

Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan Template for Bus Transit

Reference Tool

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The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) is providing the *Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan Template for Bus Transit* and accompanying *Reference Tool* to assist with the development of an Agency Safety Plan (ASP) for bus transit modes. The template and reference tool are intended for use by States and operators of public transportation systems that are required to draft an ASP in accordance with 49 C.F.R. Part 673 (Part 673). The full text of Part 673 is available at <http://www.transit.dot.gov/PTASP>.

How to Use This Reference Tool

This reference tool is intended to help you complete each section of the *Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan Template for Bus Transit* and draft an ASP that meets the requirements of Part 673 for bus transit modes. Use of the template and reference tool is voluntary. This document is not intended to provide guidance on implementing or operating a Safety Management System (SMS). As you develop content to include in the template, we recommend reviewing the corresponding section of this tool.

Each section of this tool begins with the relevant regulatory text from Part 673 in a grey box. This is followed by a description of the regulatory requirement and additional information from the preamble to the regulation. Examples and voluntary guidance are presented in blue boxes. The examples are provided for illustration only.

Certain requirements in Part 673 do not apply to small public transportation providers.¹ The relevant sections in this tool are noted in red to indicate where requirements differ.

¹ Part 673 defines small public transportation provider as a recipient or subrecipient of Federal financial assistance under 49 U.S.C. § 5307 that has one hundred (100) or fewer vehicles in peak revenue service and does not operate a rail fixed guideway public transportation system. (49 C.F.R. § 673.5). FTA interprets this definition to include bus transit systems with one hundred (100) or fewer vehicles in revenue service during peak regular service across all non-rail fixed route modes or in any one non-fixed route mode.

Who Does Part 673 Apply To?

§ 673.1(a) – This part applies to any State, local governmental authority, and any other operator of a public transportation system that receives Federal financial assistance under 49 United States Code (U.S.C.) Chapter 53.

§ 673.1(b) – This part does not apply to an operator of a public transportation system that only receives Federal financial assistance under 49 U.S.C. § 5310, § 5311, or both § 5310 and § 5311.

§ 673.11(f) – Agencies that operate passenger ferries regulated by the United States Coast Guard (USCG) or rail fixed guideway public transportation service regulated by the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) are not required to develop agency safety plans for those modes of service.

Part 673 applies to any State, local governmental authority, and any other operator of a public transportation system that receives Federal financial assistance under 49 U.S.C. § 5307 (Section 5307).

Part 673 does not apply to an operator of a public transportation system that only receives Federal financial assistance under 49 U.S.C. § 5310, § 5311, or both § 5310 and § 5311. Additionally, Part 673 does not apply to passenger ferries regulated by USCG or rail fixed guideway public transportation service regulated by FRA.

Contractors

If a recipient or subrecipient of Section 5307 funds contracts another entity to provide transit service, the recipient or subrecipient is responsible for ensuring that each of the requirements of Part 673 are satisfied through the terms and conditions of its contract, including specific safety roles and responsibilities.

Ultimately, each FTA recipient or subrecipient is responsible for ensuring compliance with Part 673 and to certify compliance annually—not a contractor.

Paratransit Service

If a transit agency receives Section 5307 funds, paratransit service² provided by the recipient or subrecipient is subject to Part 673. To the extent that a contractor provides paratransit service for multiple FTA recipients, each recipient ultimately has responsibility for ensuring that its transit operation complies with regulation.

What Does Part 673 Require?

This section summarizes the requirements of Part 673 to help you understand the requirements for an ASP in the context of the regulation. For a complete description of the regulatory requirements, please see the final rule text at <http://www.transit.dot.gov/PTASP>.

² Including general public, Americans with Disabilities Act complementary, and contracted paratransit service.

Agency Safety Plan

§ 673.11(a) – A transit agency must, within one calendar year after the effective date of the final rule, establish a Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan that meets the requirements of this part.

§ 673.11(a)(4) – The Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan must address all applicable requirements and standards as set forth in FTA's Public Transportation Safety Program and the National Public Transportation Safety Plan. Compliance with the minimum safety performance standards authorized under 49 U.S.C. § 5329(b)(2)(C) is not required until standards have been established through the public notice and comment process.

§ 673.11(b) – A transit agency may develop one Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan for all modes of service or may develop a Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan for each mode of service not subject to safety regulation by another Federal entity.

By July 20, 2020, each transit operator that is subject to this regulation must have a drafted and certified ASP that meets the requirements of Part 673 for all modes of transit service not subject to safety regulation by another Federal entity. The ASP must include all information, processes, and procedures outlined in Part 673.

A transit agency may have one or multiple ASPs. A single plan may work better for some agencies, whereas multiple plans for different modes of transit service (e.g., commuter rail, light rail, bus) may work better for others. The regulation does not prescribe the number of ASPs a transit agency must develop. Please note, some requirements under Part 673 differ between rail and bus modes.

