



Sample Agency Safety Plan Development, Review and Approval Timeline for RTAs and SSOAs

September 2019

Version 1



The Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan regulation at 49 C.F.R. Part 673 (Part 673) requires each rail transit agency (RTA) to develop an Agency Safety Plan (ASP) and certify that it meets Part 673 requirements by **no later than July 20, 2020**. In addition, as specified in § 673.13, and authorized in FTA’s State Safety Oversight regulation, 49 C.F.R. Part 674, the State Safety Oversight Agency (SSOA) must review and approve the RTA’s ASP, prior to the RTA’s certification of compliance to FTA. To approve the ASP, the SSOA must confirm that the RTA’s ASP meets both FTA’s Part 673 requirements and the SSOA’s Program Standard. Table 1 highlights key requirements that must be addressed by RTAs in developing ASPs and by the SSOAs in reviewing and approving them.

Rail Transit Agency	Requirements	State Safety Oversight Agency
<p><i>The RTA’s ASP must:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be signed by the Accountable Executive and approved by the Board of Directors or an Equivalent Authority (§ 673.11(a)(1)) • Document processes and activities related to Safety Management System (SMS) implementation (§ 673.11(a)(2)) • Include or reference a safety management policy statement with safety objectives, an employee safety reporting program, and authorities, responsibilities, and accountabilities for safety management (§ 673.23) • Include performance targets based on the performance measures in the National Public Transportation Safety Plan (§ 673.11(a)(3)) • Address applicable requirements in FTA’s Public Transportation Safety Program and the National Public Transportation Safety Plan (§ 673.11(a)(4)) • Establish a process and timeline for conducting an annual review and update of the ASP (§ 673.11(a)(5)) • Include or incorporate by reference an emergency preparedness and response plan or procedures (§ 673.11(a)(6)) 		<p><i>The SSOA must:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and approve the ASP (§ 674.25(b)) • Ensure that that the ASP meets the requirements at 49 U.S.C. 5329(d) (§ 674.25(b)) • Evaluate whether the ASP is consistent with all applicable regulations and the National Public Transportation Safety Plan, and complies with the Program Standard (§ 674.29(a)) • Determine whether the ASP: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Is approved by the RTA’s board of directors or equivalent entity – Sets forth a sufficiently explicit process for safety risk management, with adequate means of risk mitigation – Includes a process and timeline for an annual ASP review and update – Includes a comprehensive staff training program for operations personnel directly responsible for RTA safety – Identifies an adequately trained safety officer who reports directly to the Accountable Executive – Includes adequate methods to execute the ASP and sufficiently addresses other Part 673 requirements (§ 674.29(b))

Table 1: Key RTA and SSOA ASP Requirements



Roles and Responsibilities

As specified in § 673.11, each RTA must draft and implement its own ASP. **The SSOA may not draft the ASP for the RTA and may not collaborate with the RTA on drafting the ASP.**

The SSOA monitors the RTA's progress in developing the ASP and reviews and provides comments on draft ASP outlines, sections, and plans to ensure compliance with Part 673 and the SSOA's Program Standard. **Once the SSOA agrees that its comments have been addressed, the SSOA will approve the ASP, and oversee and enforce its implementation by the RTA, per § 674.25(b).**

While the SSOA has no role in developing the ASP, FTA recommends **active SSOA engagement in monitoring the RTA's progress in developing its ASP**. The SSOA, responsible for overseeing the RTA's transition from the 49 C.F.R. Part 659 System Safety Program Plan to the Part 673 ASP, may choose to perform status check-ins with the RTA to review progress. The SSOA also may seek out opportunities to clarify with the RTA the requirements in its Program Standard and to provide comments on draft ASP outlines, sections and plans, **ensuring there are no surprises when it is time to approve the ASP**. Active SSOA engagement in overseeing development of the ASP also will better prepare the SSOA for overseeing it, per § 674.25(b).

Illustrative Timeline with Milestones

To support RTAs and SSOAs in scheduling the review and approval process to meet the July 20, 2020 deadline, **this document provides an illustrative timeline with activities and milestones for consideration**. Use of this document is not required; it is provided as one possible approach to ensuring RTA and SSOA readiness to meet the Part 673 ASP certification deadline.

