

## Transit Safety and Oversight Spotlight

U.S. Department of Transportation  
Federal Transit Administration

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### Message from the Associate Administrator

July 2019  
Vol. 4 No. 6

Dear Transit Colleagues,

The deadline to comply with the Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP) regulation is quickly approaching. With just one year left, FTA is committed to working with transit agencies to meet the deadline. The regulation requires certain transit operators to have a safety plan in place no later than July 20, 2020 and implements a risk-based Safety Management System (SMS) approach to help transit agencies better manage safety risk within their operations. The PTASP regulation is not one-size-fits-all and offers flexibility for transit agencies in the development of their safety plans.

To support transit agencies with the development and implementation of their Agency Safety Plans, FTA is conducting outreach to provide important PTASP information and guidance. To date, FTA has hosted 22 webinars with over 4,200 participants attending and asking 1,100 questions. FTA also issued a [Dear Colleague](#) letter to the transit industry as an important reminder of the July 20, 2020 PTASP compliance deadline. If you are unsure of what is required, visit our [PTASP resources](#) web page to view fact sheets, frequently asked questions, and past and upcoming webinar materials on a variety of PTASP and SMS topics.

In addition, FTA delivered its first two PTASP workshops in Atlanta, GA. Participants attended to learn more about the minimum requirements to comply with the PTASP regulation, strategies for SMS implementation, and how to begin creating Agency Safety Plans. There is still time to register for the San Francisco, CA workshop—if you are considering attending, [sign up now](#). If you are a rail transit agency, [sign up](#) for the rail-focused PTASP workshop in September.

At the end of June, I spoke at the APTA Rail Conference on FTA's \$4 million dollar Human Trafficking and Public Safety initiative. FTA received 44 applications for two Notices of Funding Opportunities, requesting a total of \$12.6 million in funds. FTA anticipates announcing the awards for the Crime Prevention and Public Safety Awareness, and Innovations in Transit Public Safety opportunities this Fall. FTA created an [educational video](#) to support transit agencies in the fight against human trafficking. For more information about FTA's efforts to fight human trafficking, visit FTA's [Human Trafficking Awareness and Public Safety Initiative](#) web page.

Sincerely,  
Henrika Buchanan



Henrika Buchanan, 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](mailto:FTASafetyPromotion@dot.gov) to request an [Individual Training Plan](#) (ITP). Participants in the Public Transportation Safety Certification Training Program have three years to complete their ITP requirements.

### Courses Required by the Public Transportation Safety Certification Training Program (RAIL)\*

Effectively Managing Transit Emergencies	St. Louis, MO San Francisco, CA	Aug. 13-16 Sept. 23-26
SMS Awareness (eLearning)	On demand at <a href="http://tsi.dot.gov">tsi.dot.gov</a>	Available 24/7
SMS Principles for Transit	San Bernardino, CA Landover, MD	Jul. 31-Aug. 2 Aug. 26-28
SMS Safety Assurance	Virtual live training	Aug. 21
Transit Rail Incident Investigation	Seattle, WA Fort Worth, TX	Aug. 26-30 Sept. 9-13
Transit Rail System Safety	Philadelphia, PA Seattle, WA	Aug. 19-23 Sept. 16-20

### Voluntary Courses for the Public Transportation Safety Certification Training Program (BUS)\*\*

Fundamentals of Bus Collision Investigation	Atlanta, GA Houston, TX	Aug. 5-9 Aug. 26-30
Transit Bus System Safety	Portland, OR	Aug. 12-16

*Training dates past September 2019 will be published once the Fiscal Year 2020 schedule is available.*

\*Applies to SSOA personnel and contractors who conduct safety audits and examinations of public transportation systems not subject to Federal Railroad Administration regulation, as well as rail fixed guideway public transportation system personnel and contractors who are directly responsible for safety oversight. Other safety personnel, including those from bus agencies, are encouraged to participate in the voluntary program.