ROLE OF THE ASP

For a transit agency, the ASP serves two goals:

- Helps manage safety risks, and
- Helps prioritize capital investments through performance-based planning

As described in the sections below, all ASPs must include documented safety management processes. A transit agency may describe the processes in detail in the ASP or provide references to the processes located in other documents. Referenced documents must be available for review by FTA and other oversight authorities in accordance with the documentation requirements provided in the regulation.

An ASP may include additional sections and information beyond what is required in Part 673. The FTA encourages transit agencies to incorporate any tools and best practices that effectively mitigate and eliminate safety risk throughout their systems.

Safety Management System

§ 673.21 – Each transit agency must establish and implement a Safety Management System under this part. A transit agency Safety Management System must be appropriately scaled to the size, scope and complexity of the transit agency and include the following elements:

- (a) Safety Management Policy as described in § 673.23;
- (b) Safety Risk Management as described in § 673.25;
- (c) Safety Assurance as described in § 673.27; and
- (d) Safety Promotion as described in § 673.29.

Part 673 provides the framework for an ASP, including requirements based on the four components of a SMS. Although FTA leaves much to the discretion of States and transit agencies, Part 673 specifies that each transit agency's SMS must be appropriately scaled to the size, scope and complexity of the agency.

While an ASP serves to establish an SMS at a transit agency through description and documentation of each element, Part 673 also requires a transit agency to implement an SMS.

While a transit agency's ASP must be completed and certified by the compliance date, FTA does not expect all transit agencies to have a fully implemented SMS by this date. The FTA expects an agency's SMS to mature over time.

EXPLAIN WHY YOUR SMS IS UNIQUE

Ways to demonstrate that your SMS is appropriately scaled to the size, scope, and complexity of your transit agency include the following:

- Note key transit system characteristics in the relevant sections of your ASP to show how the features of your SMS make sense for your transit agency.
- Consider your agency's current safety performance when evaluating whether certain procedures are sufficient.

ASP Documentation

§ 673.31 Safety plan documentation – At all times, a transit agency must maintain documents that set forth its Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan, including those related to the implementation of its Safety Management System (SMS) and results from SMS processes and activities. A transit agency must maintain documents that are included in whole, or by reference, that describe the programs, policies, and procedures that the agency uses to carry out its Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan. These documents must be made available upon request by the Federal Transit Administration or other Federal entity, or a State Safety Oversight Agency having jurisdiction. A transit agency must maintain these documents for a minimum of three years after they are created.

Under Part 673, a transit agency is required to maintain documents that describe its ASP, including those related to implementation and results from processes and activities. A transit agency must maintain these documents for a minimum of three years. A transit agency may have existing documentation that describes processes, procedures, and other information required in Part 673.

DOCUMENTATION TIPS

Referencing documents directly in an ASP is an easy way to demonstrate that a requirement for ASP documentation is met and reduces the need to summarize processes and activities already described elsewhere.

When referencing a document in an ASP, clearly describe what the document contributes to the plan (e.g., describes a certain process), and specify the name of the document and where it is stored.

1. Transit Agency Information

1.1 Who is the Accountable Executive?

§ 673.5 Definitions – Accountable Executive means a single, identifiable person who has ultimate responsibility for carrying out the Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan of a public transportation agency; responsibility for carrying out the agency’s Transit Asset Management Plan; and control or direction over the human and capital resources needed to develop and maintain both the agency’s Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan, in accordance with 49 U.S.C. § 5329(d), and the agency’s Transit Asset Management Plan in accordance with 49 U.S.C. § 5326.

§ 673.23(d)(1) – The transit agency must identify an Accountable Executive. The Accountable Executive is accountable for ensuring that the agency’s SMS is effectively implemented throughout the agency’s public transportation system. The Accountable Executive is accountable for ensuring action is taken, as necessary, to address substandard performance in the agency’s SMS. The Accountable Executive may delegate specific responsibilities, but the ultimate accountability for the transit agency’s safety performance cannot be delegated and always rests with the Accountable Executive.

Each transit agency must identify an Accountable Executive who ultimately is responsible for carrying out and implementing its ASP. A State that drafts a plan on behalf of another recipient or subrecipient is not the Accountable Executive.

Given the diversity of transit systems, FTA defers to transit agencies to designate the Accountable Executive, so long as that individual meets the requirements specified in § 673.31 and § 673.23(d)(1). This person should be named the transit agency’s Accountable Executive in an ASP. In general, this person should oversee operations and asset management functions.

EXAMPLES OF ACCOUNTABLE EXECUTIVES

The Accountable Executive could be a transit agency’s chief executive—commonly the president, chief executive officer, or general manager. For municipal government agencies, the Accountable Executive could be a county executive or a mayor, the head of a city’s department of transportation, the head of a city’s department of public works, or a city manager.

