Learn. Share. Engage.

This issue of the *Biweekly Message* focuses on identifying causal factors when investigating safety events as part of the Safety Assurance section of the Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP) regulation (49 CFR § 673.27(b)(3)).

Featured Resources

New! Agency Safety Plan (ASP) Lessons Learned, Part 2: Safety Assurance and Safety Promotion Webinar (November 19, 2020):
Webinar Presentation | Webinar Recording

Safety Assurance Webinar (July 11, 2019):
Webinar Presentation | Webinar Recording

Safety Assurance ASP Section Lessons Learned (March 26, 2020):
Webinar Presentation | Webinar Recording

The Sample ASP for Small Public Transportation Providers (page 13) and the Sample ASP for Bus Transit Providers (pages 28–31) offer sample content for the safety event investigations section of an ASP.

Developing a Detailed Causal Taxonomy for Transit Safety Events, a presentation from the 2018 State Safety Oversight Workshop, gives agencies detailed descriptions of the different categories of causal factors of safety events.

Developing a Detailed Causal Taxonomy for Transit Safety Events provides a taxonomy of categories for causal factors.

The Sample List of Documented Safety Risk Management and Safety Assurance Process Elements is a fillable checklist of key processes and activities that may help in ASP development.

Access the entire resource library by visiting FTA's PTASP Technical Assistance Center website.

Need Assistance?

Contact the PTASP **Technical Assistance Center (TAC)** to speak with a specialist today!

✉ PTASP-TAC@dot.gov

☎ 1-87 PTASP-AID
1 (877) 827-7243

9 a.m. to 8 p.m. EST, M-F

Contact the TAC for **one-on-one technical sessions** to help with your ASP.

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

FTA encourages transit agencies to stay informed and prepared for protecting personnel and passengers against COVID-19. For more information, visit FTA's COVID-19 web page.

Upcoming Events

Transitioning to ASP Implementation Webinar

When: Thursday, December 17, 2-3:30 p.m. EST

Register Here

Q & A Highlights

Question 1:

How much detail on casual factors should be included in our ASP?

FTA Response:

In your ASP, consider describing or referencing documentation that describes how your agency determines causal factors not only of Accidents, but Incidents and Occurrences too. For example, this documentation could include categories such as:

- Organizational (the elements of an agency's management, policies, and procedures that contributed to the safety event).
- Equipment and infrastructure (the failures in the functioning of vehicles or other technological components of the transit system that contributed to a safety event).
- Environmental (the characteristics of the environment in which the people and vehicles were operating that contributed to the safety event).
- Outside (the larger context in which the transit agency is operating, where factors outside the control of the agency contributed to the safety event).
- Human (the errors, rule violations, and the person type involved — such as transit workers, customers, or the general public).

> ⚙
> ### ASP Tip
> ## Listing Causal Factors
> Consider listing or describing specific categories of causal factors that the agency reviews or considers as part of its investigation process.

Question 2:

Once our agency has identified possible causal factors for a safety event, what do we do with that information?

FTA Response:

The causal factors (e.g., latent organizational factors) you identified should then be entered back into your Safety Risk Management process as **hazards** or reviewed as part of assumptions you may have made regarding existing safety risk mitigations. For hazards, you will assess the potential consequences of these hazards to identify whether you need to proactively address and mitigate the consequences. Mitigating the potential consequences of these hazards may help you prevent the likelihood of a similar event occurring or may reduce the severity of the consequences of future similar events.

Question 3:

What are some examples of organizational factors?

FTA Response:

Organizational factors can include a transit agency's actions or inactions that increase safety risk. Some examples of organizational factors that may increase safety risk include the following:

- Supervisory decisions that could have contributed to the event (such as inadequate supervision or failure to correct problems).
- Outdated or ineffective policies or procedures.
- Organizational decisions regarding allocation, management, or maintenance of resources.
- Conflicts between service delivery and safety goals.
- Poor planning and communication.
- Poor recruitment, selection, and staffing.
- Deficiencies in training.

(See also Developing a Detailed Causal Taxonomy for Transit Safety Events and the presentation Developing a Detailed Causal Taxonomy for Transit Safety Events.)

Get Involved with the PTASP Community of Practice

We want to hear from you! Below are two of many topics for discussion. Start the conversation today to support your ASP development and learn from your peers.

- **If your agency submitted a draft ASP to the TAC for review, what was the most valuable feedback you received?**

- **How do you monitor information reported through your internal safety reporting programs, besides the Employee Safety Reporting Program?**