Security Awareness Training for Transit Employees

Abstract: This Recommended Practice provides the minimum guideline for security awareness training for all transit employees, including contract employees, to strengthen transit system security.

Keywords: transit, training, security

Summary: This Recommended Practice establishes guidelines for security training for transit employees. It is not intended to substitute for regulatory or national homeland security-related requirements. It offers a set of security awareness training objectives that enable all transit employees to understand their security awareness responsibilities and contribute to improved security within their transit system.

Scope and purpose: This Recommended Practice is applicable to transit agencies of all sizes or modes and addresses baseline training. IT security will not be covered in this document. The purpose of this Recommended Practice is to improve transit security awareness within all transit systems by establishing the baseline security awareness training objectives for all transit employees. Security awareness training should be provided to all transit employees. In addition to the baseline, more specialized training should be provided for specific job categories with additional security responsibilities, such as frontline employees and law enforcement positions. Please refer to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Transit Security Grant Program (TSGP) Basic Mass Transit Security Training Program Training matrix (www.fema.gov/pdf/government/grant/bulletins/info253.pdf) for more information on basic and follow-on training.
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Security Awareness Training for Transit Employees

1. Overview

This Recommended Practice provides the minimum guidelines for security awareness training for all transit employees, including contract employees, to strengthen transit system security. Regardless of whether it is their primary responsibility, all transit employees contribute to security. An employee’s presence alone can deter unlawful acts and reassure passengers. Employees can be trained to work actively and effectively to monitor the transit system. Because of their varied responsibilities and work locations, transit employees are often the first to notice or learn about suspicious activity or objects and are best positioned to recognize, report and facilitate the response to threats or security concerns.

Comprehensive security requires transit employees to be trained in security awareness, behavioral awareness, surveillance, response procedures and self-protection. Their response to, and reporting of, any incidents or suspicious behavior or activity produce a reliable source of information. Transit employees should not assume the duties of law enforcement personnel, but they can enhance law enforcement’s ability to respond to any incident by providing accurate information.

By establishing minimum security awareness training for employees and improving their knowledge and skill sets for observation, reporting, decision making and response to security issues, a transit agency will be better prepared to deal with security issues. Training only select transit employees in security awareness can result in gaps and vulnerabilities, leaving agencies susceptible to criminal and terrorist activities.

Section 1408 of the “Implementing Recommendations of the 9/11 Commission Act of 2007” (9/11 Commission Act), Public Law 110-53; 121 Stat. 266 (August 3, 2007) directs the Secretary of Homeland Security to develop and issue certain regulations for a security training program to prepare public transportation employees, including frontline employees, for potential security threats. The act requires the regulations to include training programs that will address the following elements, as applicable:

- Determination of the seriousness of any occurrence or threat.
- Crew and passenger communication and coordination.
- Appropriate responses to defend oneself, including using nonlethal defense devices.
- Use of personal protective devices and other protective equipment.
- Evacuation procedures for passengers and employees, including individuals with disabilities and the elderly.
- Training related to behavioral and psychological understanding of, and responses to, terrorist incidents, including the ability to cope with hijacker behavior, and passenger responses.
- Live situational training exercises regarding various threat conditions, including tunnel evacuation procedures.
- Recognizing and reporting of dangerous substances and suspicious packages, people and situations.
- Understanding security incident procedures, including procedures for communicating with governmental and non-governmental emergency response providers and for on-scene interaction with such emergency response providers.
- Operation and maintenance of security equipment and systems.
- Other security training activities that DHS deems appropriate.
2. Transit security awareness training

Transit agencies may choose to conduct training in house or by contract. In either case, certain learning objectives should be included in the curriculum.

2.1 Security awareness

- Explain the need for security awareness for all transit employees and why it is important.
- List the transit priorities that effective security awareness will protect.
- Determine the importance of creating a comprehensive system of security for a transit system.
- Explain the importance of observing, identifying and reporting suspicious people or behavior that may be a precursor to terrorist or criminal activity.
- Recognize the difference between normal, suspicious and dangerous activity.
- Define roles in recognizing and reacting to suspicious activity.
- Describe immediate actions when confronted with dangerous activity.

2.1.1 Transit system threats and vulnerabilities

- Employ risk management concepts to mitigate security hazards.
- Identify general security threats, vulnerabilities and potential consequences to transit systems and assets.
- Identify countermeasures that mitigate identified risks.