1.2 Who is the Chief Safety Officer or SMS Executive?

§ 673.31 Definitions –

Chief Safety Officer means an adequately trained individual who has responsibility for safety and reports directly to a transit agency’s chief executive officer, general manager, president, or equivalent officer. A Chief Safety Officer may not serve in other operational or maintenance capacities, unless the Chief Safety Officer is employed by a transit agency that is a small public transportation provider as defined in this part, or a public transportation provider that does not operate a rail fixed guideway public transportation system.

Safety Management System (SMS) Executive means a Chief Safety Officer or an equivalent.

§ 673.23(d)(2) – The Accountable Executive must designate a Chief Safety Officer or SMS Executive who has the authority and responsibility for day-to-day implementation and operation of an agency’s SMS. The Chief Safety Officer or SMS Executive must hold a direct line of reporting to the Accountable Executive. A transit agency may allow the Accountable Executive to also serve as the Chief Safety Officer or SMS Executive.

Each transit agency must identify a Chief Safety Officer or SMS Executive who has the authority and responsibility for day-to-day implementation and operation of the agency's SMS. The Chief Safety Officer or SMS Executive must meet the requirements specified in § 673.31 and § 673.23(d)(2). For SMS to be successful and effective, this person should have a strong working relationship with the operations and asset management functions at the transit agency.

Small public transportation providers may designate a Chief Safety Officer or SMS Executive who also manages other functions, such as operations, maintenance, and grant administration. For these transit agencies, the Chief Safety Officer or SMS Executive may be a full-time employee of the transit system who has responsibility for duties other than safety, a part-time employee of the transit system, or a contracted employee.

The FTA recommends that bus transit systems that do not meet the regulation's definition for small public transportation provider to have a dedicated Chief Safety Officer, given the increased safety risk of those systems. However, this is not a requirement.

2. Plan Development, Approval, and Updates

2.1 Drafting the Plan

§ 673.11(d) – A State must draft and certify a Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan on behalf of any small public transportation provider that is located in that State. A State is not required to draft a Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan for a small public transportation provider if that agency notifies the State that it will draft its own plan. In each instance, the transit agency must carry out the plan. If a State drafts and certifies a Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan on behalf of a transit agency, and the transit agency later opts to draft and certify its own Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan, then the transit agency must notify the State. The transit agency has one year from the date of the notification to draft and certify a Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan that is compliant with this part. The Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan drafted by the State will remain in effect until the transit agency drafts its own Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan.

States and Small Public Transportation Providers

States must draft and certify an ASP on behalf of any small public transportation provider located in that State, unless the small provider notifies the State that the provider will draft and certify its own ASP. This requirement stands even if no funding relationship exists between a State and a small public transportation provider, as may be the case for small recipients in large urbanized areas.

The FTA is granting small public transportation providers the discretion to opt out of a State-drafted ASP. A State does not have the option to opt out of drafting an ASP, if required by Part 673, as this discretion lies only with a small provider. If a small public transportation provider opts out and decides to draft and certify its own ASP, the State has no further responsibility regarding that ASP, and the transit agency may seek guidance and technical assistance directly from FTA.

If a transit agency grows so that it no longer meets the definition of a small public transportation provider, it has one year from that date to draft and certify its own ASP. The ASP developed by the State remains in effect until the transit agency drafts its own ASP. Notably, that ASP must include all of the Safety Assurance (SA) processes required of large operators.

A State and the small public transportation providers within that State may determine whether the State will draft and certify a single State-wide ASP for all small public transportation providers or whether it will draft

and certify an individualized ASP for each small provider. However, given the unique characteristics and safety risk of each transit system, States may carefully consider drafting and certifying individualized ASPs. If a State drafts a single State-wide ASP, the State must ensure that the ASP clearly identifies each small public transportation provider the ASP will cover and includes the unique contents required for each transit agency under Part 673.

Regardless of how an ASP is drafted, a transit agency must carry out the ASP. Therefore, FTA recommends that, when drafting an ASP, a State determines and develops ASP contents in coordination with the relevant transit provider(s). Collaboration between the State and the transit agency will produce a more meaningful, useful and executable ASP for the small public transportation provider, and ensure the SMS will be appropriately scaled to the size, scope, and complexity of the transit agency.

The FTA will oversee compliance with the requirements of Part 673 through its existing Triennial Review and State Management Review processes.

Large Public Transportation Providers

A bus transit system that operates more than 100 vehicles in peak revenue service must draft and certify its own ASP.

2.2 Signature by the Accountable Executive and Approval by the Board of Directors or Equivalent Authority

§ 673.11 (a)(1) – The Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan and subsequent updates must be signed by the Accountable Executive and approved by the agency’s Board of Directors or an Equivalent Authority.

