



Transit Safety and Oversight Spotlight

Federal Transit Administration
Office of Transit Safety and Oversight

August 2017
Vol. 2 No. 8

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Upcoming Training	2
Register for September 14 Webinar on Onboard Camera Applications for Buses	3
Upcoming TSO Speaking Events	3
Reminder: Volunteer for an Onsite Bus Safety Review by August 31	4
Agency Spotlight: How Greeley-Evans Transit Uses Training and Technology to Bolster their Safety Program	5-6
Deputy's Corner: FTA Resources on Transit Operator Fatigue	7
Personnel News	8
Save the Date: TSO Safety and Program Oversight Workshop in Washington, DC, October 23-27	8
TSO Profile	9

Message from the Associate Administrator

Dear Transit Colleagues,

This year, one of the FTA's top priorities is helping the nation's [State Safety Oversight \(SSO\)](#) Program agencies meet the April 15, 2019 certification deadline. Certification demonstrates that an SSO Program has the necessary authorities, resources, and structure in place to oversee the safety of the rail transit systems in its jurisdiction.

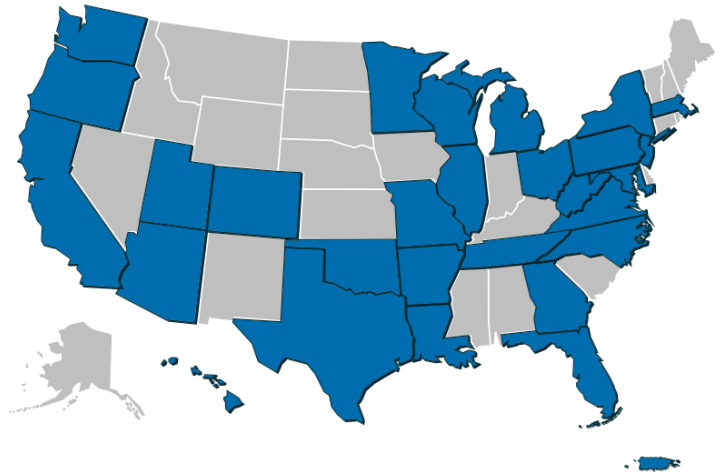
While SSO agencies oversee rail transit, the penalty for missing the April 2019 certification deadline **will affect bus systems**, as the FTA is prohibited by federal law from obligating *any* funds to *any* recipient in the state until the SSO Program attains certification.

If you work for or ride a bus system that receives federal grant funding in one of the 30 states affected by the SSO rule, I encourage you to stay up-to-date on your state's certification progress. If you're unsure if your state is affected, you may refer to the [certification map](#) on our website. To see where your state stands in the certification process, refer to our [certification status table](#).

Over the past few months, FTA has reached out to state leaders and the public transportation community to stress the importance of states meeting the certification deadline and to explain the work that certification requires from SSO agencies. Most recently, we responded to an SSO Program Manager's suggestion and sent a letter to the Chief Executive Officers and Chief Safety Officers of rail transit agencies in the 30 affected states to provide them with information and resources about SSO certification. If you would like to read the letter, copies are available [upon request](#). Our goal is to provide support to all SSO programs and to encourage states to provide sufficient, dedicated resources to meet this important milestone.

Sincerely,

Thomas Littleton, PhD



Bus systems in 30 states could be affected if their state's SSO Program does not meet the April 2019 certification deadline

Upcoming Training

The FTA sponsors several safety training courses, including those listed below. The FTA's training website is unavailable until further notice, but you may contact [Radonna Snider](#) at the FTA-sponsored [Transportation Safety Institute \(TSI\)](#) at (405) 954-4799 for safety training registration and courses.

eLearning Self-Paced Online Courses

Curbing Transit Employee Distracted Driving	Go to tsi.dot.gov
Fatigue and Sleep Apnea Awareness for Transit Employees	Go to tsi.dot.gov
SMS Awareness	Go to tsi.dot.gov

