



FTA's 7th Annual SSO Workshop

The 7th Annual State Safety Oversight Workshop, October 19th – 22nd, 2003, in Dallas, TX, brought together – for the first time – all major stakeholders in the rail safety oversight community. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA), Office of Safety and Security, sponsored the event which included representatives from state oversight agencies, rail transit agencies, FTA regional and headquarter offices, and key officials from the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), and the Transportation Security Administration (TSA).

The Workshop was hosted by the Texas Department of Transportation and supported by the Dallas Area Rapid Transit (DART) System. Representatives from 22 of the 28 (22 existing and 6 new states) state oversight agencies participated in the event; four of the state oversight agencies represented were newly designated agencies. In the first year of rail transit agency participation, 21 agencies of the 47 (37 existing and 10 new starts) invited were represented at the Workshop. Several attendees convened on Sunday to tour the DART system preceding the start of the formal Annual Workshop Sessions.

This year's Workshop marked the introduction of training for state

officials, as FTA conducted a special session on the safety certification process. FTA began the session by providing an overview of the safety certification process, based on its *Handbook for Transit Safety and Security Certification*. The remainder of the Monday session included presentations by Workshop attendees outlining their agency's experiences implementing the certification process. The information shared during this session's discussion was valuable for all participating agencies.

Safety managers from the nation's rail transit agencies joined the Workshop on Tuesday, October 21st. The 2nd day of the Workshop focused on FTA safety and security initiatives planned and currently underway including fatigue management, the Drug and Alcohol Program, and FTA's Top 20 Security Action Items and website. The program for Wednesday, October 22nd included presentations and open discussions on the Internal Safety Audit Process as well as a presentation of the Federal Railroad Administration waiver process, as it pertains to state safety oversight.

The 7th Annual Workshop provided a valuable opportunity for FTA, state oversight agencies, rail transit agencies, and the other participating agencies, such as NTSB, FRA, and

TSA. Aside from providing attendees with educational presentations, the Workshop connected agencies in a manner that encouraged the transfer of helpful information such as best practices and reference materials as well as providing FTA with valuable input from SSO community members.

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SSO Community

As reported to FTA in 2003, 22 State oversight agencies implemented 49 CFR Part 659 requirements for 37 rail transit agencies, including 12 heavy rail systems, 26 light rail systems, and 9 other rail systems (4 automated guideway / monorail systems, 4 inclined plane systems and 1 cable car system).

FTA Region	State	SOA	Agency	RFGS	Mode
1	MA	DTE	Department of Telecommunication & Energy	Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority	HR, LR
				Hudson-Bergen Light Rail System	LR
2	NJ	NJDOT	New Jersey Department of Transportation	New Jersey Transit	LR
				Port Authority Transit Corporation	HR
	NY	PTSB	New York Public Transportation Safety Board	New York City Transit	HR
				Niagara Frontier Transit Authority	LR
3	DC/VA/MD	TOC	Tri-State Oversight Committee	Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority	HR
	MD	MDOT	Maryland Department of Transportation	Maryland Transit Administration	HR, LR
	PA	PennDOT	Pennsylvania Department of Transportation	Southeastern Pennsylvania Transit Authority	HR, LR
				Port Authority of Allegheny County	LR, IP, IP
Cambria County Transit Authority	IP				
4	FL	FDOT	Florida Department of Transportation	Metro-Dade Transit Authority	HR, AG
				Jacksonville Transportation Authority	AG
				Hillsborough Area Regional Transit	LR
	GA	GDOT	Georgia Department of Transportation	Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority	HR
	TN	TDOT	Tennessee Department of Transportation	Chattanooga Area Rapid Transit Authority	IP
				Memphis Area Transit Authority	LR
5	IL	RTA	Regional Transit Authority	Chicago Transit Authority	HR
	MI	CIS	Michigan Department of Consumer & Industry Services	Detroit People Mover	AG
				Detroit Downtown Trolley	LR
	OH	ODOT	Ohio Department of Transportation	Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority	HR, LR
WI	WisDOT	Wisconsin Department of Transportation	Kenosha Transit	LR	
6	LA	LADOTD	Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development	New Orleans Regional Transit Authority	LR
	TX	TxDOT	Texas Department of Transportation	Galveston Island Transit	LR
				Dallas Area Rapid Transit	LR
7	IL	SCCTD	St. Clair County Transit District	Bi-State Development Agency	LR
	MO	MCRS	Missouri Motor Carrier and Rail Safety		
8	CO	CPUC	Colorado Public Utilities Commission	Denver Regional Transit District	LR
	UT	UDOT	Utah Department of Transportation	Utah Transit Authority	LR
9	CA	CPUC	California Public Utilities Commission	Bay Area Rapid Transit	HR
				Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority	HR, LR
				San Francisco Municipal Railway	LR, LR, CC
				San Diego Trolley, Inc.	LR
				Sacramento Regional Transit District	LR
Santa Clara Valley Transit Authority	LR				
10	OR	ODOT	Oregon Department of Transportation	Portland Tri-Met	LR
	WA	WDOT	Washington Department of Transportation	King County Metro	LR
				Seattle Center Monorail	AG

