

Transit Safety and Oversight Spotlight

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Message from the Associate Administrator

Dear Transit Colleagues,

We hope you found last month's FTA Joint State Safety Oversight and Rail Transit Agency Workshop informative and helpful to your daily responsibilities. We received your evaluations and will incorporate as much of the feedback as possible in our planning for next year's workshop. Each year we plan for the best workshop possible to inform, educate, and support your important safety work.

This month we are participating at the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) TRANSform Conference in New York City. At the conference, we will train transit executives on the Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP) requirements to prepare transit leadership for their role in carrying out a safety plan. Staff from the Office of Transit Safety and Oversight will present updates at committee meetings prior to the start of the conference. Lastly, I am pleased to serve as moderator for a session on best practices in safety for the New York City region. I always appreciate hearing about local initiatives that show results and can be used by other agencies. Throughout this meeting, we will have numerous opportunities to discuss our FTA safety priorities with APTA attendees and obtain valuable input.

Another way we are interacting with the transit industry is through our recent safety stakeholder survey. We are receiving early results on FTA's technical assistance to support safety programs and activities related to PTASP development. Feedback received so far indicates that most respondents are confident that their agency will meet the July 20, 2020 deadline for certifying their safety plans. To ensure that transit providers can meet this important deadline, we are launching a new PTASP Technical Assistance Center, which will provide online remote and on-site support. Details are on [page 4](#).

We want everyone to be successful in meeting the July 20, 2020 deadline. If you have a suggestion on how FTA can support you to meet the PTASP requirements, let us know by contacting PTASP-TAC@dot.gov. Thank you for all you do on behalf of transit safety.

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 2020 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 their ITP requirements.

Courses Required by the Public Transportation Safety Certification Training Program (RAIL)*		
Effectively Managing Transit Emergencies	Landover, MD	Nov. 4-7
	Tucson, AZ	Dec. 2-5
	Cleveland, OH	Dec. 16-19
	New Orleans, LA	Jan. 13-16
SMS Awareness (eLearning)	On demand at tsi.dot.gov	Available 24/7
SMS Principles for Transit	Jersey City, NJ	Nov. 13-15
	Landover, MD	Dec. 10-12
	Tucson, AZ	Jan. 22-24
SMS Safety Assurance	Virtual-Live Training at tsi.dot.gov	Nov. 20
		Jan. 15
Transit Rail Incident Investigation	Boston, MA	Nov. 4-8
	San Jose, CA	Dec. 16-20
Transit Rail System Safety	Charlotte, NC	Nov. 18-22
Voluntary Courses for the Public Transportation Safety Certification Training Program (BUS)**		
Fundamentals of Bus Collision Investigation	Indianapolis, IN	Nov. 4-8
	Monterey, CA	Jan. 13-17
	Orlando, FL	Jan. 27-31
Transit Bus System Safety	Atlanta, GA	Nov. 4-8
	Philadelphia, PA	Dec. 2-6

*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 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	Seattle, WA	Nov. 18-22
	Orlando, FL	Dec. 9-13
	Fresno, CA	Jan. 6-10
Safety, Security, and Emergency Management Considerations for FTA Capital Projects	Arlington, VA	Dec. 17-19
Transit Industrial Safety Management	Austin, TX	Jan. 6-10
Transit Safety & Security Audit Course	Landover, MD	Dec. 4-6
	Pomona, CA	Jan. 29-31
Transit Supervisor Certification Course	Los Angeles, CA	Jan. 6-10
Transit System Security	Columbia, SC	Nov. 18-22
	Las Vegas, NV	Dec. 16-20
	Phoenix, AZ	Jan. 13-17

ADDITIONAL COURSES: eLearning Courses (Web Based)

Roadmap to Drafting an Agency Safety Plan for Bus Agencies	On demand at tsi.dot.gov	Available 24/7
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



FTA Launches Technical Assistance Center for Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan Implementation



An important safety deadline is quickly approaching: your safety plans are due. In July, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) issued a [reminder](#) to the transit industry about the Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP) regulation compliance deadline of July 20, 2020. The PTASP regulation requires certain transit operators—and in some cases states—to develop Agency Safety Plans (ASP) based on Safety Management System principles.