General Transit Safety Courses

Transit Industrial Safety Management	Landover, MD	August 28-September 1
Transit Supervisor Certification Course	Rochester, NY	August 28-September 1
SMS Safety Assurance	Virtual-Live Training	September 14

Bus Transit Courses

Instructors Course for Transit Trainers	Atlanta, GA	September 11-15
Fundamentals of Bus Collision Investigation	Baltimore, MD	September 18-22

Transit Crime Prevention and Emergency Management Courses

Transit System Security	Dallas, TX	August 28-September 1
Crime Prevention through Environmental Design	Boston, MA	September 7-8
Transit System Security	Denver, CO	September 11-15
Effectively Managing Transit Emergencies	Philadelphia, PA	September 12-15

Register for September 14 Webinar on Onboard Camera Applications for Buses

Onboard Camera Applications for Buses

TCRP SYNTHESIS 123

Onboard Camera Applications for Buses



A Synthesis of Transit Practice

TRANSPORTATION RESEARCH BOARD
The National Academies of
SCIENCES • ENGINEERING • MEDICINE

Copyright National Academy of Sciences. All rights reserved.

TRANSIT
COOPERATIVE
RESEARCH
PROGRAM

Sponsored by
the Federal
Transit Administration

Adopting new technologies can deliver demonstrable benefits to the transit industry. On **Thursday, September 14 from 2:00-3:30 pm ET**, the National Transit Institute (NTI) will [host a webinar](#) that focuses on technologies and opportunities for onboard camera use in transit buses. Barbara Thomson of Thomson Consulting will discuss her team's work to collect current practices and document effective initiatives in [Transit Cooperative Research Program \(TCRP\) Synthesis 123: Onboard Camera Applications for Buses](#). Interested participants can [register online](#).

This webinar will include practical examples of onboard camera use on buses in large, medium, and small transit agencies across the country. It will explore agencies' collection of media images, how they use them, and how they keep up with the fast advances in surveillance technology to improve operations, safety, security, training, and customer satisfaction.

All of the surveyed agencies reported the use of onboard cameras as beneficial for improving safety and security, deterring criminal activity and reducing accident claims. However, the use of onboard cameras is not without its challenges, which will also be discussed.

Case studies included in the report feature the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) and Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA).

TCRP Synthesis 123: Onboard Camera Applications for Buses is available on the Transportation Research Board's website

FTA sponsors both NTI and TCRP to develop and apply innovative solutions and adapt technologies and approaches that help meet the demands placed on the nation's public transit systems.

Upcoming TSO Speaking Events

The FTA's Office of Transit Safety and Oversight (TSO) will speak at the following events. We hope to see you there!

[APTA Annual Meeting](#), Atlanta, GA

- October 10, 1:30 pm—Safety Management Systems (SMS) Implementation
- October 11, 9:30 am—State Safety Oversight Program Certification/Safety Regulatory Update

Reminder: Volunteer for an Onsite FTA Bus Safety Review by August 31

The FTA is seeking transit agencies operating public bus service to participate in a voluntary onsite bus safety review with the FTA's Bus Safety Program.

Voluntary onsite bus safety reviews help transit agencies identify opportunities to improve safety in areas such as driver selection and training, vendor and contractor use, equipment selection and maintenance, operations and supervision, training programs, facilities layout and maintenance, and policies and procedures. The review

"It's made us more safety-conscious."

-A participating transit agency, FTA Region VIII

also incorporates a preliminary assessment of a transit agency's readiness to implement Safety Management System processes and practices. For the FTA, these reviews are an important method of identifying and sharing safety-related best practices with the transit industry.

A review takes anywhere from one to four days, depending

upon agency size, and is conducted onsite at the transit agency using a checklist of key elements. A review typically involves extensive discussions with the transit agency's management team; a physical assessment of operational facilities; and a review of relevant policies, procedures, and record keeping. At the conclusion of the review, the FTA produces a post-review report and technical assistance material.

