



Transit Safety and Oversight Spotlight

Federal Transit Administration
Office of Transit Safety and Oversight

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Message from the Acting Associate Administrator

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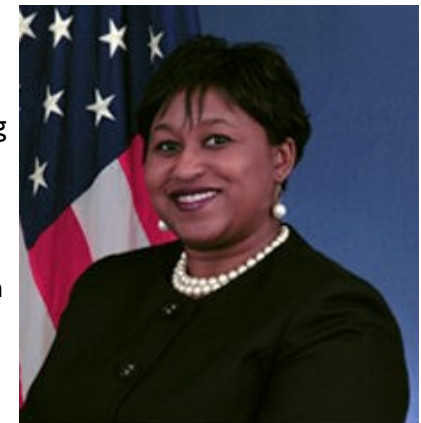
Dear Transit Colleagues,

Last month, I attended FTA's State Safety Oversight (SSO) Program Managers Training Workshop in Bethesda, Maryland. I met some of the SSO Program Managers working toward certification of their SSO programs by the April 15, 2019 deadline, as well as some who have already met this important milestone. The event afforded SSO personnel an opportunity to learn from their peers who are going through the same process. I enjoyed observing firsthand this group's dedication to improving the safety of our nation's rail transit systems.

Significant certification progress has been made since our last workshop in October 2017 when just two states had obtained certification. As of June 13, 14 out of 30 states have been [certified](#). While we are close to the halfway mark, there is still work to be done. To that end, states that have not yet submitted certification applications took advantage of the opportunity to meet with FTA while at the workshop to discuss their path forward.

FTA Acting Administrator K. Jane Williams announced at the workshop that FTA will postpone any SSO audits that were planned for this calendar year. An audit would only duplicate efforts for those states that have undergone the certification process and those that are focused on 674 certification. We are committed to reducing burdens on our state and local partners, and this is one step we're taking to help.

Sincerely,
Henrika Buchanan



Henrika Buchanan, Acting Associate Administrator for Transit Safety and Oversight

Upcoming Safety Training

The FTA sponsors several safety training courses, including those listed below. The [complete schedule](#) of training courses offered in FY2018 is available on FTA's safety website. Please contact the FTA-sponsored [Transportation Safety Institute \(TSI\)](#) at (405) 954-3682 for safety training registration and course information. Individuals may contact [Dakisha Spratling](#) or [Rhoderick Ramsey](#) to request an [Individual Training Plan](#) (ITP). Participants in the Interim Provisions have three years to complete the requirements in their ITP.

Courses Required by the Interim Provisions (RAIL)*		
Effectively Managing Transit Emergencies	Seattle, WA Houston, TX Boston, MA	July 10-13 July 31-Aug. 3 Sept. 18-21
Transit Rail System Safety	Minneapolis, MN Atlanta, GA	June 25-29 Aug. 27-31
Transit System Security	Ft. Worth, TX Cleveland, OH New Orleans, LA San Francisco, CA Boston, MA Honolulu, HI Landover, MD	June 25-29 July 9-13 July 16-20 Aug. 6-10 Aug. 20-24 Sept. 10-14 Sept. 17-21
Transit Rail Incident Investigation	Portland, OR	Aug. 6-10
SMS Awareness (eLearning)	Go to tsi.dot.gov	Available 24/7
SMS Safety Assurance	Virtual-Live Training	July 19 Aug. 20 Sept. 13
SMS Principles for Transit	Arlington, VA Newark, NJ	July 24-26 Sept. 24-26

*Applies to FTA, SSOA, and rail transit agency personnel/contractors who conduct safety audits and examinations of public transportation systems not subject to Federal Railroad Administration regulation, as well as rail transit system employees who are directly responsible for safety oversight.

