



## Rail Safety Staff Activities: National Forums



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## Presentation Overview

- Federal Transit Administration's *Transit Rail Advisory Committee for Safety*.
- National Academy of Sciences research panels.
- Association of State Rail Safety Managers.
- National Committee on Uniform Traffic Devices.





## **Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) *Transit Rail Advisory Committee for Safety (TRACS)***

- Advisory committee to make regulatory recommendations to FTA.
- Comprised of representatives from transit agency, states, industry groups.
- To advise on implementing new FTA regulatory authority granted by Congress in 2012.
- Members appointed for two-year terms.
- Appointed as individuals, not as organization representatives.
- Members negotiate, vote, on recommendations.
  - Uneven representation.
- No funding provide to members for travel expense.





## TRACS (cont.)

- Working groups, reports:
  - *Safety planning model and safety management system principles. (SMS). Report complete.*
  - *Best state oversight model. (SSO). Report complete.*
  - *Close Call Non-Punitive Reporting System. Report complete.*
  - *Prescription/Over-the-Counter (Rx/OTC) Medication Testing and Notification Procedures in the Transit Industry Members negotiate, vote on recommendations. Final, needs vote.*
  - *National Public Transportation Safety Plan (NPTSP). In-progress, due September.*
  - *Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP). In-progress, due September.*





## National Academy of Sciences (NAS) research panels.

- NAS: “a private, non-profit society of distinguished scholars.”
- Established by an Act of Congress, signed by President Lincoln. in 1863.
- “To address the government's urgent need for an independent advisor on scientific matters.”
- “As science began to play an ever-increasing role in national priorities and public life,” NAS was expanded to include:
  - National Research Council in 1916.
  - National Academy of Engineering in 1964.
  - Institute of Medicine in 1970.





## National Academy of Sciences (cont.)

- National Academy of Sciences
    - National Research Council
      - Transportation Research Board
        - Transit Cooperative Research Program
- Research Fields:
- A – Operations (e.g., A-34, A-35)
  - B - Service Configuration
  - C - Engineering of Vehicles and Equipment
  - D - Engineering of Fixed Facilities
  - E - Maintenance
  - F - Human Resources
  - G - Administration
  - H - Policy and Planning
  - I - Special Projects





## National Academy of Sciences (cont.)

### Transit Cooperative Research Panels (TCRP)

- TCRP A-34, Improving Safety-Related Rules Compliance in the Public Transportation Industry.
  - Final report published.
  - Multi-dimensional taxonomy of non-compliance, and respective recommendations.
  - Recommends developing and implementing a confidential close-call reporting system in transit.





## National Academy of Sciences (cont.)

- TCRP A-35, Improving Safety Culture in Public Transportation.
  - Research in-progress, to be published this year.
    - Academic literature review.
    - Surveys of public transit labor, management.
    - Surveys of non-public transit systems.
    - Guidance for assessment.
    - “Tools” for improving safety culture.





## National Academy of Sciences (cont.)

- Illustration of possible safety culture measurement:\*
  - **Pathological:** Individuals are blamed, and it is believed that accidents are part of the job. Responsibility for accidents is seen as belonging to those directly involved.
  - **Reactive:** There are attempts to remove "accident-prone" individuals. It is believed that accidents are often just bad luck. The responsibility of The System for accidents is considered but has no consequences.
  - **Calculative:** Faulty machinery and poor maintenance are identified as causes as well as people. There are attempts to reduce exposure. Management has a Them, rather than Us, mentality and takes an individual rather than systems perspective.
  - **Proactive:** Management looks at the whole system, including processes and procedures when considering accident causes. They admit that management must take some of the blame.
  - **Generative:** Blame is not an issue. Management accepts it could be responsible when assessing what they personally could have done to remove root causes. They take a broad view looking at the interaction of systems and people.

\* Parker, D., Lawries, M. & Hudson, P. (2006). A framework for understanding the development of organizational safety culture *Safety Science*, Volume 44.





## Association of State Rail Safety Managers (ASRSM)

- Annual meeting of state railroad safety program managers.
  - Those responsible for the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) – State Safety Participation Program.
- Sponsored by FRA:
  - FRA D.C. railroad safety officers attend.
  - FRA pays for the program manager from each FRA-State program to attend.
  - Primarily a coordination and problem-solving meeting.
  - Meetings resuming this year after recent year cancellations.





## ASRSM (cont.)

- Typical topics:
  - Discuss new regulations, programs.
  - Guidance on ensuring compliance insight.
  - Discussion of concerns that arise between the FRA and state partners.
  - Regulatory training.
  - Sharing of ideas, projects, and plans between the State programs.





## NCUTCD (cont.)

NCUTCD assists in the development of standards, for traffic signals, signs and pavement markings used to guide traffic on roadways.

NCUTCD is comprised of:

- Federal government officials, including the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).
- State government officials, including CPUC, Caltrans.
- Transportation industry representatives.
- Pedestrian and bicycle advocates.
- Others involved in roadway transportation issues.





## The National Committee on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (NCUTCD)

- Objectives:
  - Evaluate existing systems and regulatory requirements.
  - Advise the on the content and interpretations for FHWA Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD).
- The CPUC member is a voting member, NCUTCD Railroad and Light Rail Transit technical committee.
- Each State must adopt the MUTCD or some modified version in “substantial conformance” with MUTCD.
  - Adopted by the Caltrans California Traffic Control Devices Committee (CTCDC).
  - CTCDC is comprised primarily of Caltrans personnel.
- CPUC representative is California’s subject matter expert for railroad and light rail transit crossings.





## NCUTCD (cont.)

### Most Recent Activities:

- Combining Railroad and Light Rail Transit crossings into one chapter
- Modifications to pedestrian/pathway crossing guidance.
- Requirements for preemption of traffic signal systems.
- City of Riverside experimental passive “2nd Train” sign.