\*\*The voluntary bus program also includes Effectively Managing Transit Emergencies, SMS Awareness, SMS Safety Assurance, and SMS Principles for Transit. If you would like to participate in the voluntary program please contact [FTASafetyPromotion@dot.gov](mailto:FTASafetyPromotion@dot.gov) to request an ITP and see the rail schedule above for course availability.

Training, cont. from pg. 2

## ADDITIONAL COURSES

### Bus and Rail Courses (In Person)

Instructor's Course for Transit Trainers	San Diego, CA Boise, ID	Aug. 5-9 Sept. 9-13
Reasonable Suspicion and Post-Accident Testing Determination Seminar	Birmingham, AL	Aug. 16
Substance Abuse Management and Program Compliance	Birmingham, AL	Aug. 13-15
Transit Industrial Safety Management	Boston, MA	Aug. 19-23
Transit Supervisor Certification Course	Dover, DE	Sept. 9-13
Transit System Security	Boston, MA Los Angeles, CA Landover, MD	Jul. 29-Aug. 2 Aug. 19-23 Sept. 16-20

### eLearning Courses (Web Based)

Curbing Transit Employee Distracted Driving	On demand at <a href="https://tsi.dot.gov">tsi.dot.gov</a>	Available 24/7
Fatigue and Sleep Apnea Awareness for Transit Employees	On demand at <a href="https://tsi.dot.gov">tsi.dot.gov</a>	Available 24/7
Rail Nomenclature	On demand at <a href="https://tsi.dot.gov">tsi.dot.gov</a>	Available 24/7
Bus Nomenclature	On demand at <a href="https://tsi.dot.gov">tsi.dot.gov</a>	Available 24/7

Training dates past September 2019 will be published once the Fiscal Year 2020 schedule is available.

## FTA Publishes Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan Dear Colleague Letter

On July 19, 2019, FTA published a [Dear Colleague](#) letter to inform the transit industry of the upcoming July 20, 2020 compliance deadline. The full letter is provided below.

*Dear Colleague:*

*I am writing to alert you to an important, upcoming safety deadline, July 20, 2020. We are now one year from the compliance deadline for the Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP) regulation. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) published the PTASP Regulation, 49 C.F.R. Part 673, on July 19, 2018, and the regulation takes effect on July 19, 2019. The PTASP regulation implements a risk-based Safety Management System (SMS) approach and requires recipients or subrecipients of financial assistance under the Urbanized Area Formula Program (49 U.S.C. Section 5307) and rail transit agencies to have a safety plan in place no later than July 20, 2020. This Final Rule completed the regulatory foundation of FTA's National Public Transportation Safety Program.*

*Ensuring the safety of our nation's public transportation systems is the U.S. Department of Transportation and FTA's top priority. The PTASP regulation is not one-size-fits-all and offers flexibility for transit agencies in the development of their safety plans.*

*Since the publication of the PTASP regulation, the FTA has provided guidance and technical assistance to support agencies with the development of their safety plans. To date, we have hosted more than 20 webinars with over 4,000 participants attending. You can register for our monthly webinars and access other PTASP tools and resources, including past webinar materials, at <https://www.transit.dot.gov/PTASP>. The FTA will also provide a Technical Assistance Center to support transit agencies with developing and implementing their agency safety plans. We encourage you to subscribe to our monthly newsletter which includes PTASP-related articles and upcoming webinar, training, and event information, at <https://www.transit.dot.gov/regulations-and-guidance/safety/tso-spotlight-newsletter>.*

*As part of our ongoing technical assistance, the FTA is holding one-day PTASP bus workshops in July and August 2019, and a dedicated PTASP training for rail transit agencies at FTA's Joint State Safety Oversight and Rail Transit Agency Workshop in September. Registration is open to staff and contractors of recipients and subrecipients that are responsible for drafting or implementing safety plans. These workshops will allow you to learn more about the PTASP regulation requirements, how to implement an SMS, how to create safety plans, and share best practices. Additionally, our staff will continue to speak at major industry conferences throughout the year to provide you with helpful information to support compliance with the regulation and development of your agency safety plans.*