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Training, cont. from pg. 2

Additional Courses Available in FY2018		
Bus & Rail Courses (In-Person)		
Advanced Rail Incident Investigation	Chicago, IL	Sept. 10-14
Crime Prevention through Environmental Design	Salt Lake City, UT	Sept. 5-6
Instructor's Course for Transit Trainers	Las Vegas, NV Owensboro, KY Seattle, WA	July 16-20 Aug. 13-17 Sept. 17-21
Reasonable Suspicion and Post-Accident Testing Determination Seminar	Houston, TX	Aug. 17
Substance Abuse Management and Program Compliance	Richland, WA Houston, TX	July 17-19 Aug. 14-16
Transit Safety & Security Audit Course	Philadelphia, PA	Aug. 15-17
eLearning Courses (Web-Based)		
Curbing Transit Employee Distracted Driving	Go to tsi.dot.gov	Available 24/7
Fatigue and Sleep Apnea Awareness for Transit Employees	Go to tsi.dot.gov	Available 24/7
Rail Nomenclature	Go to tsi.dot.gov	Available 24/7
Transit Asset Management Training: Calculating Performance Measures and Setting Targets	Go to tsi.dot.gov	Available 24/7
Bus Nomenclature	Go to tsi.dot.gov	Available 24/7

Voluntary Interim Provisions Courses (BUS)		
Fundamentals of Bus Collision Investigation	Clemson, SC Seattle, WA Spokane, WA	June 25-29 Aug. 13-17 Sept. 17-21
Transit Bus System Safety	Denton, TX Boston, MA San Diego, CA	July 9-13 July 30-Aug 3 Aug. 27-31
Advanced Problems in Bus Collision Investigation	Landover, MD	July 16-20

State Safety Oversight Workshop Focuses on Certification

State Safety Oversight (SSO) personnel representing all 30 states with rail transit gathered in Bethesda, Maryland, for FTA's 2018 SSO Program Managers Training Workshop from May 15-17. The workshop covered various topics in rail transit safety and emphasized the upcoming April 15, 2019 certification deadline, with a focus on operating as a 674-certified SSO program. Workshop presentations can be found on [FTA's website](#).

Pictured below, left to right, top to bottom: FTA Acting Administrator K. Jane Williams welcomes participants and announces the certification of Maryland's SSO program; American Public Transportation Association President/CEO Paul Skoutelas discusses safety culture; Jane Terry, Senior Director of Government Affairs from the National Safety Council discusses transit's role in eliminating preventable deaths; Office of Transit Safety and Oversight (TSO) Acting Associate Administrator Henrika Buchanan describes TSO's safety priorities for the coming months; FTA SSO Program Manager Joe Powell hosts SSO Jeopardy; the National Transportation Safety Board's (NTSB) Dana Sanzo, Deputy Chief, Railroad Division, and Ruben Payan, Electrical Engineer, discuss NTSB accident investigations; and workshop participants take part in a Safety Management System training session conducted by FTA staff.



Q&A: Certification Application Webinar for SSOAs

On April 24, FTA hosted a technical assistance webinar for State Safety Oversight (SSO) Agencies on the SSO certification application. A summary of the question and answer discussion is below. SSO Program Managers with suggestions for future webinars should contact their FTA Program Manager, or email FTASafetyStakeholder@dot.gov.

- **We submitted certification documentation. How do we know if there are any concerns with what we submitted?**

FTA SSO Program Managers provide feedback via email and during one-on-one monthly calls with the States. States should contact their FTA SSO Program Managers if they do not receive a response within seven days.

- **After we submit a certification application and it undergoes a completeness review, will we get a confirmation email? When?**

Once a State submits their application, FTA will review it and determine whether to issue an acknowledgment letter or not.

- **What does “submitted” and “under review” mean on the status table?**

If a State submits its application and has not received an official acknowledgment letter, then their status will be “submitted.” Once FTA issues an acknowledgement letter, the State’s status will change to “under review.” FTA’s goal is to certify States as quickly as possible prior to the upcoming certification deadline. States can review their workload assessments and update their technical training plans with any staffing changes to help their application pass the completeness review.

