

Harris County METRO's Adventures in the Land of FFGAs

APTA Transit CEOs Seminar

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What was so special about METRO?

- The context
 - History of METRO and rail
 - The METRO relationship with the FTA
 - The 2003 referendum terms and conditions
 - The opposition
- The Trigger
 - CAF and Buy America
- The Resolution
 - Vehicle reprocurement
 - Change in the analysis

What Happened?

- Disappointed vendor complains to FTA
- FTA launches Buy America investigation
- New Board and management installed
- FTA broadens procurement investigation
- FTA delivers verdict
- METRO terminates railcar contract
- METRO mediates settlement with CAF
- METRO reprocures vehicles
- FTA changed the analytical framework

What Lessons did METRO Learn?

- Be your own best “patient advocate”
- The shortest route may not be the quickest
- Mistakes with FTA have a long shelf life
- A reputation, once sets, takes time to change
- Assume you will be assessed in the harshest light
- The process is seldom bilateral
- The outside game also matters
- Avoiding litigation should be a goal
- Always ask, “What could go wrong?”
- The Golden Rule still applies