HR = Heavy Rail; LR = Light Rail; IP = Inclined Plane; AG = Automated Guideway

New Start Update

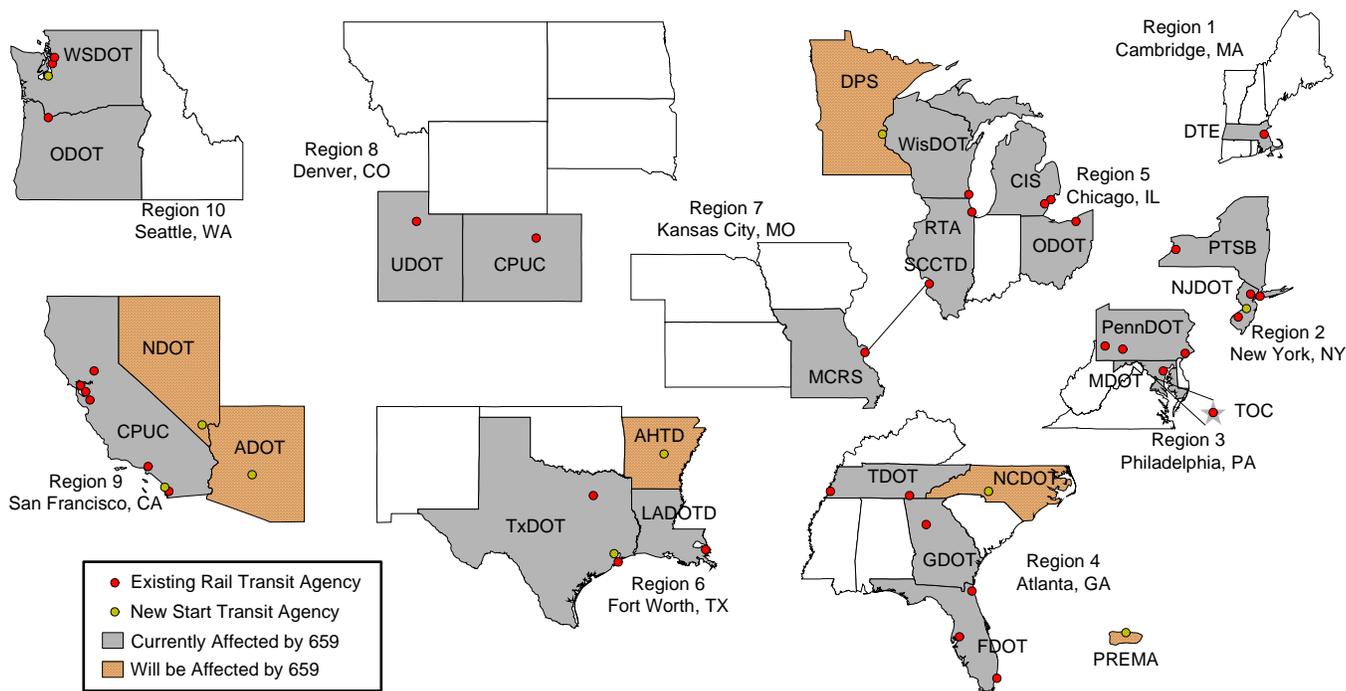
In 2003, the State Safety Oversight (SSO) community continued to grow, with 6 new oversight agencies in various phases of designation, and 10 new start rail transit agencies underway.

