11
	Houston, TX	Feb. 25-Mar. 1
	Los Angeles, CA	Mar. 25-29

*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.



Training, cont. from pg. 2

Additional Courses		
Bus & Rail Courses (In Person)		
Crime Prevention through Environmental Design	Seattle, WA	Feb. 20-21
Instructor's Course for Transit Trainers	Tampa, FL Landover, MD	Jan. 28-Feb. 1 Mar. 4-8
Reasonable Suspicion and Post-Accident Testing Determination Seminar	Montebello, CA Denton, TX	Feb. 8 Mar. 8
Substance Abuse Management and Program Compliance	Montebello, CA Denton, TX	Feb. 5-7 Mar. 5-7
Transit Industrial Safety Management	San Bernardino, CA	Feb. 4-8
Transit Safety & Security Audit Course	Landover, MD Honolulu, HI	Jan. 23-25 Mar. 6-8
Transit Supervisor Certification Course	Landover, MD	Jan. 14-18
Transit System Security	Seattle, WA Tucson, AZ Tampa, FL	Jan. 28-Feb. 1 Feb. 11-15 Mar. 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

Reminder: Upcoming TRACS Meeting

FTA's [Transit Advisory Committee for Safety \(TRACS\)](#) will meet in early 2019 at the National Highway Institute, located at 1310 North Courthouse Road, Suite 300, Arlington, VA. FTA has tasked the committee with reviewing emerging technologies and recommending safety innovations 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 email TRACS@dot.gov.

SSOAs Participate in First Session of SMS Training

On October 23, nearly 85 State Safety Oversight Agency (SSOA) personnel and contractors participated in FTA's Safety Management Systems (SMS) for SSO Programs course during the Joint SSO and Rail Transit Agency Workshop in Washington, DC. SMS for SSO Programs is one of seven courses required under the [Public Transportation Safety Certification Training Program](#) curriculum for SSOAs. The primary focus of this training session was to introduce the Safety Management Process within SMS and to provide SSOAs the opportunity to better understand their roles in the review and approval of a rail transit agency's safety plan. The session also allowed participants to share best practices and identify actions they could take to plan for their oversight duties.

SSOAs who missed the training session at October's workshop will have an opportunity to complete the course in 2019. FTA will share additional information about the next course offering once finalized.

Below are responses to two questions raised by participants during training. For other agency safety plan related questions, please see the recently updated [Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan \(PTASP\) FAQs](#) or email PTASP_QA@dot.gov.

If you have questions regarding training or enrollment into the Public Transportation Safety Certification Training Program, please contact FTA's Safety Promotion team at FTASafetyPromtion@dot.gov.

How do SSOAs who oversee multimodal agencies oversee the bus PTASP?

A SSOA must review and approve the safety plan for a rail transit agency for which it has responsibility. Multimodal agencies may choose to draft one plan for the entire agency or separate plans for each mode. SSOAs are only required to approve the rail portion of the plan.

Can SSOA funds be used to develop a plan for small bus agencies?

SSOA funds may not be used to draft any agency safety plan, for rail or bus systems. Costs related to oversight by SSOAs are eligible for Federal reimbursement through the State Safety Oversight Formula Grant Program created by 49 U.S.C. 5329.

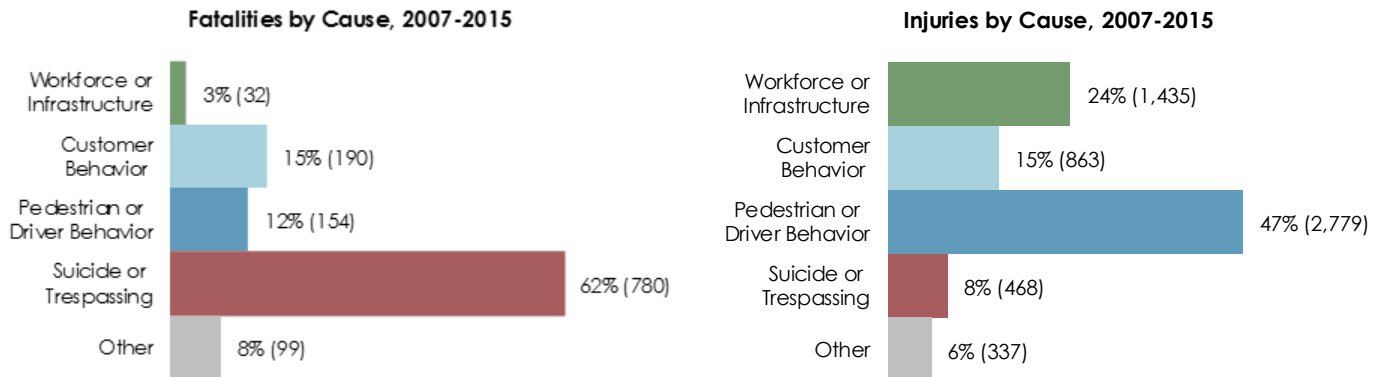


Data Spotlight: Rail Transit Fatalities and Injuries

In the coming months, the Transit Safety and Oversight Spotlight will include a “Data Spotlight” to share safety data trends and highlight data sets that may help the industry identify safety performance targets for their [agency safety plans](#).