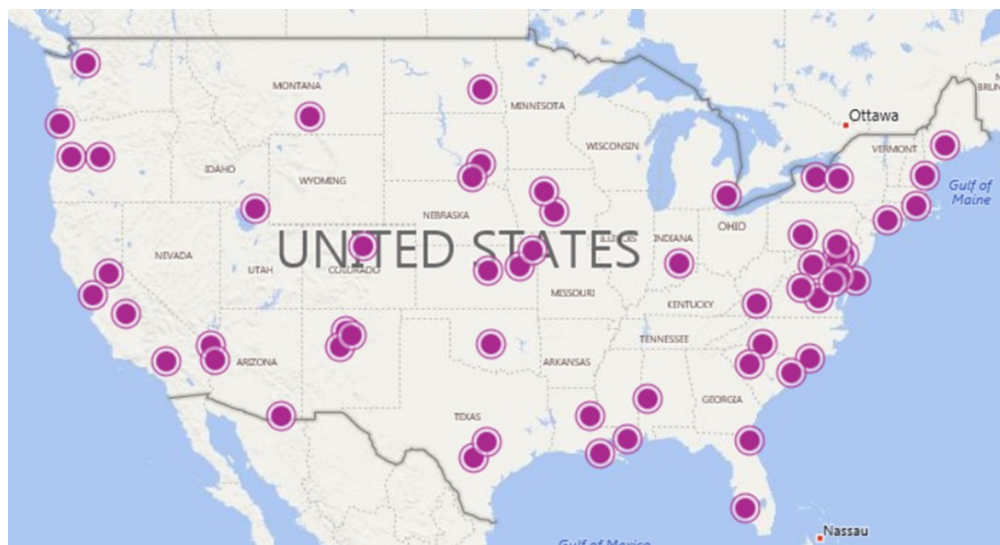
"The biggest take away from the onsite review was that our agency was able to create a roadmap for how to best move forward with our safety program and a framework for where to concentrate our efforts."

-A participating transit agency, FTA Region VII

"The lessons learned from an FTA voluntary review are going to make an agency stronger."

-A participating transit agency, FTA Region IV

Transit agencies interested in participating are encouraged to submit their agency name, a point of contact and contact information, and a brief statement of interest by August 31, 2017. Please send this submission, as well as any questions, to Paulina Orchard, FTA's Bus Safety Program Manager, at paulina.orchard@dot.gov.



To date, transit agencies operating bus service in 36 states have participated in the review program

Agency Spotlight: How Greeley-Evans Transit Uses Training and Technology to Bolster their Safety Program

Contributed by Greeley-Evans Transit, Greeley, Colorado

Safety is the transit industry's number one priority, but transit agencies are often faced with the challenge of balancing safety with operational, staffing, and planning demands. [Greeley Evans Transit \(GET\)](#), a small urban system in Northern Colorado that provides service to three municipalities and has a projected ridership of 750,000 this year, is no different. Over the last several years, GET has made safety and training program improvements that enable the organization to prioritize safety while meeting business and operational needs.

One of the ways we accomplish this is through our Training Compliance Tracker. Patrick Moore, GET's Safety and Training Supervisor, developed a training program from scratch for new and veteran drivers and utilizes the Microsoft Excel-based tracking tool pictured below to manage the program. The tracker automatically highlights who is in compliance (●), who will be out of compliance within the next 30 days (●), and who is out of compliance (●). It also calculates our agency's training compliance performance measure based on employees' compliance with all of our required training elements, providing a real-time view of where the agency stands on safety training.