Upcoming Additions to the SSO Community: 2003 to 2006

Location	Project	Date of Service*	Weekday Ridership*	SOA
Tacoma, WA	Tacoma Link Light Rail	8/2003	2,000	Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT)
San Juan, PR	Tren Urbano	12/2003	113,300	Puerto Rico State Emergency and Disaster Management Agency (PREMA)
Houston, TX	Houston MetroRail	1/2004	40,000	Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT)
Las Vegas, NV	Las Vegas, Resort Corridor Fixed Guideway	1/2004	38,800	Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT)
Camden, NJ	Southern New Jersey Light Rail	12/2004	8,500	New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT)
Little Rock, AK	Central Arkansas Transit Authority River Rail Project	9/2004	1,000	Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department (AHTD)
Minneapolis, MN	Metro Transit Hiawatha Corridor Light Rail Transit	12/2004	19,300	Minnesota Department of Public Safety/State Patrol (DPS)
San Diego, CA	North County Transit District Sprinter	12/2004	16,000	California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC)
Charlotte, NC	Charlotte Area Transit System South Corridor	Fall 2006	21,100	North Carolina Department of Transportation, Rail Division (NCDOT)
Phoenix, AZ	Regional Public Transportation Authority East Valley Corridor	12/2006	48,000	Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT)

*projected

BOLD – New Oversight Agency



2002 Service and Safety Data

The following analyses have been compiled from the State Safety Oversight Program's annual reporting process. The safety data presented below were extracted from State Oversight Agency submissions of the *Annual Reporting Template – 2002*.

Annual Unlinked Passenger Trips: 1999 to 2002				
Mode	1999	2000	2001	2002
Heavy Rail	2,609,453,900	2,604,328,600	2,656,231,300	2,650,694,300
Light Rail	278,102,600	298,372,100	315,725,820	317,601,400
Other*	19,375,800	19,769,400	20,458,080	20,029,900
Total	2,906,932,300	2,922,470,100	2,992,415,200	2,988,325,600

*includes automated guideways, inclined planes, monorails, and cable cars

Service Data –

In 2002, the 37 rail transit agencies affected by 49 CFR Part 659 experienced a slight decrease in ridership, reversing a trend of growing ridership.

This decrease is largely attributed to economic downturns affecting several major metropolitan areas. The above service data were

extracted from the American Public Transportation Association's (APTA) ridership reports and FTA inquiry.

Safety Data –

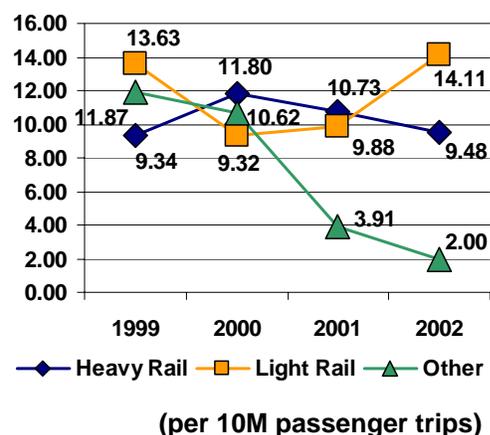
FTA's State Safety Oversight Rule (49 CFR Part 659.45) requires that SOAs must submit to FTA an annual report summarizing oversight activities for the preceding twelve months, including accident, injury, and fatality figures for all applicable transit agencies which they oversee. In 1999, FTA developed an *Annual Reporting Template* to facilitate the collection of data in a format that could be easily quantified at year's end. The following safety data was taken from the Annual Report submissions since 1999 and offer a four-year picture of patterns and trends in reported safety data.