*Safety is our number one priority, and we are here to work with you to make transit even safer. If you need information or assistance, or have suggestions on how we can support your development of a compliant Agency Safety Plan, please contact Henrika Buchanan, FTA's Chief Safety Officer and Associate Administrator for the Office of Transit Safety and Oversight, at (202) 366-1783 or [henrika.buchanan@dot.gov](mailto:henrika.buchanan@dot.gov).*

Sincerely,



K. Jane Williams

Acting Administrator

# Understanding Safety Risk Management Requirements for Agency Safety Plans

The [Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan \(PTASP\)](#) regulation (49 C.F.R. Part 673) requires recipients and subrecipients of Section 5307 funds to develop and certify Agency Safety Plans (ASPs) based on Safety Management System (SMS) principles and methods. This article focuses on the Safety Risk Management (SRM) component of SMS and describes Part 673 requirements and considerations for transit agencies developing the SRM section in their ASP.

Conditions that may create hazards will inevitably emerge during transit service operations. If left unchecked, these hazards have the potential to impact transit agencies' safety performance and, eventually, trigger serious safety events. SRM is an essential process within a transit agency's SMS for identifying hazards and analyzing, assessing, and mitigating safety risk.

Part 673.25 requires transit agencies to develop and implement a SRM process for all elements of their public transportation system and establish the following SRM activities in their ASP:

- ✓ Safety hazard identification,
- ✓ Safety risk assessment, and
- ✓ Safety risk mitigation.



## Safety Hazard Identification

A hazard is “any real or potential condition that can cause injury, illness, or death; damage to or loss of the facilities, equipment, rolling stock, or infrastructure of a public transportation system; or damage to the environment” (49 C.F.R. § 673.5). A hazard, when triggered, may result in a consequence that could cause a broad spectrum of harm or damage. For example, ice on the road is a hazard to bus transit operations with several potential consequences, including collisions or slips. A hazard informs agencies of what is wrong, while a consequence identifies what could happen.

When agencies properly identify and clearly define hazards, they can more easily identify potential consequences that will help decision-makers allocate safety resources based on safety risk. Transit agencies may consider employee safety reporting programs, event investigations, monitoring of operations and maintenance activities, or system changes as sources for hazard identification.

## Safety Risk Assessment

A safety risk is “the composite of predicted severity and likelihood, and the potential effect of a hazard” (49 C.F.R. § 673.5). Agencies document safety risk assessments in their ASPs by describing—or referencing documentation that describes—methods or processes used to assess the safety risk associated with the potential consequences of identified safety hazards.

Safety risk assessment evaluates the likelihood and severity of the consequences of hazards, including existing mitigations, and prioritizes hazards based on safety risk. Agencies will establish a hazard's safety risk based on their assessment of how often they may experience a potential consequence (likelihood) and the consequence's degree of harm or damage (severity).

*Continued on pg. 6*



Continued from pg. 5

Agencies may decide to use tools, like a safety risk matrix, to facilitate risk-based prioritization. This approach can help decision-makers understand when actions are necessary to reduce or mitigate safety risk. Ultimately, safety risk assessment is helpful to determine if the assessed safety risk is acceptable or if additional risk mitigation may be necessary to lower the risk rating.

### Safety Risk Mitigation

Safety risk mitigation is how transit agencies directly address safety concerns faced during the delivery of transit service operations and supporting activities. Transit agencies are required to “establish methods or processes to identify mitigations or strategies necessary, as a result of agencies’ safety risk assessment, to reduce the likelihood and severity of the consequences” (49 C.F.R. § 673.25(d)).

Safety risk mitigation is a multi-disciplinary activity. Obtaining input from subject matter experts from different departments within a transit agency can ensure that the selected safety risk mitigation is appropriate. Input from multiple sources also can help to prevent unintended effects, including new hazards.

