



U.S. Department of
Transportation

Federal Transit
Administration



Keeping Safety on Track

Building New Partnerships in Safety



Federal Transit Administration
Office of Safety and Security

<http://transit-safety.volpe.dot.gov>
202.366.2896



Keeping Safety on Track

Building New Partnerships in Safety

“Early integration of system safety concepts in the planning, design, and construction of major capital projects directly supports the Department of Transportation’s number one strategic goal by working toward eliminating all transportation-related deaths, injuries, and property damage.”

- Nuria I. Fernandez, Acting Administrator, Federal Transit Administration

BACKGROUND

The Federal Transit Administration provides New Starts funding for the design, construction, and start-up of new rail fixed guideway systems and extensions to existing systems. Nationwide, over 190 projects have been authorized under the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century, to compete for Federal Transit Administration New Starts funds. With Federal Transit Administration funding presently at record levels, there has never been a greater need to integrate system safety concepts early in the project development process.

The Federal Transit Administration’s Office of Safety and Security manages the State Safety Oversight Program (49 CFR Part 659). Established in 1997, this program requires the incorporation of *system safety and security concepts* into rail fixed guideway systems. As of May 2000, 22 State Safety Oversight Agencies have been designated to implement the system safety and security requirements for 35 rail fixed guideway systems. Rapid expansion of existing rail fixed guideway systems and the growth in New Starts projects creates new challenges for system safety and security. To address these challenges, the Federal Transit Administration is committed to working with State Safety Oversight Agencies to implement Part 659 requirements, ensuring that system safety and security are properly addressed during the project development phases.

SYSTEM SAFETY IN ALL PHASES OF PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

As highlighted in its *Safety Action Plan* (March 2000), the Federal Transit Administration recommends integrating system safety and security concepts into all phases of project development: planning, design, construction, and start-up.

Early incorporation of system safety and security concepts in project development yields many benefits. For example, it brings:

- Reduction of financially damaging losses associated with accidents and incidents;
- Reduction of hazards during operations and maintenance activities;
- Documented records of activities to identify and control hazards;
- Promotion of effective and efficient use of resources;
- Improved functionality of system design;
- Reduction in work-arounds and change orders during construction.

SAFETY CERTIFICATION

Incorporation of safety is traditionally accomplished through the ***safety certification process***. The goal of the safety certification process is to confirm that all practical steps have been taken to optimize the operational safety of the rail fixed guideway system before, during, and after construction.

- Safety certification ensures that a high level of safety and security is designed into the rail fixed guideway systems;
- Safety certification requires a partnership among the rail fixed guideway system, State Safety Oversight Agency, and the Federal Transit Administration;
- Each agency must play a role in requiring, reviewing, and approving the incorporation of system safety into all phases of project development.