This sample timeline begins on October 1, 2019 and concludes on July 20, 2020. It presumes that the RTA completed some essential ASP development activities before October 1, 2019 and that the SSOA established its requirements for the RTA's ASP in its Program Standard. The sample timeline recommends the following two types of activities:

- **Meetings between the RTA and SSOA**, where the SSOA clarifies its Program Standard requirements and may review its comments on draft ASP outlines, sections, and plan versions. RTAs may present their draft ASP outline, sections or plan, or may confirm their understanding of the SSOA's requirements. To ensure the RTA fulfills its obligation to independently develop the ASP, meetings with the SSOA focus on the review of work previously performed by the RTA, not the development of new ASP content.
- **Written deliverables**, where the RTA provides draft ASP materials to the SSOA or the SSOA provides comments documenting the results of its review of the materials provided by the RTA.



Rail Transit Agency

Before the First Meeting

State Safety Oversight Agency

- Designate an Accountable Executive
- Designate a Chief Safety Officer (or SMS Executive) and/or SMS Implementation Lead
- Identify key stakeholder groups to include in ASP design and development
- Identify roles and responsibilities for ASP development and implementation
- Identify key staff to support ASP development and implementation

- Update the Program Standard to include all requirements and expectations for ASP development, implementation and operation

October 2019



Meeting:

- SSOA reviews Program Standard requirements for the ASP, including the process and schedule it will require to review and approve the ASP
- RTA explains its approach for writing the ASP and provides its preliminary development schedule

November 2019



Deliverable:

RTA completes draft ASP outline and ASP development approach



Meeting:

- RTA presents its draft outline and planned approach to drafting, reviewing, and finalizing the ASP
- RTA reviews its schedule and identifies opportunities for the SSOA to review and provide comments on draft ASP materials



Deliverable:

- SSOA provides feedback on the draft ASP outline



Rail Transit Agency

December 2019
– January 2020

State Safety Oversight Agency



Meeting:

SSOA and RTA meet monthly (or more frequently) for the RTA to present the content of draft ASP sections to the SSOA and for the SSOA to review its comments with the RTA



Deliverable:

- RTA delivers draft ASP sections



Deliverable:

- SSOA provides comments on draft ASP sections

February 2020



Deliverable:

- RTA delivers its first ASP draft



Deliverable:

- SSOA provides feedback on the first ASP draft

March 2020



Meeting:

- SSOA and RTA meet to discuss SSOA feedback on the first ASP draft



Deliverable:

- RTA delivers its second ASP draft



Deliverable:

- RTA delivers its approach and timeline for ASP implementation, including training and other activities



Rail Transit Agency

State Safety Oversight Agency

April 2020



Deliverable:

- SSOA provides feedback on the second ASP draft



Meeting:

- SSOA and RTA discuss SSOA feedback on the second ASP draft
- SSOA and RTA discuss SSOA initial comments on RTA approach to ASP implementation

May 2020



Deliverable:

- RTA delivers final draft ASP



Deliverable:

- SSOA provides feedback on the RTA's proposed approach for ASP implementation



Meeting:

- SSOA and RTA meet to discuss ASP implementation approach

June 2020



Meeting:

- RTA initiates its approach to ASP implementation, including training, disseminating documents and policy statements, etc.



Deliverable:

- SSOA provides feedback on the final draft ASP



Rail Transit Agency

July 2020

State Safety Oversight Agency



Deliverable:

- RTA delivers the final ASP to the Accountable Executive and Board of Directors for final approval



Deliverable:

- RTA delivers the final signed and approved ASP to the SSOA



Deliverable:

- SSOA delivers signed approval of the ASP to the RTA



Deliverable:

- RTA certifies its ASP to FTA by July 20, 2020



After July 20, 2020: The RTA carries out its ASP implementation approach. The ASP is a living document that changes as the RTA collects, analyzes, and addresses trends in data and its SMS matures. By reviewing, approving and certifying the ASP at least annually, as specified in Part 673 and Part 674, RTAs and SSOAs can ensure that ASPs:

- Match RTA activities, helping identify any instances where their practice does not match their intent
- Include changes to their hazard identification and risk analysis process based on safety event and other data
- Reflect substantial changes to the system based on risk assessments and safety mitigations or due to changes in asset inventory, condition assessments, or investment prioritization
- Reflect updates to the National Public Transportation Safety Plan and/or to FTA's Public Transportation Safety Plan, as appropriate

The RTA may also include a procedure for revising the ASP outside of the annual process. For example, the RTA may change its ASP to reflect:

- Changes to a key process, such as Safety Risk Management
- Changes to practices based on evolving resource priorities
- Changes in service delivery or requirements or to the organizational structure that could impact safety performance