§ 673.5 Definitions – Equivalent Authority means an entity that carries out duties similar to that of a Board of Directors, for a recipient or subrecipient of FTA funds under 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53, including sufficient authority to review and approve a recipient or subrecipient’s Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan.

Part 673 elevates accountability for the ASP to the Accountable Executive and Board of Directors or equivalent authority. Therefore, the ASP and any subsequent updates must be signed by the Accountable Executive and approved by the transit agency’s Board of Directors or equivalent authority. Approval of the ASP means that the Board of Directors or equivalent authority accepts the ASP as satisfactory, the ASP complies with each requirement of Part 673, and the ASP effectively will guide the transit agency to manage safety risk.

EQUIVALENT AUTHORITIES

An Equivalent Authority could be the policy decision-maker or grant manager for a small public transportation provider, the city council or city manager for a city, a county legislature for a county, or a state transportation commission.

If a transit agency does not have a Board of Directors, an equivalent authority may approve its ASP. An equivalent authority is an entity that carries out duties similar to those of a Board of Directors and has sufficient authority to review and approve an ASP. Given the diversity of transit systems across the country, FTA is deferring to each transit agency to identify who would be an equivalent authority for its system.

2.3 Certification of Compliance

§ 673.13(a) – Each transit agency, or State as authorized in § 673.11(d), must certify that it has established a Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan meeting the requirements of this part one year after the effective date of this final rule.

§ 673.13 (b) – On an annual basis, a transit agency, direct recipient, or State must certify its compliance with this part.

Part 673 does not require transit agencies or States to submit their completed or updated ASPs to FTA on a regular basis. Instead, each transit agency or State must certify that they have established an ASP that fulfills the requirements under Part 673. The FTA annually amends and issues the list of Certifications and Assurances. The FTA will issue guidance on how States can certify ASPs on behalf of small public transportation providers.

2.4 ASP Review and Updates

§ 673.11(a)(5) – Each transit agency must establish a process and timeline for conducting an annual review and update of the Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan.

Each transit agency must establish a process and timeline for conducting an annual review and update of its ASP. Given the diversity of transit systems, FTA is deferring to each transit agency to determine how its ASP review and updates are completed each year. Small public transportation providers are responsible for reviewing and updating their ASPs, even if the plan is initially drafted by the State.

A transit agency should update its ASP at any point when information, processes or activities required under Part 673 undergo significant changes. As a transit agency collects data through its Safety Risk Management (SRM) and SA processes, the agency should be evaluating its safety performance targets (SPTs) to determine whether they need to be changed, as well.

WHEN TO REVIEW AN ASP

The following are examples of when a transit agency should review its safety plan:

- The approach to mitigating safety deficiencies is determined ineffective,
- Significant changes to service delivery are made,
- New processes or procedures that may impact safety are introduced,
- Resources available to support SMS are changed or re-prioritized, and/or
- Significant changes are made to the organizational structure.

3. Safety Performance Targets

3.1 Target Development

§ 673.5 Definitions –

Accident means an event that involves any of the following: a loss of life; a report of a serious injury to a person; a collision of public transportation vehicles; a runaway train; an evacuation for life safety reasons; or any derailment of a rail transit vehicle, at any location, at any time, whatever the cause.

Event means any accident, incident, or occurrence.

Incident means an event that involves any of the following: A personal injury that is not a serious injury; one or more injuries requiring medical transport; or damage to facilities, equipment, rolling stock, or infrastructure that disrupts the operations of a transit agency.

Occurrence means an event without any personal injury in which any damage to facilities, equipment, rolling stock, or infrastructure does not disrupt the operations of a transit agency.

Performance target means a quantifiable level of performance or condition, expressed as a value for the measure, to be achieved within a time period required by FTA.

Safety performance target means a performance target related to safety management activities.

Serious injury means any injury which: (1) Requires hospitalization for more than 48 hours, commencing within seven days from the date the injury was received; (2) Results in a fracture of any bone (except simple fractures of fingers, toes, or noses); (3) Causes severe hemorrhages, nerve, muscle, or tendon damage; (4) Involves any internal organ; or (5) Involves second- or third-degree burns, or any burns affecting more than 5 percent of the body surface.

§ 673.11(a)(3) – The Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan must include performance targets based on the safety performance measures established under the National Public Transportation Safety Plan.

Each transit agency must include SPTs in its ASP. These targets must be specific numerical targets set by transit agencies themselves and must be based on the safety performance measures established by FTA in the National Public Transportation Safety Plan. In the most recent version, the 2017 National Public Transportation Safety Plan (NSP),³ FTA adopted four initial safety performance measures: (1) Fatalities, (2) Injuries, (3) Safety Events, and (4) System Reliability.