In 2002, heavy rail and "other" rail modes experienced a decrease in injury rates for the second straight year. Heavy rail's

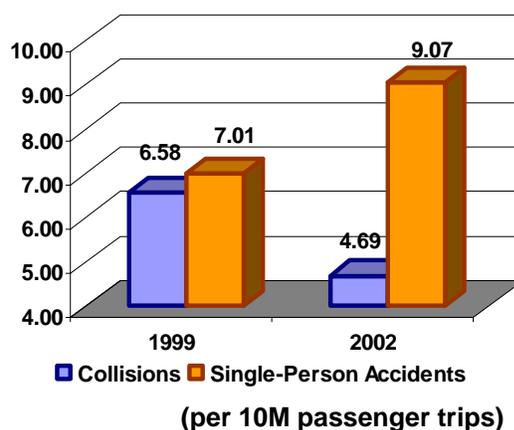
rate decreased by 12% and "other" rail's rate decreased by 49%. The 2002 light rail service injury rate was 20% higher than its mark four years earlier. The 2002 injury rate (14.11 per 10M trips) measured higher than heavy rail for the first time since 1999. The other rail service injury rate for 2002 of 2.00 injuries per 10M trips was a four-year low.

The overall increase in injuries incurred by light rail service over the past four years may be attributed to increases in the reporting of single person accidents, such as slips, trips, and falls and trespassing-related incidents. The single-person accident injury rate for light rail has increased over the past four years as the mode's collision injury rate over the same period has decreased.

Injury Rates by Mode: 1999 - 2002



Light Rail Injury Rates: 1999 - 2002



Rail Grade Crossings

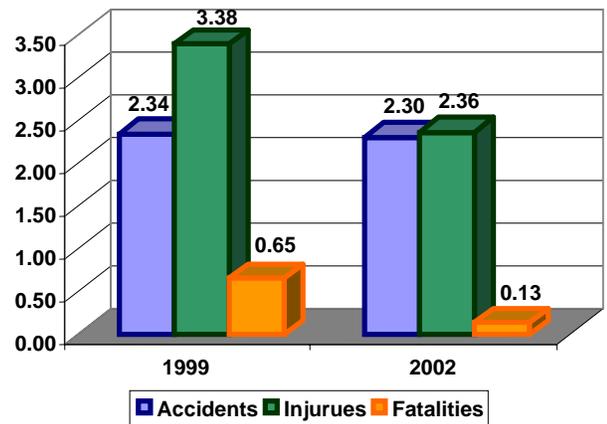
Unlike heavy rail systems, which operate largely within exclusive right-of-ways, the majority of light rail transit systems operate portions of their systems within exclusive right-of-ways on city streets, in mixed traffic, within median strips in city streets, and in pedestrian malls. This situation frequently results in numerous, roadway-light rail grade crossings. In some cases, light rail systems share grade crossings with mainline railroads.

Over the past four years, FTA's annual reporting process has

collected rail grade crossing accident data. These data reveal declines in rail grade crossing accident rates, injury rates, and fatality rates. The graph to the right illustrates these decreasing rates. Rail grade crossing injury rates have decreased by 30% and rail grade crossing fatality rates have fallen by 80% over the past four years.

FTA appreciates this unique safety concern and continues to structure programs and provide technical assistance to assist the industry in the prevention, mitigation and

Rail Grade Crossings: 1999 - 2002



(per 10M passenger trips)

management of light rail accidents, including those occurring at rail grade crossings.

Internal Safety Audit Process

Basic Overview

The Internal Safety Audit Process is a series of ongoing audits that evaluate and document an agency's performance of key safety functions specified in the System Safety Program Plan (SSPP). The ISAP is an effective means for a rail system to demonstrate to the state oversight agency and its own top management the effectiveness of the implementation of its SSPP. This process provides an opportunity to proactively identify areas for improving critical elements of the transit agency's transit safety program and SSPP.

Agencies implement a variety of different options in establishing audit responsibility. For example a Safety Department, Operations Department, or a specifically selected Audit Team may carry out the audits. Both FTA and APTA recommend that auditors be independent from first line of supervision responsible for the activity being audited.