Training Compliance Tracker

Todays Date	Drug and Alcohol	Driver's Challenge Rodeo/ Gillig	CPR/First Aid Blood Born/AED	Defensive Driving	PASS Training
7/13/2017	Yearly	Yearly	Every 2 Years	Every 2 Years	Every 3 Years
John A.	● 7/26/2017	● 8/15/2017	● 6/20/2019	● 3/28/2019	● 3/5/2017
Jane B.	● 2/23/2018	● 2/15/2018	● 5/16/2019	● 3/28/2019	● 7/26/2019
Jose C.	● 2/23/2018	● 8/16/2017	● 7/25/2019	● 3/28/2019	● 1/26/2018
Mary D.	● 2/3/2018	● 2/23/2018	● 7/25/2019	● 1/19/2019	● 1/30/2020
Joe E.	● 3/29/2018	● 8/27/2017	● 4/12/2018	● 3/29/2019	● 8/3/2019
Ann F.	● 2/23/2018	● 8/10/2017	● 7/25/2019	● 3/29/2019	● 8/1/2019

GET's Training Compliance Tracker is a Microsoft Excel-based spreadsheet that helps visualize our training compliance program and automatically calculates our compliance performance measure. The above image is only representative of a few items we track. Employee names have been changed.

Of course, it is also important that our staff applies their safety training on the job, and one of our safety program enhancements has provided us with insight into how they are doing so. In 2013, GET installed new onboard security cameras on all of our buses. Although the tool was intended to provide insight into accident, incident, and complaint investigations, it has grown to help our agency also identify close calls. When a driver pushes the driver event button or the accelerometer triggers an event, the system downloads a video of the event for review. We also are able to watch video live while the bus is on route through the integration of our camera system with our automated vehicle location system. Occasionally, coaching opportunities arise from these videos. More frequently, however, the videos highlight how drivers avoided an accident or incident by using something they learned in training. We recognize these drivers at our monthly safety meetings and may also play the video so other employees can learn from the close call.

(Cont. on pg. 6)

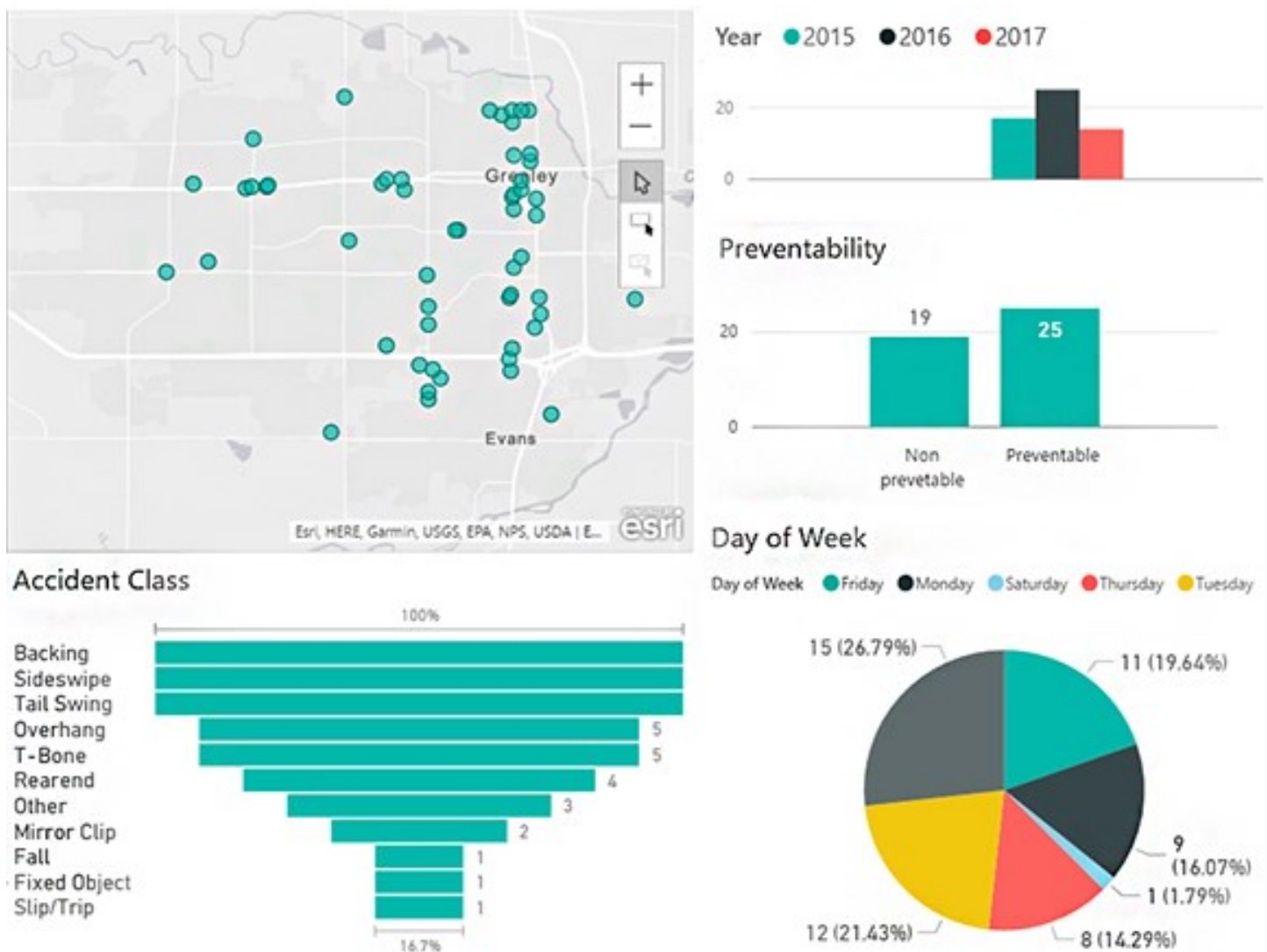
(Agency Spotlight, cont. from pg. 5)