FTA Triennial and State Management reviewers will not “reject” a transit agency’s safety performance targets; however, they will ensure that each transit agency has identified SPTs that meet Part 673 requirements, including undergoing annual review with the rest of the ASP contents.

³ See the full text of the NSP at <https://www.transit.dot.gov/regulations-and-guidance/safety/national-public-transportation-safety-plan>.

3.2 Target Coordination

§ 673.15(a) – A State or transit agency must make its safety performance targets available to States and Metropolitan Planning Organizations to aid in the planning process.

§ 673.15(b) – To the maximum extent practicable, a State or transit agency must coordinate with States and Metropolitan Planning Organizations in the selection of State and MPO safety performance targets.

Transit agencies must coordinate with States and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), to the maximum extent practicable, to assist those States and MPOs with the selection of Statewide and regional safety performance targets. At a minimum, each transit agency must make its SPTs available to States and MPOs.

4. Safety Management Policy

4.1 Safety Management Policy Statement

§ 673.23(a) – A transit agency must establish its organizational accountabilities and responsibilities and have a written statement of safety management policy that includes the agency’s safety objectives.

An ASP must include the organizational accountabilities and responsibilities necessary for a transit agency to implement and operate its SMS. The level of detail of the stated organizational accountabilities and responsibilities should reflect the size and complexity of the transit agency.

A transit agency must have a written Safety Management Policy Statement that contains the transit agency’s safety objectives. Part 673 does not establish specific requirements for objectives. Objectives set by the agency should reflect the agency’s overarching safety goals, based upon the agency’s unique characteristics and circumstances.

SAFETY MANAGEMENT POLICY STATEMENTS

An effective Safety Management Policy statement is:

- A short, straightforward document developed by top executives and management,
- Describes a transit agency’s commitment to SMS and the dedication of resources (e.g., people and funds) to support it,
- Commits the agency to developing and implementing the structures and activities necessary to sustain an SMS, and
- Assigns ultimate accountability for safety management to the agency’s Accountable Executive.

Senior management should consult with staff members in charge of safety critical functions to ensure that the safety objectives are relevant to the agency and the services it delivers.

4.2 Safety Management Policy Communication

§ 673.23(c) – The safety management policy must be communicated throughout the agency.

A transit agency's Safety Management Policy Statement must be communicated throughout the agency, to all its employees, managers, and executives, as well as contractors, and to the Board of Directors or equivalent authority. Part 673 does not specify communication channels or methods, so agencies can identify approaches and formats that will be most effective for their operations.

4.3 Employee Safety Reporting Program

§ 673.23(b) – A transit agency must establish and implement a process that allows employees to report safety conditions to senior management, protections for employees who report safety conditions to senior management, and a description of employee behaviors that may result in disciplinary action.

Under Part 673, each transit agency must have a process that allows employees to report safety conditions to senior management. This process must provide protections for employees who report safety conditions and include a description of behaviors that are unacceptable and therefore would not be exempt from disciplinary actions.

Such a reporting program allows employees who have in-depth knowledge of the transit system to report unsafe conditions to management without fear of reprisal so safety risk can be mitigated. The FTA believes that employee safety reporting programs will help support a positive safety culture within transit organizations.

EMPLOYEE SAFETY REPORTING GUIDELINES SHOULD CLARIFY:

- What to report and how,
- What managers should do when employees report safety concerns,
- How reports are documented, and
- How employees will receive feedback about the results of their reports.

The FTA is providing significant flexibility to transit agencies to determine their own approach to meeting this requirement. For example, an employee safety reporting program could be based on a hotline, web-based reporting system, form-based reporting system, or direct reporting to management. The FTA supports the establishment of close call reporting systems, although this type of system is not required.

The FTA acknowledges that disciplinary actions for employee behaviors may be the subject of collective bargaining agreements. Transit agencies may need to work with their labor unions to establish employee safety reporting programs that fit the needs of management and employees. Collaboration and communication between labor and management is encouraged and will contribute to a more successful employee reporting system and robust collection of safety data.

4.4 SMS Authorities, Accountabilities, and Responsibilities

§ 673.23(d) – The transit agency must establish the necessary authorities, accountabilities, and responsibilities for the management of safety amongst the following individuals within its organization, as they relate to the development and management of the transit agency’s Safety Management System (SMS).

Each transit agency must establish the authorities, accountabilities, and responsibilities necessary for the development and management of its SMS. The level of detail in this section of the ASP should reflect the size and complexity of the transit agency’s operations. At a minimum, a transit agency must identify the authorities, accountabilities, and responsibilities of the Accountable Executive, Chief Safety Officer or SMS Executive, agency leadership, executive management, and key staff who play a substantial role in safety management.