The audit process should use checklists to support reviews and interviews that auditors conduct. Aside from being an auditor's tool, checklists also help to define the role of an auditor and to ensure the objective review of safety

activity. Checklists should be developed in advance of an audit using the SSPP as guidance. The final checklist should be easy to complete and completed checklists should be easy to understand.

ISAP

Important to the audit process is the planning of the audit. Critical elements to be audited should be identified and auditors should coordinate with the appropriate departments and present documentation requirements upfront.

Common Checklist Components

- Date
- Department
- Department Contact
- Auditors
- Reference Criteria
 - SSPP
 - Standard Operating Procedures
 - Training Manuals
 - Maintenance Procedures
- Method of Verification
 - Conduct Interviews
 - Review/Evaluate Procedures and Records
 - Equipment Inspection
 - Observation of Operations and Maintenance Productivity
- Result/Comments
- Recommendations/Corrective Action
- Implementation Schedule

Results from audits should be appropriately documented and verified. The auditing group should provide results to appropriate levels of management. Result presentation is accomplished through meetings and briefings. An administrative process should be in place to address disagreements should they arise.

During the corrective action phase, or follow-up phase, actions are taken to address deficient areas. An implementation schedule should be developed and approved by management. Agencies track the corrective actions to ensure compliance and submit this data as part of its Annual Report.

Regulation

49 CFR Part 659.35 directs State Oversight Agencies to require applicable transit agencies to submit Annual Audit Reports. Transit agencies should report their ISAP findings annually or as agreed to with the state

§ 659.35 Transit Agency Annual Audit Reports

The oversight agency must—

- (a) Require that the transit agency submit, annually, a copy of the annual safety audit report prepared by the transit agency as a result of the Internal Safety Audit Process (APTA Guidelines, checklist number 9); and
- (b) Review the annual safety audit reports prepared by the transit agency.

Internal Safety Audit Process: Best Practices

RTD and Colorado PUC: Joint Safety Audit Process

The Regional Transportation District of Denver (RTD) and the Colorado Public Utilities Commission (CoPUC) have jointly developed a unique safety audit

program that fosters efficient and comprehensive audits and has helped to ensure a high level of passenger safety aboard RTD vehicles.



Before the implementation of the joint audit process, the CoPUC had established a triennial review process similar to the model used by the California Public Utilities Commission and the RTD was executing a separate program. As a result of an FTA audit of the State Safety Oversight activities in Colorado and the cooperation that took place between the involved parties, the CoPUC and RTD developed the idea for the joint audit process.

The CoPUC and RTD held a series of meetings to outline issues and discuss concerns with the proposed program concept. The group tackled the specifics of the program; responsibilities and procedures for the creation of checklists, the conduct of audits, and report generation were established with input from both the CoPUC and RTD.

Assuring audit program independence as well as the validity of a final report and the creation of an audit team were key stepping stones of the program development process. The accepted procedure was drafted by the CoPUC and

adopted by RTD as the agency's Internal Safety Audit Plan. The completed program utilizes five to six semiannual audits over a three-year audit period. Prior to an audit, the joint process establishes two pre-audit meetings. In the first meeting, the designated audit team develops checklist criteria for the audit. The second meeting takes place between the audit team and the audit contacts. Following the audit process of discussion, review, documentation, observation, inspection, and measurement, a closing meeting

is held at which a draft audit report and recommendations are presented by the audit team.

Audited departments are given a 30-day response period to implement Corrective Action Plans (CAPs) and overturn findings of deficiency. If both agencies sign off on the CAPs, then a joint final report is issued, but in the case of disagreement between the agencies, separate final reports are issued. Following the reports, the CoPUC receives quarterly updates on all active CAPs.