Recently we have started disseminating this safety information within our organization alongside our agency's accidents and incidents with the use of an interactive business intelligence tool that allows us to visually identify trends.

This information, along with feedback from our drivers, is being used to facilitate solutions to reduce accidents and incidents. Example solutions include adding de-acceleration light bars to our new buses, changing mirrors sizes, reducing paratransit bus length and height, and changes to routes and bus stop locations.

Although these improvements to our safety program are not a silver bullet, they have proven to be a cost effective way for a transit system like ours to help enhance safety for our passengers and employees.

Questions? Contact GET Transit Manager [Will Jones](#).



The business intelligence tool helps to identify trends not only by type, but also on a map (upper left), which helps to determine if certain areas of town present more of a safety concern than others. Please note, as we are still entering data into this tool, the data shown in the above figure is not complete.



Kimberly Burtch, Acting
Deputy Associate
Administrator

Deputy's Corner

FTA Resources on Transit Operator Fatigue

Kimberly Burtch, Acting Deputy Associate Administrator

Safety is the number one priority at the US Department of Transportation (USDOT), and fatigue is a serious safety issue leading to accidents and incidents. USDOT continues to take actions that prevent fatigue-related safety lapses and crashes through research, education, and training.

The FTA's Office of Research and Innovation recently started participating in a new Federal Fatigue Management and Research Working Group led by the National Institutes of Health (NIH). The majority of participants are from USDOT, the Department of Defense, and NASA, in addition to the NIH. We will share additional information as FTA continues to participate in the working group and learn more about the latest developments in fatigue management and research.

In the meantime, I want to share some existing resources with you. The FTA sponsors a fatigue awareness training course through the Transportation Safety Institute called "Fatigue and Sleep Apnea Awareness Training for Transit Employees." This self-paced e-learning course is offered free of charge and takes about an hour to complete. To learn more or register, visit [TSI's website](#).