The goal of risk mitigation is to reduce the assessed risk rating to an acceptable level; however, mitigations do not typically eliminate the risk entirely. For example, possible mitigations to reduce the risk of ice on the road could include slow speed orders or changes in curbing procedures.

In an SMS, transit agencies conduct Safety Assurance activities to know whether mitigations are achieving their goals. Part 673.27 requires agencies’ Safety Assurance processes to include activities to monitor the effectiveness of safety risk mitigations. Agencies may consider defining the mitigation monitoring approach when implementing safety risk mitigations.

When planning for SRM, agencies may consider a centralized or decentralized model. For example, in a centralized model, the Safety Department leads the SRM process with input from subject matter experts in operations and maintenance. In contrast, in a decentralized model, operations and maintenance personnel conduct the assessments, and the Safety Department assists. Agencies also may consider testing SRM procedures in a segment of the organization before agency-wide implementation to determine whether SRM processes—and associated documents, tools, and training—are effective and feasible.

Finally, transit agencies should consider the requirements to maintain SRM-related documentation and records for a minimum of three years after they are created, and how to make them available to FTA and other oversight entities upon request (49 C.F.R. § 673.31). Agencies may consider how to effectively collect and maintain the required documentation throughout the SRM process, by using SharePoint or other information management tools.

FTA discussed this topic during a recent PTASP webinar. The webinar [presentation](#) and [recording](#) are available on [FTA’s PTASP web page](#). Please submit questions to [PTASP\\_QA@dot.gov](mailto:PTASP_QA@dot.gov) and refer to the [June newsletter](#) for additional SMS information.

Severity Likelihood	1	2	3	4
A	1A	2A	3A	4A
B	1B	2B	3B	4B
C	1C	2C	3C	4C
D	1D	2D	Unacceptable under existing circumstances	
E	1E	2E		
			Acceptable, but monitoring is necessary	
			Acceptable under existing circumstances	

Example of a safety risk matrix to rank the likelihood and severity of potential consequences of hazards

*The guidance in this document is not legally binding in its own right and will not be relied upon by the Federal Transit Administration as a separate basis for affirmative enforcement action or other administrative penalty. Compliance with the guidance in this document (as distinct from existing statutes and regulations) is voluntary only, and noncompliance will not affect rights and obligations under existing statutes and regulations.*





## FTA Participates at 2019 APTA Rail Conference

On June 23 through 25, 2019, FTA attended the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) annual [Rail Conference](#) in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. FTA staff presented and participated at several sessions, including the Priorities and Perspectives from U.S. Federal Partners, Transit's Efforts to Combat Human Trafficking in Transportation, Safety Culture: A Key Component of an Agency's Successful Safety Management System, and the Rail Safety Committee meeting. FTA's presentations are available on FTA's Office of Transit Safety and Oversight [Conference Presentations](#) web page.

FTA Acting Administrator K. Jane Williams delivers remarks at the Priorities and Perspectives from U.S. Federal Partners session, stating "At FTA, we are continuing to support the rail industry with significant capital investment."



Left, FTA Acting Administrator K. Jane Williams at the Value Capture session, co-hosted by the Japan International Transport Institute USA- JITI. The Acting Administrator encouraged transit agencies, developers, and communities to advance value creation strategies to build revenue for transit agencies, increase ridership, and create benefits in communities tied to transit.

Right, Director of the Office of System Safety in FTA's Office of Transit and Safety Oversight Candace Key delivers remarks at the Safety Culture session alongside APTA Rail Safety Committee Chair, Walter Heinrich (left).



FTA's Acting Administrator K. Jane Williams tries out the rail simulator at the Rail Products and Services Showcase.



