



Transit Safety and Oversight Spotlight

Federal Transit Administration
Office of Transit Safety and Oversight

Message from the Associate Administrator

December 2017
Vol. 2 No. 12

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Upcoming Training	2-3
Upcoming Speaking Events	3
Deputy's Corner	4
Utah Certification	5
Contractor Summit	5
TSO Profile	6

Dear Transit Colleagues,

In November, Utah became the third state to obtain FTA certification of its State Safety Oversight (SSO) program in accordance with the requirements of federal public transportation safety law and the SSO final rule. You can read more about their accomplishment on page 5.

As we progress toward the April 15, 2019 deadline, FTA continues to work with the 27 states that still need to obtain certification of their SSO programs. Five states (Illinois, Michigan, New York, Oklahoma, Tennessee) and Puerto Rico must take legislative or executive action to authorize a federally compliant SSO program before submitting a certification application. In November, FTA Acting Administrator K. Jane Williams sent a letter to the governors of five of these states urging swift action to establish a federally compliant SSO program, including prompt completion of any required legislative or executive action. The letter emphasized that the certification deadline is mandated by federal transit safety law, and cannot be waived or extended. Additionally, if a state misses the deadline, FTA is prohibited by federal law from awarding any new grants within the state until the SSO program is certified. FTA sent copies of the letter to the states' legislatures and transportation departments.



Photo credit: An Errant Knight via [Wikimedia Commons](#), [Creative Commons license](#)

If you have questions about the status of SSO program certification in your state, please see our [certification status table](#). The FTA continues to assist states as they prepare for certification, and as always, I encourage SSO program managers to reach out to FTA as questions arise.

In 2018, SSO certification will continue to be a priority for the FTA, as we continue our core mission to make transit safer. I want to extend my sincere appreciation to everyone in the transit industry – on the federal, state, and local levels – for their ongoing dedication to providing communities with safe transportation services. We are all partners in safety.

Wishing you a happy and safe new year.

Sincerely,

Thomas Littleton, PhD

Upcoming Training

The FTA sponsors several safety training courses, including those listed below. The [complete schedule](#) of training courses offered in FY2018 is available on FTA's safety website. Please 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
Rail Nomenclature	Go to tsi.dot.gov
SMS Awareness	Go to tsi.dot.gov
Transit Asset Management Training: Calculating Performance Measures and Setting Targets	Go to tsi.dot.gov

General Transit Safety Courses

SMS Principles for Transit	New Orleans, LA	Jan. 17-19
SMS Safety Assurance	Virtual-Live Training	Jan. 18
SMS Principles for Transit	S. San Francisco, CA	Jan. 24-26
Transit Supervisor Certification Course	Long Beach, CA	Feb. 5-9
Substance Abuse Management and Program Compliance	Los Angeles, CA	Feb. 6-8
Reasonable Suspicion and Post-Accident Testing Determination Seminar	Los Angeles, CA	Feb. 9
Transit Industrial Safety Management	Tampa, FL	Feb. 12-16
SMS Safety Assurance	Virtual-Live Training	Feb. 13
SMS Principles for Transit	St. Louis, MO	Feb. 21-23
Transit Supervisor Certification Course	Las Vegas, NV	Feb. 26-Mar. 2
SMS Principles for Transit	Newark, NJ	Mar. 7-9
SMS Safety Assurance	Virtual-Live Training	Mar. 13
Substance Abuse Management and Program Compliance	Kansas City, MO	Mar. 13-15
Reasonable Suspicion and Post-Accident Testing Determination Seminar	Kansas City, MO	Mar. 16
SMS Principles for Transit	Seattle, WA	Mar. 21-23

Transit Crime Prevention and Emergency Management Courses

Effectively Managing Transit Emergencies	Oakland, CA	Jan. 30-Feb. 2
Effectively Managing Transit Emergencies	Columbia, SC	Feb. 6-9
Effectively Managing Transit Emergencies	San Diego, CA	Feb. 27-Mar. 2
Effectively Managing Transit Emergencies	Phoenix, AZ	Mar. 13-16

Cont. on pg. 3

Training, cont. from pg. 2

Bus Transit Courses		
Fundamentals of Bus Collision Investigation	Ft. Worth, TX	Jan. 8-12
Instructor's Course for Transit Trainers	Fresno, CA	Jan. 22-26
Fundamentals of Bus Collision Investigation	San Diego, CA	Jan. 29-Feb. 2
Instructor's Course for Transit Trainers	Honolulu, HI	Jan. 29-Feb. 2
Transit Bus System Safety	Atlanta, GA	Feb. 5-9
Fundamentals of Bus Collision Investigation	Sacramento, CA	Feb. 12-16
Instructor's Course for Transit Trainers	Everett, WA	Feb. 12-16
Transit Bus System Safety	Philadelphia, PA	Feb. 12-16
Instructor's Course for Transit Trainers	San Francisco, CA	Mar. 5-9
Fundamentals of Bus Collision Investigation	Honolulu, HI	Mar. 12-16
Transit Bus System Safety	Tampa, FL	Mar. 19-23
Instructor's Course for Transit Trainers	Boston, MA	Mar. 26-30

