



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Transit Administration

**Transportation Asset Management
Condition Assessment & Guideway Performance Restriction
Webinar**

Questions and Answers

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Note: The responses in this document may differ from the responses that were provided during the webinars by FTA staff members. FTA revised some responses for clarity.

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System and Asset Definitions

Facilities

1. If the passenger station does not have fare collection, should we consider it an administration facility?

If you have passengers that are boarding transit vehicle at that facility, it is still considered a passenger station.

2. How would we report a storage building, i.e. where buses are parked at night?

This would be reported as a general maintenance facility.

3. How do we report our transit fueling service stations?

Transit fueling stations would be reported as general maintenance facilities and are only reportable if the agency has full or partial capital responsibility.

4. If we leased space from a municipality would we still have to do a facility rating?

An asset inventory is required for all passenger stations regardless of capital responsibility. An asset inventory is required for administrative and maintenance facilities for which an agency has full or partial capital responsibility. Condition assessments are only required for a facility (passenger, parking, administrative and maintenance) for which you have full or partial capital responsibility.

5. We conduct our maintenance operations out of a facility that is partly owned by the transit agency and partly owned by the County Road Department. How would we complete the facility assessment and report the condition in this situation?

If necessary, you may need to coordinate with the joint owner to satisfy the requirement for condition assessments. You would be required to report the facility to the inventory indicating your capital responsibility as a percentage. You would also be required to report a condition assessment once every 3 years. You would also report performance measure targets annually.

6. We have 10 different taxi cab companies providing service. Would all 600 vehicles in the various contractor inventories be part of the TAM? Would condition assessment be necessary?

The NTD requests information on a 'representative vehicle' for contractor owned vehicles. A condition assessment for revenue vehicles is not required to be reported to the NTD. The performance measure used for rolling stock is a useful life benchmark (ULB). A useful life benchmark is only required for fleets for which you have full or partial capital responsibility. If you contract service out but you provide all the assets to the contractor, then you need to report performance measure targets for those assets.

Rail

7. Fixed guideway is defined as a facility that uses and occupies separate ROW or rail for the exclusive use of public transportation. By this definition, we have one railroad line out of eleven – the rest of our lines have freight traffic. How do we reconcile?

The FTA follows the definition of 'fixed guideway' set forth in the FAST Act.

Fixed Guideway – The term fixed guideway means a public transportation facility –

- (a) Using and occupying a separate right-of-way for the exclusive use of public transportation;
- (b) Using rail
- (c) Using a fixed catenary system
- (d) For a passenger ferry system
- (e) For a bus rapid transit system

Thus, all of the rail lines mentioned qualify as public transportation.

8. Are rail fixed guideways considered Tier I or Tier II?

All rail systems are automatically considered to be Tier I. Non-rail fixed guideway systems (ferry or BRT) may be either Tier I or Tier II based on the thresholds for the definitions of Tier I and Tier II in the TAM final rule.

9. Are HOV lanes reportable as fixed guideway?

HOV lanes are reportable as fixed guideway to the NTD. However, agencies are not required to report on performance restrictions for non-rail guideways as per the final TAM rule.

10. What is considered a "high intensity busway"?

A high-intensity busway is an HOV Lane that is reportable to the NTD for purposes of the High Intensity Motor Bus tier of the State of Good Repair Formula Grants Program apportionment.

11. Is the safe stopping distance of a particular track considered to be part of the design speed?

The design speed of a track section is inclusive of speed reductions necessary to accommodate safe operations over the original design of the track. For example, if the speed is reduced entering a blind curve to ensure safe operations due to the track design, this reduction in speed can be considered to be the original design speed.

Facility Condition Assessment

12. Is the weighted average based on square footage per facility?

No, the weighted average aggregation approach is based on replacement cost. The weighted average is for assessing the components and the sub components of a facility in order to get one overall condition assessment score.

13. If I have multiple HVAC's in a particular facility, do they each get rated and captured separately? Are they then aggregated as one number?

The guidance allows considerable flexibility on this point. An agency may choose to combine multiple HVAC units into one HVAC system component with one condition rating or they may choose to treat each HVAC system as a separate component with its own condition rating.

14. On Slide 12 of your Presentation, regarding the "Marginal" rating notes for system: do you envision safety professionals on staff assisting condition assessments?

Agencies may task any qualified staff with conducting condition assessments of their facilities. In some cases, this may include safety professionals. FTA does not intend to provide specific recommendations on staffing levels or certification.

15. How recent does the facility assessment have to be, within how many years?

A condition assessment is required once every 3 years. The first condition assessments are reportable in NTD report year 18. FTA is requiring that a condition assessment is reported for at least 1/3 of an agency's facilities in FY18, at least 1/3 in FY19 and the remaining in FY20. A facility would be required to have an updated condition assessment every 3 years.

16. If you have two buildings on a site, one administration and one maintenance, is one overall condition assessment submitted to NTD or one for each building?