## Data Spotlight: Derailments

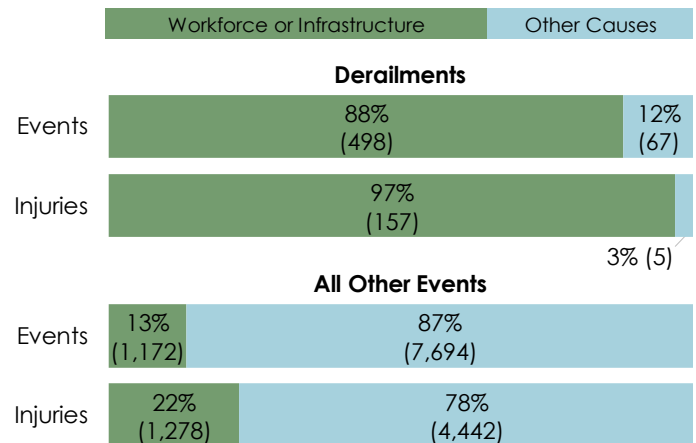
The Transit Safety and Oversight Spotlight includes a “Data Spotlight” to share safety data trends and highlight data sets that may help the industry identify safety performance targets for their [Agency Safety Plans](#).

This month, we focus on derailment data as reported by State Safety Oversight Agencies (SSOAs). Additional data is available in FTA’s [Rail Safety Data Report](#). Questions? Please contact FTA’s [Paulina Orchard](#).

Between 2007 and 2015, FTA required SSOAs to report all mainline derailments and any other derailments that exceeded 49 C.F.R. Part 659 thresholds. During this nine-year period, SSOAs reported 565 derailments that resulted in 162 injuries and no fatalities.

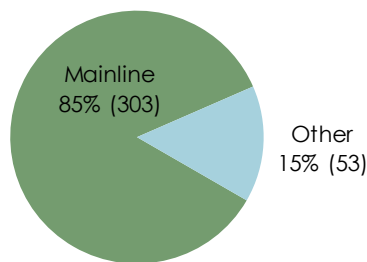
Workforce behavior and infrastructure issues caused nearly nine of every ten derailments SSOAs reported between 2007 and 2015, as well as most derailment *Injuries* (97 percent). In contrast, only 13 percent of all other SSOA-reported *Events* and 22 percent of reported *Injuries* resulted from workforce and infrastructure issues.

### Events and Injuries by Cause, 2007-2015

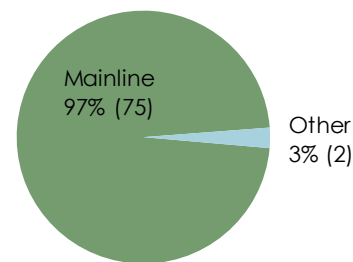


Starting in 2010, SSOAs began reporting derailment locations. Between 2010 and 2015, they reported more than five times as many derailments on mainlines<sup>1</sup> than at other locations. Most derailment *Injuries* (97 percent) resulted from mainline derailments during this six-year period.

### Derailments, 2010-2015

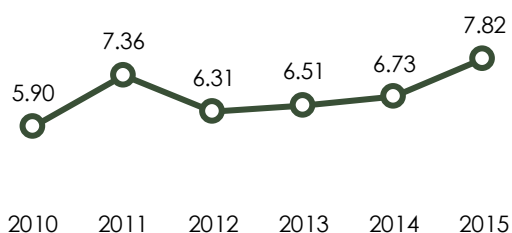


### Derailment Injuries, 2010-2015

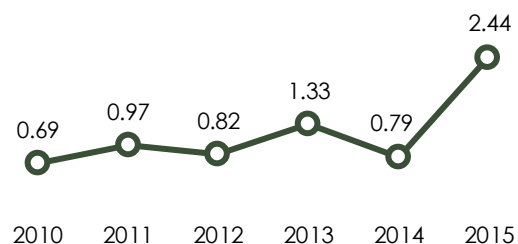


Below are the derailment rates per 100 million vehicle revenue miles (100M VRM) for both mainline and other derailments from 2010 to 2015. Both rates generally increased over the six-year time frame.