4.4.1 Accountable Executive

§ 673.23(d)(1) – The transit agency must identify an Accountable Executive. The Accountable Executive is accountable for ensuring that the agency’s SMS is effectively implemented throughout the agency’s public transportation system. The Accountable Executive is accountable for ensuring action is taken, as necessary, to address substandard performance in the agency’s SMS. The Accountable Executive may delegate specific responsibilities, but the ultimate accountability for the transit agency’s safety performance cannot be delegated and always rests with the Accountable Executive.

The Accountable Executive is accountable for ensuring that the agency’s SMS is effectively implemented, and that action is taken, as necessary, to address substandard performance in the agency’s SMS. The Accountable Executive may delegate specific responsibilities, but not their accountability for the transit agency’s safety performance. The authorities, accountabilities, and responsibilities assigned to the Accountable Executive in the ASP must reflect these requirements.

ACCOUNTABLE EXECUTIVE’S ROLES OFTEN INCLUDE:

- Decision-making about resources (e.g. people and funds) to support asset management, SMS activities, and capital investments;
- Signing SMS implementation planning documents; and
- Endorsing SMS implementation team membership.

4.4.2 Chief Safety Officer or SMS Executive

§ 673.23(d)(2) – The Accountable Executive must designate a Chief Safety Officer or SMS Executive who has the authority and responsibility for day-to-day implementation and operation of an agency’s SMS. The Chief Safety Officer or SMS Executive must hold a direct line of reporting to the Accountable Executive. A transit agency may allow the Accountable Executive to also serve as the Chief Safety Officer or SMS Executive.

The Chief Safety Officer (CSO) or SMS Executive has the authority and responsibility for day-to-day implementation and operation of a transit agency's SMS. The authorities, accountabilities, and responsibilities assigned to the CSO or SMS Executive in the ASP must reflect this requirement.

CSO'S OR SMS EXECUTIVE'S ROLES MAY INCLUDE:

- Developing and maintaining SMS documentation,
- Directing hazard identification and safety risk assessment,
- Monitoring safety risk mitigation activities,
- Providing periodic reports on safety performance,
- Briefing the Accountable Executive and Board of Directors on SMS implementation progress, and
- Planning safety management training.

4.4.3 Agency Leadership and Executive Management

§ 673.23(d)(3) – A transit agency must identify those members of its leadership or executive management, other than an Accountable Executive, Chief Safety Officer, or SMS Executive, who have authorities or responsibilities for day-to-day implementation and operation of an agency's SMS.

Other members of a transit agency's leadership or executive management have authorities and responsibilities for day-to-day implementation and operation of the agency's SMS. These authorities, accountabilities, and responsibilities must be described in the ASP.

AGENCY LEADERSHIP AND EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT POSITION EXAMPLES:

- Chief Operations Officer,
- Director of Bus Operations,
- Director of Maintenance, and
- Chief Infrastructure Officer.

4.4.4 Key Staff

§ 673.23(d)(4) – A transit agency may designate key staff, groups of staff, or committees to support the Accountable Executive, Chief Safety Officer, or SMS Executive in developing, implementing, and operating the agency's SMS.

A transit agency may designate other individuals, including key staff, groups of staff and committees to support the development, implementation, and operation of the agency's SMS. Their authorities, accountabilities, and responsibilities must be described in the ASP.

5. Safety Risk Management

§ 673.25(a) – A transit agency must develop and implement a Safety Risk Management process for all elements of its public transportation system. The Safety Risk Management process must be comprised of the following activities: safety hazard identification, safety risk assessment, and safety risk mitigation.

Under Part 673, a transit agency is required to develop and implement an SRM process applied to all elements of its system. Transit agencies must conduct safety hazard identification, safety risk assessment, and safety risk mitigation activities. The FTA is providing a great deal of flexibility in this requirement to allow each transit agency to determine how these SRM activities are carried out, and the safety hazards and safety risks the agency will prioritize and mitigate. Transit agencies should review their existing hazard identification and risk management processes, and incorporate them into their plan if the processes are still effective.

Additionally, transit agencies should use any new processes that provide a more effective means of identifying and addressing hazards and safety risk.

5.1 Safety Hazard Identification

§ 673.25(b)(1) – A transit agency must establish methods or processes to identify hazards and consequences of the hazards.

§ 673.25(b)(2) – A transit agency must consider, as a source for hazard identification, data and information provided by an oversight authority and the FTA.

Each transit agency must establish a process for safety hazard identification, which includes specifying sources of information about hazards and their associated consequences. Safety hazard identification activities should reflect the size and scope of the transit agency's operations.

Part 673 does not specify the type of data and information that oversight authorities must share with transit agencies, nor does the regulation specify the types of safety data that transit agencies should collect.

SAFETY HAZARD IDENTIFICATION ACTIVITIES

Safety hazard identification could involve:

- Safety data analysis,
- Safety focus groups,
- Reviews of safety reporting trends, or
- Holding a meeting with a few bus drivers and discussing hazards in the system (*for smaller bus systems*).