Rail Transit Courses		
Transit Rail System Safety	Phoenix, AZ	Jan. 8-12
Transit Rail Incident Investigation	San Jose, CA	Jan. 22-26
Transit Rail System Safety	Landover, MD	Feb. 12-16
Transit Rail Incident Investigation	New Orleans, LA	Mar. 5-9

Upcoming TSO Speaking Events

The FTA Office of Transit Safety and Oversight will speak at the following event. We hope to see you there!

[Transportation Research Board Annual Meeting](#)

Washington, DC

Developing Safety Management Systems for Different Types of Transit:

Monday, Jan. 8, 2018, 8:00-9:45am



Deputy's Corner

Angela Dluger, Deputy Associate Administrator

For regular readers of Deputy's Corner, you may have been aware that I had been serving as the Director for FTA's Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) Safety Oversight Office since last fall. In August, I left on extended leave, and have now officially returned to my permanent role as the Deputy Associate Administrator for the Office of Transit Safety and Oversight.

Kimberly Burtch, who served as acting Deputy Associate Administrator in my absence, has returned to her position as Director of the Office of Safety Review. Patrick Nemons, who temporarily led that office for Kim, will continue to work with States on SSO certification to ensure that each State gets across the finish line before the April 2019 deadline. I sincerely thank both Kim and Patrick for stepping into these new responsibilities without hesitation.

As we look toward our safety priorities for 2018, it's important to remember that transit safety extends beyond the roadway. Cyber security continues to be a very real threat to transit safety, and it is crucial that every transit system, agency, and oversight body acknowledge that cyber security can create safety risks, but that we also have the knowledge, ability, and resources to protect Sensitive Security Information (SSI) and minimize the risk.

Sensitive Security Information: What is It and How Do We Protect It?

SSI refers to sensitive but unclassified information obtained or developed while conducting security activities, such as research and development. The unauthorized disclosure of SSI is an unwarranted invasion of privacy, and ultimately it could reveal trade secrets or privileged information, or be detrimental to transportation safety.

All DOT employees, contractors, grantees, consultants, licensees, and regulated entities that have access to or receive SSI must comply with DOT/FTA SSI rules. Any DOT contract, grant, or consulting agreement that will result in access to SSI must include provisions for handling and protecting SSI. Policies and procedures are available on [FTA's safety website](#).

By regulation, SSI currently includes 16 types of records. The following record types apply to transit agencies (and are issued, established, required, received, funded, or approved by DOT or DHS):

- Security programs and contingency plans,
- Vulnerability assessments, or
- Threat information concerning transportation, transportation systems, and cyber infrastructure.

Transit agencies must control SSI during storage, use, reproduction, transmittal, and destruction. During use, SSI records should not be left out in the open and should be sent only to persons with a need to know. SSI records may be reproduced only to the extent necessary to carry out transit agency business.

For additional information, please review [FTA's SSI resource document for transit agencies](#) or contact FTA's Emergency Coordinator, [Tony Tisdale](#), or FTA Attorney Advisor [Candace Key](#).



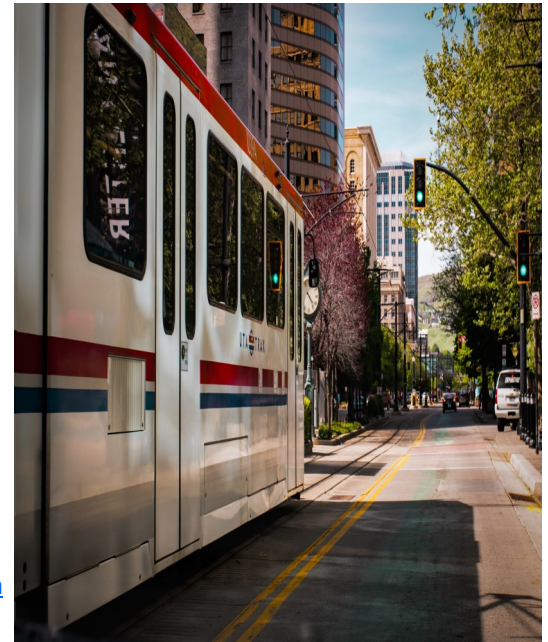
Angela Dluger, Deputy Associate Administrator

Utah Obtains SSO Program Certification

On November 17, 2017, Utah became the third state to obtain FTA certification of its State Safety Oversight (SSO) Program in accordance with the requirements of federal public transportation safety law and the [SSO final rule](#), 49 CFR Part 674.