### Mainline Derailments per 100M VRM



### Other Derailments per 100M VRM



Note: Graphs not to scale

<sup>1</sup>Mainline derailments occur on trackways, rights-of-way, or revenue facilities.

## TSO Profile

*This month's profile includes a Q&A with Donna Aggazio, Public Engagement and Stakeholder Outreach Manager.*



Donna Aggazio,  
Public Engagement and  
Stakeholder Outreach  
Manager

**How would you explain your job to someone you've never met?** I advise the Associate Administrator for the Office of Transit Safety and Oversight (TSO) on outreach efforts. I am responsible for planning stakeholder communications such as the newsletter, webinars, conference presentations, fact sheets, remarks, workshops, conference calls, and website content. I also work closely with transit associations and other organizations.

**What is your favorite part of your job?** As a writer, I enjoy drafting remarks and talking points which communicate our key safety and oversight messages to a diverse set of stakeholders. I also enjoy drafting letters to the industry which clarify new requirements and important deadlines, and working one-on-one with TSO leadership to advance their safety and oversight priorities.

**What were you doing prior to this role?** In 2014, I returned to FTA in my current position after nearly five years as the Chief Speechwriter for the leadership at the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration. I also held public affairs/spokesperson positions at the Port Authority of Allegheny County in Pittsburgh and at the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority. Additionally, I spent five years at the American Public Transportation Association as the CEO's speechwriter and senior communications lead before returning to the federal government.

**What led you to work in transit?** My passion for public transportation began as a child where I drew plans for cities and included buses and trains on my streets and roadways. Also, my dad was a freight railroad trackman and my mom was an advertising artist for the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette—both contributing to my career path in becoming a transportation communicator. My first job after graduating from the University of Pittsburgh with a Master's Degree in Public Administration was at FTA as a policy analyst in the Office of Budget and Policy. Later I moved to what is now the Office of Communications and Congressional Affairs to work with the news media and write speeches.

**What are some current projects or initiatives that you or your team are working on?** We are helping the industry to fully understand the requirements needed to comply with the Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan rule through a robust series of ongoing webinars, fact sheets, presentations, and articles. We also are busy planning for the upcoming FTA Joint State Safety Oversight and Rail Transit Agency Workshop by crafting the agenda, inviting speakers, and assisting our subject matter experts with their presentations. Additionally, we are participating in the planning of a new IT system for our oversight activities.

**How do you work with people outside of the FTA? How would you like to be working with them in the future?** I am always planning for TSO's ongoing speaking involvement at industry conferences. I want to be sure we have timely speaking opportunities so that the industry can hear first-hand from TSO on FTA's programs that affect their operations. I also draft and place articles in trade publications when we have key news to share. I would like to receive more feedback from stakeholders on how our outreach can better support the industry.

**What is your favorite form of transportation and why?** I have a slight preference for buses because you can check out your environment in a way you cannot from a subway underground or in a car. I also love to walk and formed a walking group on my street where we walk most mornings through our DC neighborhood.

**What are your hobbies and interest outside of work?** Playing basketball and frisbee with my husband, daughter, and golden retriever. I also volunteer at my church to arrange flowers for Sunday services and those who have suffered a loss. I enjoy talking to neighbors as I walk our dog, and I am a loyal fan of the Pittsburgh Steelers, Penguins, and Pirates!

## Upcoming TSO Speaking Events

### PTASP Workshops

August 7 | [Chicago, IL](#)

August 20 and 21 | [San Francisco, CA](#)

### [FTA Bi-Annual State Programs Meeting](#)

August 14-16

Washington, DC

### [Midwest/SW Transit Conference](#)

September 11

Kansas City, MO



**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>

### **FTA Joint State Safety Oversight (SSO) and Rail Transit Agency (RTA) Workshop**

September 23-26 | [Washington, DC](#)