- **When a State obtains certification, when and how will FTA communicate that back to the States?**

First, the US Department of Transportation contacts the Governor of the State to announce the certification. Then, FTA contacts the State’s Secretary of Transportation or equivalent agency head, the State DOT and SSO leadership, and the SSO Program Managers. FTA also contacts the affected rail transit agency leadership. FTA sends press releases to all the State’s contacts and a notice email to FTA stakeholders.

Presentations Available from 13th Annual FTA Drug & Alcohol Program National Conference

If you were unable to attend FTA’s Drug & Alcohol Program Conference, which took place May 8-10 in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, you can see what you missed by downloading presentations from the [Drug & Alcohol Program website](#).

If you have questions about FTA’s Drug & Alcohol Program, please contact [lyon Rosario](#), FTA’s Drug and Alcohol Program Manager.

TSO Profile

Q&A with Tim Braxton, Program Analyst, Office of System Safety



Tim Braxton

How would you explain your job to someone you've never met before? I perform National Transit Database and State Safety Oversight (SSO) data analysis, which is published annually to the National Transportation Statistics Bureau of Transportation Statistics and the National Transportation Safety Board's Annual Safety of Transportation Report. In this role, I manage TSO's Safety Statistics Data Collection Program. I also manage FTA safety data projects related to performance goals and program objectives published in the DOT Conditions and Performance report. As needed, I manage the production and distribution of safety and security statistics to support the Department of Homeland Security, Transportation Security Administration (TSA) Suspicious Incidents Report, and FTA's Government Performance and Results Act reporting responsibilities.

What were you doing prior to joining FTA? I began my transportation career at the Maryland State Highway Administration in 1991. As a transportation engineer, I conducted cost-benefit analyses and safety studies as part of completing accident location study improvement reports for Candidate

Safety Improvement Locations as part of the Safety & Spot Improvement Program. I also compiled and analyzed accident information for various locations.

What led you to work in transit? My core interests have always been public safety and developing accident prevention applications, so transit safety was a natural fit.

What are some current projects or initiatives that you or your team are working on? As FTA's safety role has evolved, my duties have increased and evolved as well. Currently, I am helping to manage FTA's SSO certification and audit activities, which includes providing technical assistance and conducting time sensitive compliance reviews of SSO programs.

How do you work with people outside of the FTA? I've taken on a number of detail assignments where I was able to contribute to recommendations for Safety Management System (SMS) and data prioritization plans and practices. A recent detail assignment was as a project lead with the Federal Railroad Administration, where I helped stand up the enforcement strategy for the railroad's positive train control implementation plan. In my current role, I communicate regularly with SSO agencies, helping them with the certification process.

What are your hobbies outside of work? I mentor and tutor young adults on website design and computer application development at my church.

FTA Updates Industry on Status of Voluntary Onsite Bus Safety Reviews

On May 17, 2018, FTA sent a letter to bus agencies that had recently requested to participate in an FTA Voluntary Onsite Bus Safety Review. The letter notified requestors that FTA is currently unable to provide bus safety reviews and provided an update on other work underway to support FTA's bus operator grantees in delivering the safest service possible. This work includes leveraging lessons learned from the past decade of onsite reviews to publish a series of bus safety guides that highlight recommendations made and effective practices observed at transit agencies across the country. In addition, FTA will issue guidance materials and tools to help bus transit agencies of all sizes and types implement FTA regulatory requirements as efficiently and effectively as possible. Lastly, FTA will continue to partner with industry associations to coordinate bus safety technical assistance efforts and identify new opportunities to serve the needs of the transit bus community.

If you have questions, please contact [Paulina Orchard](#), FTA's Bus Safety Program Manager.



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**Federal Transit
Administration**

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[https://www.fta.dot.gov/regulations-and-guidance/
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