2.1.2 Security concerns

- Recognize transit crimes:
  - trespassing
  - workplace violence
  - theft
  - vandalism
  - sabotage
  - personal crimes:
    - minor assaults
    - serious/major assaults
    - assaults with conventional weapons
  - “quality of life” issues:
    - smoking on transit
    - loud, raucous, unruly behavior
    - urination/defecation in public
    - alcohol or drug violations
    - throwing objects
    - unusual odors (such as garlic, hay, almonds or chlorine)
    - loud music
  - sleeping on transit
  - fare evasion
  - hijack/hostage situations
  - bomb threats
- Define terrorism and recognize terrorist activity, including:
  - chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear weapons (CBRNs)
  - improvised explosive devices (IEDs)
  - sabotage and cyber-sabotage
  - hijacking
2.1.3 Recognizing, reacting, reporting and responding to transit crime and terrorism activities

- Learn to recognize indicators of criminal and/or terrorist activity (see APTA’s Recommended Practice “Identifying Suspicious Behavior in Mass Transit”).
- Learn to recognize unusual or unattended objects (e.g., packages, baggage, vehicles) (see APTA’s Recommended Practice “Recognizing and Responding to Suspicious Unattended Packages, Devices and Baggage”).
- Learn to react and respond as appropriate (see APTA’s Recommended Practice “Recognizing and Responding to Suspicious Unattended Packages, Devices and Baggage”).
- Learn to report as appropriate (following internal/external procedures on reporting).

2.1.4 All transit employees’ roles in security awareness

- Follow agency policies, procedures and security plans (for example, wear and look for proper employee ID and uniforms on people working on or near transit property; conduct inspections and security sweeps in accordance with agency protocols; enforce document control and protect sensitive security information documents in accordance with agency applicable protocols).
- Examine how a transit employee’s presence and security awareness deters criminal and terrorist activities.
- Employ responses to security issues, keeping the transit priorities in mind.
- Learn to improve crew and passenger communication and coordination.
- Learn evacuation procedures for passengers and employees, including individuals with disabilities and the elderly.
- Learn procedures for communicating and interacting with governmental and non-governmental emergency response providers.

3. Security awareness training delivery

When selecting a training delivery method, consideration should be given to cost, the audience that is being trained and the frequency of retraining. Incorporating agency success stories or other positive examples into security awareness training strengthens the validity and effectiveness of the training. It shows employees that their agency’s security methods do work and that their roles as observers and reporters are integral components in maintaining a secure transit system.

3.1 Training methods

3.1.1 Classroom instruction

Classroom-style training typically involves a combination of lecture, participant discussion and facilitation of practical exercises and activities to reinforce new and old concepts and skills. This training medium provides personalized training that can be easily modified for the audience to make it most relevant. It affords participants instant feedback to their questions, as well as the opportunity to learn from their peers.

3.1.2 Computer-based-training

Computer-based training (CBT) is a training program that individual employees can complete at their own pace and at any time access to the computer is available. It usually provides activities or integrated evaluations of learning that are meant to reinforce the content.

3.1.3 Online courses

Online courses are similar to computer-based training courses but require Internet access instead. These programs allow for easy access and may be taken anywhere employees can access the Internet, even from home.
3.1.4 Workshops
Workshops involve classroom-type training, followed by scenario-based activities or hands-on skill enhancement exercises. Workshops tend to be clearly focused on a particular topic and may last from several hours to several days.

3.1.5 Toolbox training
“Toolbox” safety training, otherwise known as “tailgate” safety training, is a system of short, frequent training sessions (e.g., 10 to 15 minutes’ duration, occurring weekly or biweekly). This effective concept is being used across North America in almost all sectors of industry. The idea is to occasionally highlight safety as an essential part of the workplace routine. Utilizing this method can be effective for security awareness training as well.

3.1.6 Videos
Video is a medium that provides visual and audio learning for participants. Videos are easy to present and often are a captivating training alternative. Videos can be a primary training medium or can be used as a supplement or enhancement to another medium.

3.1.7 Printed reminders/handouts
Printed material (posters, fliers or newsletters) may serve as a primary training piece, or they can be used as supplemental materials in a different format (classroom instruction, workshops, CBT or online courses). Printed materials are easy to make and distribute to employees, but they must have a clear, well-communicated message.