Additionally, the FTA continues to conduct research and analysis through the Transit Advisory Committee for Safety (TRACS). The TRACS report on fatigue, titled "[Establishing a Fatigue Management Program for the Bus and Rail Transit Industry](#)," is available on our website. The report identifies the major organizational and behavioral challenges that may be faced in addressing transit employee fatigue and recommends components of a successful fatigue management program.

Fatigue and Sleep Apnea Awareness for Transit Employees

Module 2: Introduction to Sleep

NREM Sleep

Stage 1 Sleep

- "nodding off"
- "zoning out"
- "dozing off"

Slide 16 of 82

Back Next

Fatigue and Sleep Apnea Awareness Training for Transit Employees course, available through TSI's website

TSO Personnel News

Erin Powell has joined the Office of Transit Safety and Oversight as FTA's first Regional Safety Officer. In this position, she will work with FTA regions and FTA's headquarters office to coordinate and perform a variety of safety related oversight and compliance activities. Her responsibilities will include supporting FTA's accident, incident, and occurrence investigations with State Safety Oversight (SSO) Agencies and rail transit agencies; assisting FTA grantees and SSO Agencies in addressing findings and other safety issues; and supporting the SSO formula grant program.

Immediately prior to joining TSO, Erin worked as a General Engineer in FTA's Office of Capital Project Management, overseeing over \$2 billion in federally funded transit construction projects. Previously, she served in the United States Air Force as a Civil Engineering Officer both stateside and abroad.

Erin received a Bachelor's degree in Environmental Engineering from the US Air Force Academy, a Master's degree in Civil Engineering from North Carolina State University, and is working toward her PhD in Water Resources Engineering at George Mason University.

Contact Erin at erin.powell@dot.gov.



Erin Powell, Regional Safety Officer



Save the Date

Who: State Safety Oversight (SSO) program managers, staff, and contractors and rail transit agency safety (RTA) personnel

What: Joint SSO and RTA Training Workshop

When: October 24-27, 2017

Where: Washington, DC

Look for an email with additional details soon.

TSO Profile

Q&A with Jamie Pfister, Director, FTA's WMATA Safety Oversight Team



Jamie Pfister, Director, FTA
WMATA Safety Oversight Team

How would you explain your job to someone you've never met before? I serve as the director of the FTA's office that provides temporary and direct federal safety oversight to the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) Metrorail system. The FTA WMATA Safety Oversight Team provides day-to-day safety oversight through activities such as on-the-ground inspections, oversight of WMATA accident investigations, and audits, which may result in required actions for WMATA. On an ongoing basis, our team is verifying WMATA's progress in implementing safety-related Corrective Action Plans and remedial actions and ensuring that WMATA is effectively carrying out its own critical maintenance, operations, and training programs.

What were you doing prior to this role? I was the Deputy Associate Administrator for the FTA's Office of Research, Demonstration and Innovation, where I helped develop strategies and programs to advance public transportation innovation.

What led you to work in transit? I joined the FTA 15 years ago as a regional engineer in the Atlanta Regional Office. The FTA afforded me the opportunity to apply my technical skills and knowledge, provide customer service to a variety of stakeholders, and support an extremely powerful mission. I love working in transit and am grateful for the opportunity to be a public servant.

What are some current projects or initiatives that you or your team are working on? The WMATA Safety Oversight Team is continuing to provide direct safety oversight of WMATA Metrorail, including daily inspections, monitoring progress and closeouts of corrective action plans and findings, and beginning to plan for the eventual transition of state safety oversight responsibilities to the local jurisdictions through the new Metro Safety Commission.

What is one thing you would like people to know about the FTA? Many people may think of the FTA solely for our financial assistance or grant funding. However, in addition to providing critical funding to operate transit service, purchase vehicles and equipment, and build and maintain transit infrastructure, the FTA fulfills its mission through research; technical assistance; and oversight of safety, grant programs, and projects. FTA staff are dedicated to the organization's mission and these activities. We also are extremely grateful for our partnerships across the industry, which help us carry out these activities.



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>