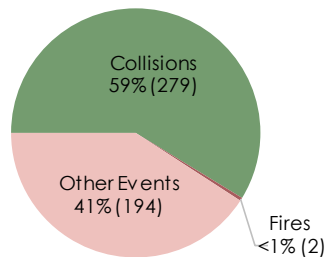
This month, we focus on rail transit fatality and injury data taken from State Safety Oversight annual reporting. Additional data is available in FTA’s [Rail Safety Data Report](#). Questions? Please contact FTA’s [Rick Gerhart](#).

Between 2007 and 2015, most reported rail transit fatalities resulted from suicide attempts and trespassing.

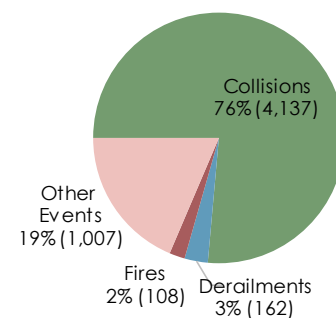


However, after excluding these events, most reported rail transit fatalities result from collisions. Most injuries reported to FTA during this timeframe also resulted from collisions.

**Fatalities, 2007-2015
(Excluding Suicide and Trespassing)**

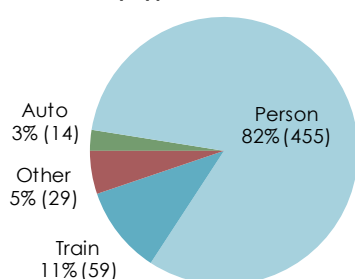


**Injuries, 2007-2015
(Excluding Suicide and Trespassing)**



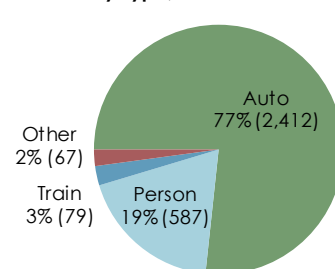
Collisions at heavy rail modes, which use exclusive rights-of-way (ROW), are typically between trains and people.

**Heavy Rail Collisions
by Type, 2007-2015**



At light rail and streetcar modes, where ROWs intersect more often with general traffic, train collisions are more likely to involve an automobile.

**Light Rail / Streetcar Collisions
by Type, 2007-2015**



TSO Profile

Q&A with Rhoderick Ramsey, Safety Promotion Program Analyst



Rhoderick Ramsey, Safety Promotion Program Analyst

How would you explain your job to someone you've never met? I am part of a team responsible for implementing the [Public Transportation Safety Certification Training Program](#) and developing safety education resources to support the transit industry.

What is your favorite part of your job? I get to wear different hats every day and the job is never boring. I get to meet new people, learn new subject matter, and develop strategies to meet our project goals.

What were you doing prior to this role? I was an instructional designer for another federal agency. Before that, I worked in the private sector as a facilitator and instructional designer/content developer.

What led you to work in transit? I thought it would be a good opportunity to learn more about transit and assist the transit industry with safety education. Coincidentally, my grandfather worked for a railroad and my mother worked for a state department of transportation. I didn't anticipate that I would work in

transportation too, but it worked out that way.

What are some current projects or initiatives that you or your team are working on? We are developing a series of Safety Management System (SMS) and Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan-related training courses and workshops to support the transit industry with implementing SMS within their agencies.

What is your favorite form of transportation and why? I like to ride intercity passenger rail, like Amtrak. The train gives you a unique view of the landscape and the freedom to move around.

What are your hobbies and interests outside of work? I spend a lot of time working on my doctorate degree in educational psychology. But when I have time, I like to travel and attend concerts. I'm at a music event at least once a month.



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**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](https://www.fta.dot.gov/regulations-and-guidance/safety/transit-safety-oversight-tso)

Upcoming TSO Speaking Events

[Transportation Research Board Annual Meeting](#)

Washington, DC

January 14

Upcoming Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan Webinar

[Frequently Asked Questions](#)

January 10, 2:00 PM Eastern Time



As part of FTA's outreach for the Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan final rule, FTA speakers Candace Key and Adrienne Malasky addressed the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) Mid-Year Safety Meeting in Washington, D.C. on November 27 on the role of the Chief Safety Officer in a Safety Management System environment.