Certification demonstrates that an SSO Program has the authority, resources, and expertise necessary to provide safety oversight of the rail transit systems in its State. By April 15, 2019, each eligible state must have an FTA-certified SSO Program or FTA cannot award new federal transit dollars. By law, the deadline cannot be waived or extended. The FTA is provided technical assistance and other support to assist states in meeting the deadline.

To track states' progress, please refer to [FTA's SSO Program Certification Status Table](#).



Utah's SSO Agency oversees the safety of the Utah Transit Authority's TRAX light rail, pictured, and the S-Line streetcar.

Second Annual Contractor Summit Focuses on Improving Consistency

The FTA's Office of Program Oversight is responsible for four of FTA's compliance review programs—Triennial, State Management, Procurement System, and Financial Management Oversight reviews. Executed with the support of contractors, these reviews help assess FTA funding recipients' program implementation and compliance with federal laws and requirements.

The Office of Program Oversight held its second annual Contractor Summit in Washington, DC, October 3-5, 2017. The Summit gathered over 80 contractors who conduct program oversight reviews for discussions about oversight processes and initiatives as well as presentations from FTA policy makers on guidance and program updates that will impact the FY18 oversight reviews including Circular 5010 revisions and the new Transit Asset Management Rule.

The Summit also provided an opportunity for the team leading the redesign and update of FTA's oversight tracking system (OTrak) to receive input from contractors on ways to improve workflow and communication with both FTA staff and recipients. Contractors mapped out the oversight review processes step-by-step showing when materials are retrieved from or uploaded to OTrak and where they'd like to see improvements or links to other systems.

Finally, participants engaged in discussion of actual scenarios encountered during past reviews to explore the different approaches contractors used when they encountered a compliance "gray" area (something that does not have an easy black and white answer). Differences of opinion on whether a deficiency finding should be issued were explored and provided an opportunity for FTA to better understand it needs to clarify guidance for both recipients and contractors.

Questions? Please contact FTA's [Scott Giering](#), Acting Director of Program Oversight.

TSO Profile

Q&A with James Bartell, Program Analyst, Office of System Safety



James "Jim" Bartell, Program Analyst

What led you to work in transit? I worked for the County of Essex, New Jersey for 17 years before joining the federal government. In New Jersey, I was in the unique position to work with local, county, state, and federal entities. I was hired as the county's budget analyst for FTA/FHWA's transportation planning grant program, and had the opportunity to collaborate with the transportation planning team and was impressed with their mission focused agenda. For example, if there was a transportation or beautification project needing approval, we would host roundtables for commissioners, mayors, county freeholders, state representatives, and other elected officials with a vested interest to sit down and talk. The collective willingness to work together allowed us to move quickly to accomplish exciting transit improvements. Simply put, everyone worked together and we got things done.

What were you doing prior to this role? Immediately prior to joining FTA, I was a policy analyst for the Department of State, where I served as the strategic planner for Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations, and acted as the liaison between the Office of the Inspector General and the Government Accountability Office. My previous work as a program manager in the Division of Engineering for the County of Essex on redevelopment projects was the link between engineering and construction that led to my interest in the Overseas Buildings Operation's office of Policy and Program Analysis. That led to my interest in joining TSO's policy office and return to the transit industry.

What are some current projects or initiatives that you or your team are working on? Currently, my team is preparing for the next iteration of the National Public Transportation Safety Plan (NSP). The NSP was published in January 2017 fulfilling congressionally mandated requirements to provide guidance to the transportation industry and establishing Safety Management System (SMS) as the foundation for FTA's safety regulatory framework. Currently I'm coordinating with other FTA offices to evaluate performance measures and industry safety standards for inclusion in the next version of the NSP.

How do you work with people outside of the FTA? How would you like to be working with them in the future? My greatest opportunity for collaboration with rail transit agency colleagues, and the public, is during the notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) process. NPRMs, by design, encourage interaction with external agencies, the transit industry, and the public at large. I like to take advantage of opportunities to participate in working groups or attend conferences.

What is one thing you would like people to know about FTA? FTA team members are some of the most diligent, focused, and committed professionals in government service, and I'm excited to be part of a team that's dedicated to the safety of the public.



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>