With slightly under a year remaining to meet this safety deadline, FTA has launched the [PTASP Technical Assistance Center \(TAC\)](#) to provide enhanced assistance to the transit industry on the development and implementation of safety plans. The TAC offers this support through three engagement methods: an online community of practice to facilitate information sharing and peer-to-peer support; remote support from FTA to address PTASP questions and provide feedback on draft ASP content; and on-site assistance to provide training and ASP development support.

Agencies are starting from different places—either transitioning current safety plans to address new requirements, drafting completely new plans, or performing analyses to identify next steps for developing plans. In all cases, the TAC will provide a variety of resources, tools, and examples to help agencies tackle obstacles and meet the compliance deadline.

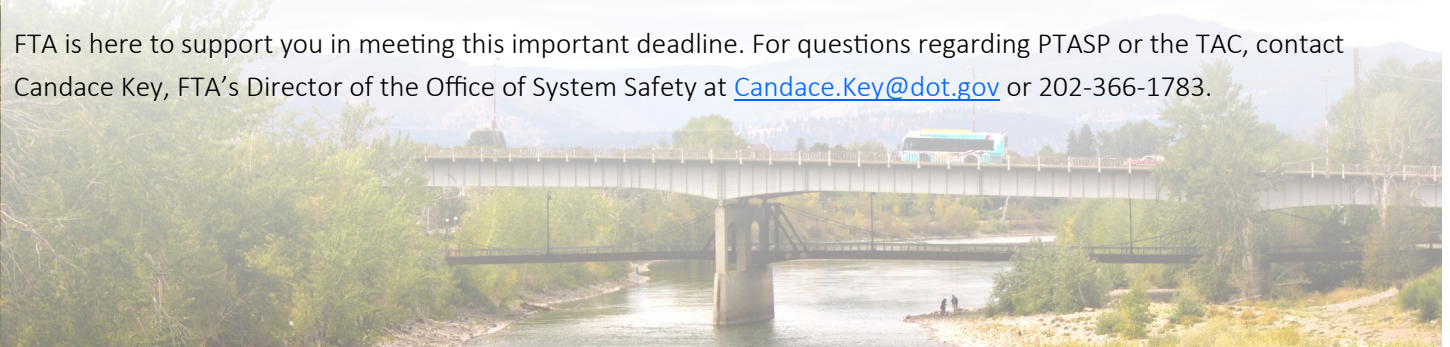
The TAC also will serve as the central repository for PTASP resources. For ease of access, FTA has organized the resources based on stakeholder categories, including small public transportation providers, large bus operators, rail transit providers, multi-modal operators, State Departments of Transportation, and State Safety Oversight Agencies.

FTA will update online content and resources frequently. Participants are encouraged to visit the site often and subscribe to [GovDelivery](#) notifications and the [Transit Safety and Oversight Spotlight newsletter](#) to stay updated on the latest PTASP TAC discussions and developments.

Over the past year, FTA has provided robust PTASP outreach, including 23 webinars attracting more than 4,500 participants and six, one-day workshops with nearly 500 industry stakeholders attending. This fall, we will continue our PTASP webinar series with two [webinars](#) scheduled for the end of October on the TAC, and PTASP applicability and requirements.

On September 20, 2019, FTA distributed a PTASP survey to transit agencies, State Departments of Transportation, and State Safety Oversight agencies. The survey will help FTA determine progress toward meeting the PTASP requirements along with topics and resources to support in the development of safety plans. If you have questions or did not receive the survey, please contact PTASP-TAC@dot.gov. Responses are due by October 25, 2019.

FTA is here to support you in meeting this important deadline. For questions regarding PTASP or the TAC, contact Candace Key, FTA's Director of the Office of System Safety at Candace.Key@dot.gov or 202-366-1783.