Nexus to Transit Asset Management

A transit agency should consider the results of its asset condition assessments when performing safety hazard identification activities through its SMS. The results of the condition assessments and SRM activities will inform a transit agency's determination as to whether an asset meets the state of good repair standards under 49 C.F.R. Part 625.

5.2 Safety Risk Assessment

§ 673.25(c)(1) – A transit agency must establish methods or processes to assess the safety risks associated with identified safety hazards.

§ 673.25(c)(2) – A safety risk assessment includes an assessment of the likelihood and severity of the consequences of the hazards, including existing mitigations, and prioritization of the hazards based on the safety risk.

Each transit agency must establish procedures for assessing the safety risk of the consequences of identified safety hazards and prioritizing the hazards based on this safety risk. Each transit agency must assess safety risk in terms of likelihood (the probability of a consequence occurring) and severity (the seriousness of a consequence, if it occurs).

Transit agencies are not required to adopt any specific method or process for safety risk assessment. However, transit agencies may find it useful to review the U.S. Department of Defense's Military Standard 882E,⁴ which outlines a commonly used approach for conducting safety risk assessments.

HAZARDS VS CONSEQUENCES

Under § 673.5, a hazard means 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.

Hazard are conditions, while consequences are outcomes or what those conditions can cause. Transit agencies should assess the likelihood and severity of the *consequences* of a hazard, not of the hazard itself.

5.3 Safety Risk Mitigation

§ 673.25(d) – A transit agency must establish methods or processes to identify mitigations or strategies necessary as a result of the agency's safety risk assessment to reduce the likelihood and severity of the consequences.

Each transit agency must establish an approach to determining when safety risk mitigation is necessary based on assessed safety risk. This may include setting criteria or thresholds for different levels of safety risk and may involve assigning accountability to levels of management for the safety risk of operations under their control. A transit agency may color code different levels of safety risk (e.g., “red” as high, “yellow” as medium, and “green” as minor) and associate different types of safety risk mitigations to that level of risk.

6. Safety Assurance

§ 673.27(a) – A transit agency must develop and implement a safety assurance process, consistent with this subpart. A rail fixed guideway public transportation system, and a recipient or subrecipient of Federal financial assistance under 49 U.S.C. Chapter 53 that operates more than one hundred vehicles in peak revenue service, must include in its safety assurance process each of the requirements in (b), (c), and (d) of this section. A small public transportation provider only must include in its safety assurance process the requirements in (b) of this section.

Each transit agency must develop and implement a process for SA. Bus transit agencies that operate more than one hundred vehicles in peak revenue service must develop processes for (1) safety performance monitoring and measurement, (2) management of change, and (3) continuous improvement. Small public transportation providers need only to develop a process for safety performance monitoring and measurement. Each transit agency's SA activities should be scaled to the size and complexity of its operations.

SA activities serve as a check on the agency's SRM process. The procedures are designed to ensure that safety risk mitigations are effective and implemented as intended, collect safety performance data that will help a transit agency anticipate future safety events and mitigate or prevent them, and to analyze the safety risk of any new practices or procedures the transit agency adopts. If a transit agency identifies safety

⁴ Available at <http://www.system-safety.org/Documents/MIL-STD-882E.pdf>.

deficiencies through its safety performance assessments, then it must act to correct them. These efforts are intended to minimize the exposure of the public, personnel, and property to unsafe conditions.

6.1 Safety Performance Monitoring and Measurement

§ 673.27(b) – A transit agency must establish activities to:

§ 673.27(b)(1) – Monitor its system for compliance with, and sufficiency of, the agency’s procedures for operations and maintenance;

§ 673.27(b)(2) – Monitor its operations to identify any safety risk mitigations that may be ineffective, inappropriate, or were not implemented as intended;

§ 673.27(b)(3) – Conduct investigations of safety events to identify causal factors; and

§ 673.27(b)(4) – Monitor information reported through any internal safety reporting programs.

Safety performance monitoring and measurement involves the continual monitoring of a transit agency’s activities to understand safety performance. Through these efforts, each transit agency should be able to determine whether it is meeting its safety objectives and safety performance targets, as well as the extent to which it is effectively implementing its SMS.

The FTA does not prescribe any specific process for investigating safety events, but notes that it is critical for transit agencies to identify and understand the causes of the accidents, incidents, and occurrences in their systems so that the circumstances leading to the events can be mitigated and prevented in the future.

MEASURING SAFETY PERFORMANCE

To enable safety performance monitoring and measurement activities, a transit agency should establish safety performance indicators (SPIs) and safety performance targets (SPTs) based on its safety objectives.