Key Benefits of the Joint Program

- Efficient use of limited resources
- Allows a more comprehensive program
- Oversight Agency involvement at all levels
- Multi-perspective audit team
- Meets oversight agency & transit agency regulatory requirements
- Promotes a cooperative working relationship
- Improves safety

BART and California PUC: Focus on Skill and Expertise

The Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) Internal Safety Audit Program (ISAP) was developed with great emphasis on auditors' skill sets. This focus was made to ensure credible checklists, proper groundwork with audited departments, professional implementation, and appropriate follow-up on corrective actions.



BART used the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) Audit Program as a model for their program. The program encourages coordination with the CPUC; a designated representative participates in the audit process and an annual audit report is presented to the

Oversight Agency. The process establishes a Management Procedure that is signed by the agency's General Manager to provide justification, identify affected departments, and outline responsibilities of involved parties.

Using the American Public Transportation Association's (APTA) Safety Audit Program list of elements, BART developed a global list of all audit subject areas, activities, and functions involved in the audit process. All audit activities are covered within a three-year cycle with the third year also including the CPUC triennial review.

The audit team development process used at BART assures that roles for team members, such as Team Leader, Audit Administrator, and Field Auditors, are clearly defined. BART provides the audit team with training on the audit process and the systems being audited. The team is a

dedicated, independent group and the Audit Program is a key responsibility for each member of the team and is part of each member's performance evaluation.

An aspect of audit team training that BART places emphasis on is the professional implementation of audit activities. By utilizing strong personal skills such as courtesy, clear verbal communication, and the ability to deal with difficult individuals, auditors are able to ensure a smooth and helpful experience for all participants. Proper preparation and review, interviews with managers, detailed observation, clear

documentation, and fair evaluations serve to create a thorough and professional audit experience.

The BART program also places emphasis on the communication between the audit team and the audited department. Important is pre-audit planning with the appropriate managers, including a pre-audit distribution of audit checklists and the scheduling of a mutually agreeable audit time. Findings are to be discussed with the appropriate manager upon the completion of the audit and a draft copy of the completed audit checklist is presented in order to eliminate any surprises for the audited department.

The BART ISAP also emphasizes the importance of corrective action follow-up. One of the most difficult phases of the audit process, corrective action management requires the commitment and support of the appropriate department within the transit agency organization. BART requires periodic reports to track the progress of corrective action plans. The reports identify the specific responsibilities assigned for the completion of corrective actions.

BART ISAP Key Aspects

- Oversight Agency Coordination
- Audit Team Development
- Training
- Communications with Audited Departments
- Documentation
- Professional Implementation

Shared Corridor Safety: FRA Waiver Process

In June of 2000 the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) issued a "Joint Statement of Agency Policy" with regard to the shared use of the tracks of the

general railroad system by urban mass transit systems. Subsequently, FRA issued a "Statement of Agency Policy Concerning Jurisdiction" that established a process wherein the FTA would serve as a

nonvoting member of the FRA's Railroad Safety Board. The Board considers and acts upon shared track and shared corridor waiver petitions addressed by the FTA/FRA Joint Policy and FRA Agency Policy.

When a transit agency (“grantee petitioner”) submits a waiver petition to the FRA, a notice is published in the Federal Register. The notice describes the petition, invites public and/or other interested parties’ comments and establishes a comment period (usually 45 days). The petition is sent to the FRA’s respective regional office for investigation and recommendations. This is followed by review and decision by the FRA Railroad Safety Board in conjunction with FTA’s representative. FRA’s interaction with the grantee petitioner is primarily on the local level.

In response to the State Safety Oversight Community’s request

that safety officials be notified when a transit agency petitions for waiver, FTA is implementing an informal procedure to request safety oversight official notification. Upon receipt of a transit agency’s waiver petition, FTA requests that the petitioner provide a copy of their FRA waiver petition to oversight officials. This will initiate early dialogue with the

transit agency. A copy of the Federal Register notice will also be mailed to officials so that comments may be made for the record, as provided for in that notice. FRA’s Safety Board will consider all state safety oversight agency observations in making their final decision with respect to any shared use waivers.

Pending Waivers Online

- <http://dms.dot.gov/reports/fr.htm>

FTA Safety and Security Website

<http://www.fta.dot.gov>

Click on “Safety and Security”

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