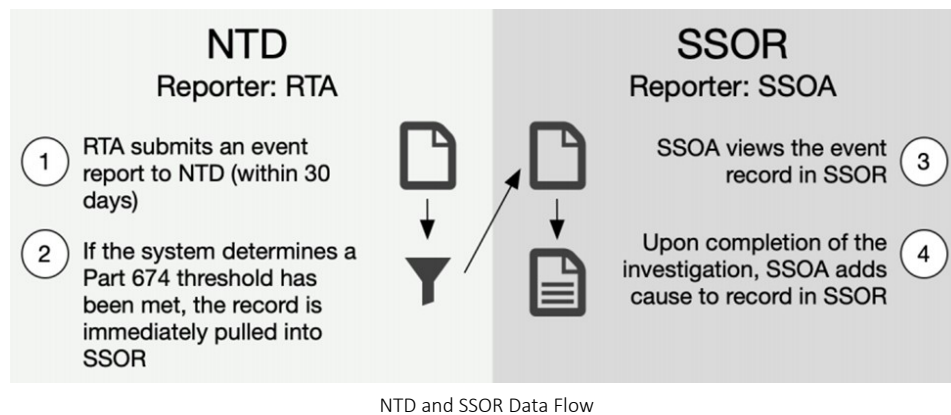
Register for Upcoming State Safety Oversight Reporting Tool Training

The State Safety Oversight Reporting (SSOR) tool is a new web-based system to replace the current State Safety Oversight (SSO) annual report process. The [State Safety Oversight regulation](#) (49 C.F.R. Part 674) requires State Safety Oversight Agencies (SSOAs) to submit information to FTA, including, but not limited to, oversight activities, rail transit agency and SSOA audits, hazard and event data, and corrective action statuses.

The SSOR is in the Appian® environment—the same platform as the Transit Award Management System (TrAMS) and National Transit Database (NTD)—to help streamline event reporting for SSOAs. Events reported to the NTD that meet Part 674 accident thresholds are instantly added to the SSOR as read-only entries, and available for SSOAs to review and add investigation data.

FTA will offer two-day webinar training sessions on the SSOR. The training consists of two parts and will be offered on October 23-24 and November 6-7, 2019 from 2:00-4:00 PM ET each day. Meeting notices for the training sessions will be provided to registered SSOR users. FTA anticipates launching the system in December 2019.

Contact [Cyrell R. McLemore](#) for questions on the training sessions and email the [SSOR Help Desk](#) for system IT support.



FTA Hosts Joint State Safety Oversight and Rail Transit Agency Workshop

From September 23-26, 2019, FTA hosted the Joint State Safety Oversight (SSO) and Rail Transit Agency (RTA) Workshop in Washington DC. All workshop [presentations](#) are available on FTA's website.



On Monday, September 23, 2019, workshop participants attended either a one-day Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP) or Safety Management Systems (SMS) training. Pictured (left) FTA staff from the Office of System Safety lead the PTASP workshop and (right) a participant asks a question during the workshop. Nearly 200 rail transit professionals learned how to implement an SMS as a part of FTA's technical assistance to help agencies meet the July 20, 2020 PTASP compliance deadline. The entire workshop attracted 285 attendees from every State Safety Oversight Agency and more than 45 rail transit agencies.

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Workshop sessions included remarks from FTA's Acting Administrator K. Jane Williams and the Office of Transit Safety and Oversight Associate Administrator Henrika Buchanan (top left and right, and bottom left). Participants also heard from an FTA, Washington Metrorail Safety Commission, and Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) panel on FTA WMATA safety oversight lessons learned (center) and an emotional presentation on human trafficking in transit from FTA, South West Transit Association, American Public Transportation Association, and the A21 Campaign (bottom right).

Register Now for FTA's Oversight Tracking System Focus Groups

In [April 2019](#), FTA announced an initiative to update its Oversight Tracking System (OTrak), FTA's official system of record for all program oversight data. The enhanced OTrak system will use Appian®—the same platform as the Transit Award Management System (TrAMS) and National Transit Database (NTD)—for improved design and functionality. As part of this update, FTA recipients will have access to the system.

Over the next several months, FTA will engage with its recipients to collect feedback on the system and provide training opportunities. To kick things off, FTA will host two virtual focus groups on [November 19, 2019](#) from 2:00-4:00 PM EST and [December 4, 2019](#) from 1:00-3:00 PM EST. The focus groups will provide FTA recipients with a first look at the new system and a demonstration of recipient oversight functions. Additionally, FTA will request recipient feedback on system design and functionality to help identify additional enhancements.