Examples	
Safety Objective: Minimize passenger slip and fall events in buses.	
SPI	SPT
The number of passenger slip and fall events on a vehicle per [number] of vehicle revenue miles.	Reduce the number of passenger slip and fall events on a vehicle by [percent] per [number] of vehicle revenue miles over the next [time period].

6.2 Management of Change (Not Required for Small Public Transportation Providers)

§ 673.27(c)(1) – A transit agency must establish a process for identifying and assessing changes that may introduce new hazards or impact the transit agency’s safety performance.

§ 673.27(c)(2) – If a transit agency determines that a change may impact its safety performance, then the transit agency must evaluate the proposed change through its safety Risk Management Process.

Under Part 673, transit agencies, except small public transportation providers, must manage changes with potential safety impacts in their system. Transit agencies subject to this requirement must develop a process for identifying and assessing changes that may introduce new hazards or impact safety performance. If a transit agency determines that a change might impact safety, then the agency must evaluate the proposed change using the SRM process implemented to meet the requirements under § 673.25.

The FTA is providing each transit agency with flexibility in developing these procedures and identifying the types of changes in its system that could impact safety performance. Relevant changes include changes to operations or maintenance procedures, procurement or safety management processes, service, the design and construction of major capital projects (e.g., New Starts and Small Starts projects and associated certifications), and organizational changes.

EXAMPLES OF CHANGES

Changes with safety performance impacts can come from many sources and may include:

- Regulatory requirements,
- Audit results,
- City or regional planning,
- Service environment,
- New technology,
- New processes or procedures,
- Switching to new products (e.g., parts or chemicals), and
- New employee contracts.

6.3 Continuous Improvement (Not Required for Small Public Transportation Providers)

§ 673.27(d)(1) – A transit agency must establish a process to assess its safety performance.

§ 673.27(d)(2) – If a transit agency identifies any deficiencies as a part of its safety performance assessment, then the transit agency must develop and carry out, under the direction of the Accountable Executive, a plan to address the identified safety deficiencies.

Transit agencies, except small public transportation providers, must have a process in place for assessing their safety performance. If a transit agency identifies any deficiencies during a safety performance assessment, it must develop and carry out, under the direction of the Accountable Executive, a plan to address the identified safety deficiencies. The FTA expects each transit agency subject to this requirement to conduct a safety performance assessment annually, at a minimum. The safety performance assessment can be completed in conjunction with the annual review and update of the ASP, as required under § 673.11(a)(5).

7. Safety Promotion

Safety Promotion involves the training, awareness, and communication that support safety. Part 673 requires each transit agency to establish competencies and training for all agency personnel directly responsible for safety, and to establish and maintain the means for communicating safety performance and safety management information.

7.1 Competencies and Training

§ 673.29(a) – A transit agency must establish and implement a comprehensive safety training program for all agency employees and contractors directly responsible for safety in the agency’s public transportation system. The training program must include refresher training, as necessary.

Each transit agency must establish a comprehensive safety training program. A transit agency may require employees and contractors, including the CSO or SMS Executive and the transit agency’s Board of Directors or equivalent authority, to complete training to be able to fulfill their safety-related roles and responsibilities. A transit agency also must require refresher training, as necessary, to stay current with the agency’s safety practices and procedures. Given the diversity of transit systems, FTA is deferring to each transit agency to determine the level of training that is adequate for their employees and contractors.

DOCUMENTATION EXAMPLES

Training documentation may include:

- Records of training needs analysis for curriculum development,
- Curricula for initial and refresher training,
- Training schedules and records of all completed training, and
- Procedures for revising training materials.

Agencies may choose to define competencies necessary to perform different job roles. A competency:

- Combines the knowledge, skills, and abilities required to effectively fulfill job roles and functions;
- May cross various job roles and functions;
- May be useful as an employee training topic; and
- Can be developed from a variety of sources.

7.2 Safety Communication

§ 673.29(b) – A transit agency must communicate safety and safety performance information throughout the agency’s organization that, at a minimum, conveys information on hazards and safety risks relevant to employees’ roles and responsibilities and informs employees of safety actions taken in response to reports submitted through an employee safety reporting program.

Each transit agency should ensure that all personnel are aware of information relevant to their safety-related roles and responsibilities. At a minimum, a transit agency must share information about hazards and safety risks, and what actions are taken in response to reports submitted through the employee safety reporting program. Transit agencies also may provide explanations of changes to policies, activities, or procedures. The FTA expects that each transit agency will establish the means and mechanisms for effective safety communication based on its organization, structure, and size of operations.

DOCUMENTATION EXAMPLES

Documentation of safety communication may include the following details:

- Objectives,
- Content,
- Target audience,
- Format,
- Frequency, and
- Ways to ensure understanding.

Questions?

If you have any questions about this document or the PTASP Template for Bus Transit, please email PTASP-TAC@dot.gov.



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