You would submit one assessment for each building – if the buildings are connected, you submit a single condition assessment.

17. Should agencies be developing a cost estimate for assets which have a rating 2 or below?

FTA does not require agencies to report on replacement cost in the NTD asset inventory or as a part of their TAM plan. However, an agency may find it prudent to create a replacement cost estimate to inform their capital planning process.

Rail Fixed Guideway Performance Restrictions

18. With regard to the performance restrictions, why not also request a “snapshot” at 5:00 p.m. for the performance measure?

FTA will require a single snapshot, but there are a number of compromises incorporated into this decision. FTA is suggesting the snapshot be taken the first Wednesday of the month at 9:00 AM. This is meant to emulate the AM peak.

19. Our commuter rail operates from 5:00 to 8:00 AM - should we measure the performance restrictions in place during the morning rush at, say, 7:30?

Right now FTA does not have a suggestion on how to adjust the measure for instances where an agency does not operate service at all at 9:00 AM on the first Wednesday of the month.

20. Why are performance restrictions for fixed guideway being measured on design speed rather than full service speed? Does that mean if the guideway speed was originally designed to run at 50 miles per hour, but there was never any intention to run it at speeds greater than 30, that our guideways are always under speed restriction?

The amount of your track under speed restriction is intended to serve as a proxy for the track's state of good repair – state of good repair is driven more by design speed than your own operating environment. If the track is able to accommodate your operating environment and there aren't any performance restrictions on it, that is you can always go 30 miles an hour or faster as needed, then it is unlikely you have a state of good repair issue. In the case where you do not know the intended design speed, it may be possible to use instead your standard scheduled speed. The measure of performance restrictions is meant to capture the point at which the guideway begins to degrade and fall short of its intended use.

21. Are the performance restrictions based solely on the conditions of the guideway? Or could performance restrictions due to other service factors be included as well, such as congestion on the tracks?

The Infrastructure performance measure includes slowzones in the calculation regardless of the cause, such as condition, service factors, congestion etc, or duration of the performance restriction.

22. Are performance restrictions related to special events reportable?

Yes – all performance restrictions in place at 9 AM on the first Wednesday of each month are reportable, regardless of cause or duration. The one caveat to this is in the case of weather events or heat: if the entire system is under performance restrictions, you would not be required to report, unless the performance restriction is limited to a specific section or sections of track

23. Are BRT dedicated bus lanes in roadway considered performance restricted?

To maintain consistency with the provisions of the final Transit Asset Management (TAM) rule, agencies are only required to report performance restrictions for rail guideway. However, the Infrastructure guidebook can be used to assess your BRT at your discretion.

24. At what level are the performance restrictions reported monthly: total or disaggregated by segment?

The total fixed guideway directional route miles under performance restriction is required for each rail mode for each month of the year, with a yearly average per rail mode reported with the annual NTD reporting

Reporting Methods

25. Slide 14 identified a \$10k threshold for component equipment. Why is this different than the \$50k threshold of the TAM Final Rule?

The \$50,000 threshold identified in TAM final rule pertains to the equipment category of assets that should be included in the TAM inventory. The Facility Condition Assessment Guidebook is intended to provide the direction necessary for an agency to conduct a condition assessment of their facilities. The \$10K threshold listed for component equipment in the guidebook is intended to help agencies identify components to be considered to inform the overall condition assessment of the facility.

FTA does not require reporting on the condition of each facility component; an agency must only provide a condition rating for the entire facility. Neither does FTA require each facility component to be listed in the asset inventory. Please note listing as individual units or a system of components is determined by how the items are listed in the agency's capital plan.

26. Trains are often diverted from a northbound track to a southbound track while a section of track is being serviced. Do these situations need to be factored into the directional route mile calculation?

Directional route miles only taken into consideration the direction of service – it does not matter if a train is operating on what is normally a southbound track, the measure is with respect to the direction actually being traveled.

27. On slide 21 covering data requirements, which includes directional route miles, is that for fixed guideway only?

Directional route miles include all route miles travelled by a vehicle. Fixed Guideway Route Miles are only those travelled on fixed guideway.

28. On page 14, the example on how to measure the length of performance restrictions shows the use of multiplication, but in the explanation above the example it "recommends that the directional route mileage be divided by the number of tracks". Is this not a conflict?

The example provided on page 14 of the Performance Restrictions Guidebook is not a direct representation of the statement in the explanation above regarding a section of track with multiple tracks. The example provided in the guidebook speaks to how a performance restriction is calculated on a section of track that has service in two directions. A performance restriction on a track with service operating in both directions over a single track would count the restriction in both directions – so 1 mile of restriction on a two-way track would be recorded as 2 miles of directional route miles under performance restriction.