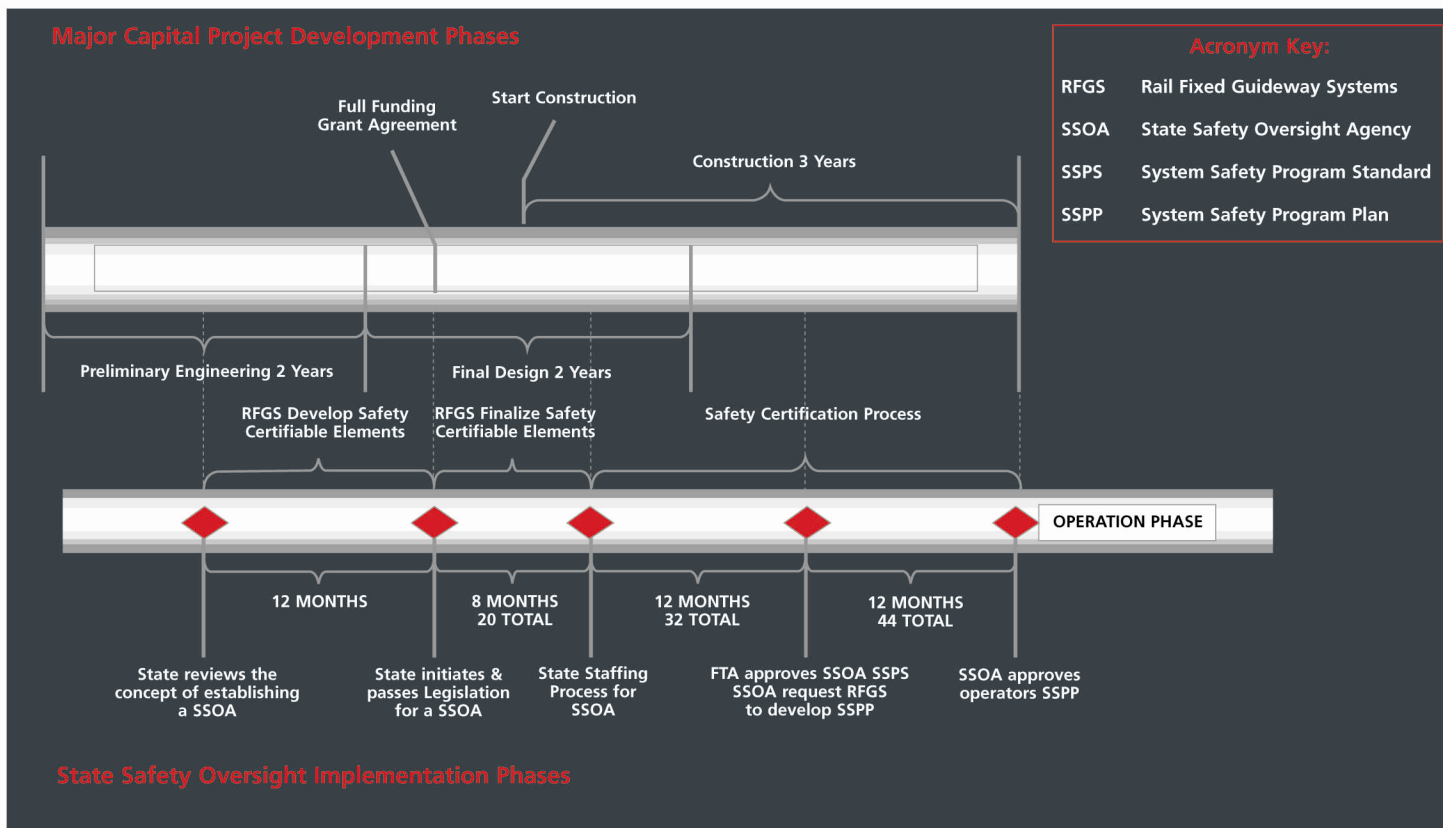
STATES WITH NEW STARTS

States with existing State Safety Oversight Agencies are actively addressing the inclusion of system safety and security concepts for extensions and modifications to rail fixed guideway systems already in their programs. These agencies review drawings, plans, and procedures, and formally approve system safety and security program plans.

In order for states without existing State Safety Oversight Agencies to effectively support system safety and security integration during the development process, the Federal Transit Administration recommends that:

- A State Safety Oversight Agency be designated no later than during the *preliminary engineering phase*;
- State Safety Oversight Agencies' roles and responsibilities be clearly defined and supported with appropriate resources;
- State Safety Oversight Agencies establish effective policies for coordinating with the rail fixed guideway system and Federal Transit Administration.

The following diagram depicts an overlay of the major capital project development phases and the phases necessary to implement an effective State Safety Oversight Program:



BUILDING NEW PARTNERSHIPS IN SAFETY

The Federal Transit Administration's Office of Safety and Security is committed to working with all organizations involved in the development of rail fixed guideway systems. The Federal Transit Administration's commitment is to:

- Partner with the American Public Transportation Association in revising its rail safety guidelines;
- Proactively work with organizations that are developing new rail fixed guideway systems;
- Develop training and technical assistance that will assist the industry in maximizing system safety programs;
- Integrate the State Safety Oversight Program with other agency safety and oversight activities.

FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The Federal Transit Administration's Office of Safety and Security promotes the incorporation of system safety and security during the early phases of project development. The Office provides technical assistance, covering such topics as system safety principles, hazard analysis, safety certification, Part 659 requirements, and industry best practices. This assistance is available in the form of:

- State Safety Oversight Audit Program: (202-366-0197) (<http://www.fta.dot.gov>)
- Training from the Transportation Safety Institute: (405-954-3682) (<http://www.tsi.dot.gov>)
- Training from the National Transit Institute (Rutgers): (732-932-1700) (<http://policy.rutgers.edu/ntil>)
- Guidelines and newsletters published by the Federal Transit Administration and distributed through its safety and security clearinghouse: (617-494-2108) (<http://transit-safety.volpe.dot.gov>)
- Federal Transit Administration Safety and Security Web site: (<http://transit-safety.volpe.dot.gov>)

Additional information regarding Federal Transit Administration programs can be obtained by contacting the Office of Safety and Security at 202-366-2896.

Sharing information between states is a valuable tool to State Safety Oversight Program implementation, ongoing oversight issues, and concerns. Contact information for State Safety Oversight Agencies is listed below:

State Safety Oversight Agency Phone Numbers

California Public Utilities Commission	415-703-4142
Colorado Public Utilities Commission	303-894-2855
Delaware River Port Authority	856-968-2091
Tri-State Oversight Committee (Washington, D.C., Maryland, and Virginia)	202-671-0537
Florida Department of Transportation	850-414-4525
Georgia Department of Transportation	404-651-9201
Illinois Regional Transportation Authority	312-917-0771
Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development	225-379-1928
Maryland Department of Transportation	410-865-1120
Massachusetts Department of Telecommunications and Energy	617-305-3559
Michigan Department of Consumer and Industry Services	517-373-7246
Missouri Department of Economic Development	573-751-7122
New Jersey Department of Transportation	609-292-6893
New York Public Transportation Safety Board	518-457-6500
Ohio Department of Transportation	614-466-8957
Oregon Department of Transportation	503-986-4094
Pennsylvania Department of Transportation	717-787-1207
Tennessee Department of Transportation	615-253-1042
Texas Department of Transportation	512-416-2833
Utah Department of Transportation	801-965-4284
Washington Department of Transportation	360-705-7912
Wisconsin Department of Transportation	608-266-3662

“Integrating safety into the *planning, design, construction, and operations for New Starts, extensions, and modifications to the system to rail fixed guideway systems* is a priority for this office and will result in enhanced transit safety for the riding public.”

- Nuria I. Fernandez, Acting Administrator, Federal Transit Administration