Overall, OTrak's enhancements will transition the system from a database to a dynamic work tool, using automated workflows, notifications, and data visualization and reporting tools to increase the efficiency, transparency, and accountability of FTA's compliance review process.

For the first time, FTA recipients will be able to complete key oversight tasks within the system. For example, recipients will be able to respond to information requests and submit corrective actions directly in OTrak. Additionally, recipients will be able to track the status of reviews, determine the status of findings and corrective actions, and access their oversight history.

FTA anticipates rolling out this new system for the Fiscal Year 2021 review cycle. Visit the new OTrak website for more information and updates on training opportunities over the coming months. For questions on OTrak, please contact [David Schilling](#).

Data Spotlight: High Property Damage Events

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](#).

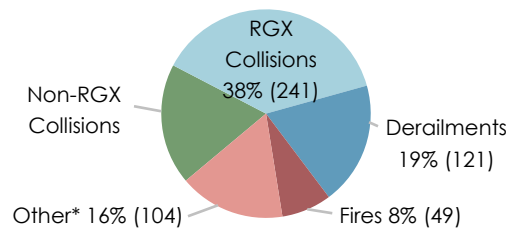
This month, we focus on high property damage events that result in at least \$25,000 of property damage as reported by State Safety Oversight Agencies (SSOAs). Additional data is available in FTA’s [Rail Safety Data Report](#). Questions? Please contact FTA’s [Dharm Guruswamy](#).

Between 2007 and 2015, FTA required SSOAs to report all events with estimated damages of at least \$25,000. During this nine-year period, SSOAs reported 634 high property damage events, which also included 29 fatalities and 904 reportable injuries.

Between 2007 and 2015, **Rail Grade Crossing (RGX)** collisions accounted for 38 percent of high property damage events reported to FTA.

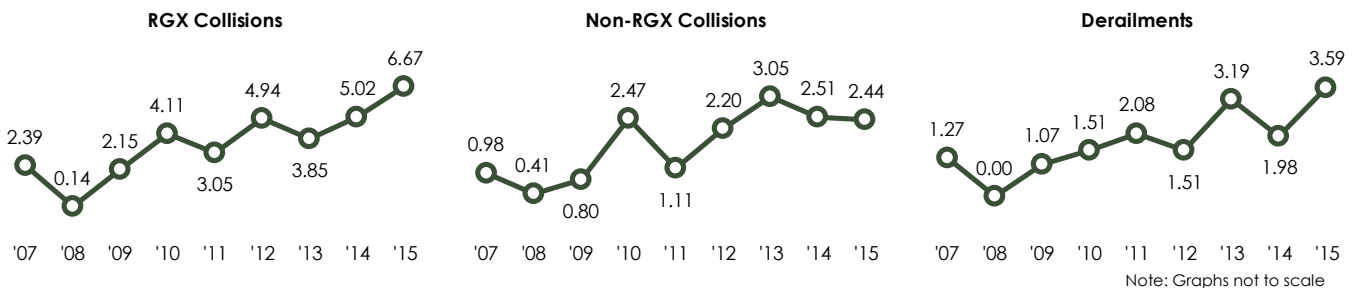
Non-RGX Collisions and **Derailments** were the second most frequent type of high property damage event, each accounting for 19 percent of the total. The remaining 24 percent included **Fires** and **Other** events,* such as natural disasters, electric shocks, or suicides.

High Property Damage Events by Type, 2007-2015



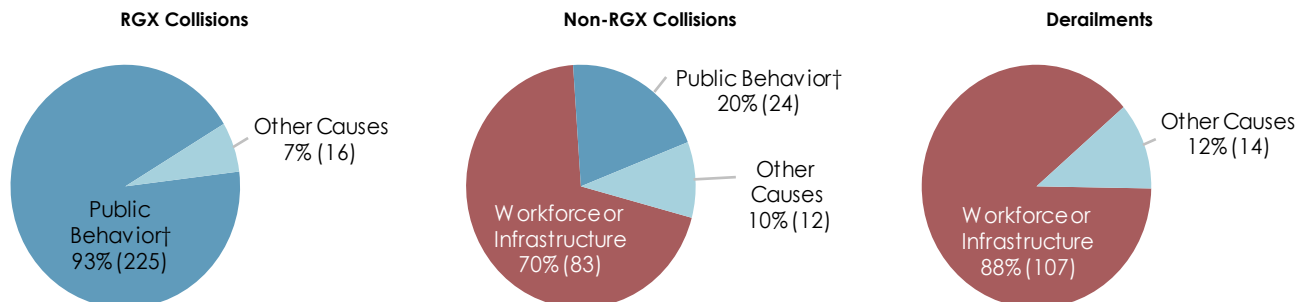
The figures below show how often high property damage **RGX Collisions**, **Non-RGX Collisions**, and **Derailments** occurred per 100 million vehicle revenue miles (100M VRM). In 2015, SSOAs reported higher rates of these three types of high property damage events than in 2007.