The statement in the text above applies to fixed guideway with multiple tracks and attempts to address how performance restrictions on a section with multiple tracks should be calculated. For example, if a 1 mile section of track has 4 tracks – two operating service northbound and two operating southbound, this represents two directional route miles – one mile north and one mile south. If a performance restriction exists on only 1 of the northbound tracks, an agency should capture this by dividing the directional route miles by the number of tracks to represent the total slow zone. So in this example, a performance restriction on only one of the northbound tracks would be captured as .5 miles under performance restriction. FTA will add an additional example to the guidebook to clarify this information.

Final Rule

29. Is this level of reporting required for each individual subrecipient facility for Section 5311 and Section 5310 and is that a final decision or can we comment on that approach?

The TAM rule and NTD reporting requirements are final. They have each followed the notice and comment process multiple times and are now published as final to the Federal Register. The asset inventory reporting requirements are the same across all recipient types. Condition and performance information also have the same requirements for all types of grant recipients, however, in most cases Section 5311 and Section 5310 recipients will be reporting as part of a group plan for TAM or as a subrecipient for NTD.

For further clarification, being subject to the TAM requirements do not necessarily make the recipient subject to NTD reporting requirements beyond those of TAM information, namely asset inventory and targets.

30. Can you define what direct capital responsibility is – does this mean purchased with federal funds?

It does not mean purchased using federal funds. Direct capital responsibility means you are responsible for the replacement of that asset. At the end of its useful life, you are the one that has to procure its replacement or you will have to fund its rehabilitation or its rebuild.

Generally, it's ownership of the asset. It's worth noting that these are applicable to assets that are used in public transportation for which you have direct capital responsibility. You do not take into consideration whether or not there is federal funding involved.

31. Can you describe examples of fare collection that would be considered part of a passenger station?

Essentially all of your fare equipment would be considered part of a passenger station: the vending machine where people purchase the fare cards, your turnstiles, other fare machines, etc.

32. How do performance measures relate to state of good repair?

Performance measures are an approximation for a state of good repair. The measures are actionable in that a transit agency could potentially use funding to influence the achievement of their performance targets, which reflects both a change in condition and actual state of good repair.

33. Can you go over setting targets for facilities?

You must set initial targets by January 1, 2017 FTA is very aware of the fact that the information and data we have suggested as part of the process for setting your targets will not be in place at that time.

Therefore, the targets that you set in January are not required to be tied to those data requirements.

Your 2018 targets should be tied to your condition assessments, and your TAM plan, but since the targets for 2017 are in absence of those data sources, we are not expecting them to be based off of those.

Further, we anticipate that there will be fluctuation in the targets from those set during these first three months to your first annual baseline target, which is based upon your TAM plan, your condition assessments.

34. Can you elaborate on expected FTA oversight measures with TAM? Particularly in regards to the triennial review and special reviews or audits.

We expect that the requirements identified in the TAM final rule will be verified through the triennial and state management review process.

The TAM Rule is going to become a condition of FTA grant making, just like any of our other requirements. So it will be incorporated into our certifications and assurances, and it will also be incorporated into trends and reviews.

35. If a Section 5310 and Section 5307 both share a maintenance facility, do both report?

Each agency would report the maintenance facility in the inventory and indicate their percentage of capital responsibility. If an agency has no capital responsibility for the facility, they are not required to report a condition assessment.

36. Clarify the thinking in deciding to drop replacement costs in NTD reporting. Will FTA be employing its own assumed replacement cost(s) for each facility in sizing the total funding need?

FTA removed the requirement to provide replacement cost information in response to industry concerns that providing this information would be a significant burden on reporters. FTA will continue to estimate replacement cost information through the Transit Economic Requirement Model.

37. If the current transit facility was built with local funds, not FTA, would this reporting still be required?

All facilities used in the provision of public transportation are reportable, regardless of funding source.

NTD Inventory

38. The City owns and operates a fleet maintenance and repair facility that includes maintenance and repairs of our transit buses. Does this facility need to be reported and assessed?

This facility is reportable if the agency has full or partial capital responsibility for the facility.

39. When does NTD condition reporting begin? If year ended June 30, is it possible to defer, and if so, how?

Condition assessment reporting does not begin until report year 2018. We are asking for one third of your facilities to have a condition assessment in year 1, so that would be 2018, at least one third in year 2, that would be 2019, and the final third in 2020. If you would like to do all of your facilities in 2018, that's great. The three year cycle begins whenever you most recently completed a full condition assessment. If you do them all in year 1, then in year 3 you would do another condition assessment of all of your facilities.

40. We only have to report condition on facilities, but we have to capture condition on all assets in our TAM Plan such as rolling stock, etc. Is that correct?

Yes. You must conduct condition assessments for all asset categories in your TAM plan.

41. I have a transfer center that has an office to sell tickets and provide information but it does not have an enclosed area for passengers. Do I need to conduct a condition assessment?

Additional detail may be needed to confirm, but as described, this would be reportable to the inventory either as a passenger facility or an administrative facility. Assuming your agency has full or partial capital responsibility; this facility would also need to have a condition assessment reported to the NTD.