



## Learn. Share. Engage.

This issue of the Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP) Technical Assistance Center (TAC) Update focuses on identifying causal factors in safety event investigations.

## Featured Resources

**[New! Causal Factors in Safety Investigations \(Part 1\): Causal Factors and Safety Management Systems:](#)**  
Explains what causal and contributing factors are and what their roles are in Safety Risk Management, Safety Assurance, and Safety Promotion.

**[Rail Transit Agency Accident Investigations—Background Research \(Report 0221\):](#)** Provides a comprehensive examination of each Safety Management System (SMS) element to broaden understanding of how components complement each other and how agencies can use SMS to support accident investigations.

**[Effective Practices in Performing Rail Transit Accident Investigations \(Report 0203\):](#)** Documents rail transit practices for performing investigations.

**[Effective Practices in Bus Transit Accident Investigations \(Report 0204\):](#)** Documents bus transit practices for performing investigations.

**[Safety Event Investigation in an SMS:](#)** Provides transit agencies and States with sample approaches to investigating safety events in an SMS.

**[Sample Bus Transit Provider Agency Safety Plan:](#)** Includes example safety event investigation procedures and activities to identify causal factors.

Access the entire TAC Resource Library by visiting FTA's [PTASP TAC website](#).

### Need Assistance?

Contact the PTASP TAC at



[PTASP-TAC@dot.gov](mailto:PTASP-TAC@dot.gov)



1-877 PTASP-AID  
1 (877) 827-7243



Contact the TAC for **one-on-one technical sessions** for ASP development and implementation support and voluntary Agency Safety Plan (ASP) reviews.

### Bipartisan Infrastructure Law

*Have questions about the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law? Email [FTA-IIJA@dot.gov](mailto:FTA-IIJA@dot.gov).*

*See also the [Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Changes to PTASP Requirements Webinar](#) and [PTASP FAQs for New Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Requirements](#).*

### Upcoming Webinar

**[Tools for Implementing a Comprehensive Safety Training Plan](#)**

When: May 2023

Registration Coming Soon



## Q & A Highlights

### Question 1:

What is the PTASP definition of a “safety event” for a motor bus or demand response transit system?

#### FTA Response:

The PTASP regulation defines an [event](#) as “any accident, incident, or occurrence.” The regulation also defines [accident](#), [incident](#), and [occurrence](#). These definitions pertain to the Safety Assurance requirement at [§ 673.27\(b\)\(3\)](#) that transit agencies must establish activities to conduct investigations of safety events to identify causal factors.

### Question 2:

What are some examples of causal factors?

#### FTA Response:

Causal factors include key actions, situations, or conditions that led to an event’s occurrence.

Some examples of causal factors include:

- Organizational factors: Elements of the transit agency’s management, policies, and procedures.
- Equipment and infrastructure factors: Vehicle or other technological component failures or issues.
- Environmental factors: Characteristics of the environment in which the people and vehicles were operating.
- Outside factors: Larger context in which the transit agency is operating, where factors are outside the control of the agency.
- Human factors: Errors, rule violations, and characteristics of the people involved.

*The contents of this document do not have the force and effect of law and are not meant to bind the public in any way. This document is intended only to provide clarity to the public regarding existing requirements under the law or agency policies. Grantees and subgrantees should refer to FTA’s statutes and regulations for applicable requirements.*

### ASP Directory

The [Agency Safety Plan Directory](#) is available in the TAC Resource Library. Transit agencies can use these publicly available ASPs as a resource to help with their own ASPs.

*If you would like to add your ASP to the ASP directory, please contact [PTASP-TAC@dot.gov](mailto:PTASP-TAC@dot.gov).*

FTA has not assessed whether any of the plans meet applicable statutory or regulatory requirements. This directory is provided for technical assistance only.