High Property Damage Events per 100M VRM by Event Type, 2007-2015



Between 2007 and 2015, public behavior[†] caused most high property damage **RGX Collisions** reported by SSOAs. In contrast, workforce behavior or infrastructure issues caused most **Non-RGX Collisions** that resulted in high property damage, while public behavior caused only one in five of these events. During this time frame, workforce behavior or infrastructure issues caused over 80 percent of high property damage **Derailments**.

High Property Damage Events per 100M VRM by Event Type and Cause, 2007-2015



*Other events include all suicide attempts and trespasser events.

[†]Public behavior includes pedestrian, bicyclist, and motorist actions.

TSO Profile

This month's profile includes a Q&A with Meleia Egger, Transportation Program Analyst, Office of Program Oversight.



Meleia Egger, Transportation Program Analyst, Office of Program Oversight

How would you explain your job to someone you've never met? I work on FTA's program oversight team to help plan FTA's oversight activities each year. Our team manages and analyzes data that supports oversight decisions, and helps make FTA's oversight program more effective, efficient, and beneficial.

What is your favorite part of your job? The people. FTA has fun, interesting, and passionate staff that make the work feel even more meaningful.

What were you doing prior to this role? I was a Program Manager at the Peace Corps where I led the planning and coordination of our annual Peace Corps Week global celebrations. I also worked on alumni engagement and storytelling training to support recruitment and the Peace Corps' *Third Goal* to educate Americans about the countries where we serve. We also hosted a storytelling contest, and the winners performed at the Kennedy Center Millennium stage.

What led you to work in transit? I had a limited term position at the Peace Corps and wanted to continue my career in government service. When I was searching for a new job, FTA's mission appealed to my own interests and values and connected with my academic background in geography.

What are some current projects or initiatives that you or your team are working on? My biggest focus right now is a platform upgrade for FTA's Oversight Tracking System (OTrak). The new functionalities are very exciting for the system users. OTrak will evolve from a database, to an automated and streamlined workflow system with many additional benefits for users.

What is your favorite form of transportation and why? Walking—I love the pace and chance to look around and explore. Swimming, canoes, and boats are also fantastic. As for public transit, give me a New York City subway car packed with interesting characters!

What are your hobbies and interests outside of work? I enjoy yoga, bird watching, and travel. I love to read and also enjoy spoken word art, including comedy, poetry, and storytelling. I am passionate about social justice and love spending time in nature. I also stay engaged in DC's Jewish community. On weekends, you can find me wandering DC's fantastic neighborhoods in search of the best Thai food.



Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP) Webinars

The webinar slides and recordings will be posted to the [PTASP Resources](#) web page.

PTASP Technical Assistance Center

October 24, 2019 | 2:00 PM EST

This webinar will discuss the PTASP Technical Assistance Center (TAC) and provide instructions on how to navigate the online forum. The TAC will provide enhanced technical assistance to assist agencies in developing and implementing their Agency Safety Plan.

PTASP Refresher Training

October 29, 2019 | 2:00 PM EST

This webinar will review PTASP regulation requirements, including applicability, Agency Safety Plan documentation, and a review of the FTA's PTASP development resources.



**U.S. Department
of Transportation**

**Federal Transit
Administration**

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Office of Transit Safety and Oversight
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<https://www.fta.dot.gov/regulations-and-guidance/safety/transit-safety-oversight-tso>

Upcoming TSO Speaking Events

Transportation Research Board (TRB)

Annual Meeting

January 12-16, 2020

Washington, DC