3.2 Training audience
All transit employees should be trained in basic transit security awareness.

All contract employees who fall under any of the following categories should be trained in transit security awareness:

- those who maintain a regular presence in the agency, acting in a permanent capacity over a continuous period of time, performing more than incidental activities
- those who augment tasks and duties of full-time employees
- those who work on construction crews or cleaning staff
- those who work with sensitive security information (SSI)
- other positions deemed fit to undergo security awareness training by the transit agency (transit agencies will need to apply their own judgment regarding which contract employees should and should not receive security awareness training)

3.3 Training frequency
It is recommended that all transit employees receive security awareness and emergency management training upon hire as deemed appropriate by the transit agency to contribute to a more secure transit system. Further, it is recommended that all transit employees be refreshed on transit security awareness training objectives annually, in an abbreviated method at the least. Refresher training should be updated to reflect advancements or modifications to criminal and terrorist activities and reinforce the security awareness training that employees received initially. The objectives of this refresher training should be re-emphasized and reviewed using a variety of training media. Refreshing transit employees in security awareness matters will keep them confident in their ability to recognize and respond to security issues and will emphasize that security awareness is a priority for the agency.
4. Mass transit security training program

Table 1 contains an example of a training program for transit employees of all levels. Some of these classes have a train-the-trainer component so that the transit agency can customize and provide the class internally.

**TABLE 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Available vendor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>System Security Awareness for Transportation Employees</td>
<td>National Transit Institute, <a href="http://www.ntionline.com">www.ntionline.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terrorist Awareness Recognition and Training (TARR)</td>
<td>National Transit Institute, <a href="http://www.ntionline.com">www.ntionline.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transit Response to Bus or Rail Hijackings Seminar (FT00544)</td>
<td>Transportation Safety Institute, <a href="http://www.tsi.dot.gov">www.tsi.dot.gov</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active Shooter Scenario Training</td>
<td>Various</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelter in Place Training</td>
<td>Various</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix A: Other resources

Existing transit security awareness resources

The following references are provided as representative examples of available training resources:

- Transportation Security Administration approved training vendors:
  [http://www.tsa.gov/assets/pdf/approved_vendor_list.pdf](http://www.tsa.gov/assets/pdf/approved_vendor_list.pdf)
- **APTA Recommended Practice**, “Securing Control and Communications Systems in Transit Environments”
- Federal Emergency Management Agency Training Operations Course Catalog (broad range of courses offered through federally sponsored programs and the National Preparedness Consortium with numerous training options to enhance capabilities to prevent and respond to security threats): [https://www.firstrespondertraining.gov/webforms/pdfs/gt_catalog.pdf](https://www.firstrespondertraining.gov/webforms/pdfs/gt_catalog.pdf)
- Transit Workplace Safety & Security course. National Transit Institute at Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey with additional federal agencies’ cooperation. 2002.

Training organizations

There are a number of entities and organizations that supply transit security awareness training covering many of the objectives outlined in this *Recommended Practice*. A partial listing is below.

**National Transit Institute**

The National Transit Institute, at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, was established under the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 to develop, promote and deliver training and education programs for the public transit industry. NTI’s mission is to provide training, education and clearinghouse services in support of public transportation and quality of life in the United States. It promotes, develops and delivers high-quality programs and materials through cooperative partnerships with industry, government, institutions and associations. It also serves as a catalyst for enhancing skills and performance in public transportation.

Workplace safety and security awareness courses are designed to address worker safety and health in the transit workplace. Courses are designed for frontline and supervisory personnel.

Courses and materials include the following:

- Emergency Preparedness Guide for Transit Employees
• Securing Community Mobility course (four hours) and pocket guide
• System Security Awareness for Commuter Railroad Employees course (four hours direct delivery, six hours train-the-trainer) and pocket guide
• System Security Awareness for Passenger Vessel Employees course (six hours train-the-trainer) and pocket guide
• System Security Awareness for Transit Employees course (four hours direct delivery, six hours train-the-trainer), CD-ROM training and pocket guide
• Terrorist Activity Recognition and Reaction for Transit Employees course (four hours direct delivery, six hours train-the-trainer) and pocket guide
• System Security poster
• Rail Operations Control Center Response to WMD Incidents course (seven hours)
• Violence in the Transit Workplace — Prevention, Response, and Recovery course (four hours) and pocket guide
• “Warning Signs” video (15 minutes)
• “The Mark” video (20 minutes)

Learn more about NTI at www.ntionline.com.

Transportation Safety Institute
The Transit Safety and Security Division was established in 1976 in direct support of the FTA’s mission to provide economical, timely, state-of-the-art training and educational opportunities to the transit industry. The division, housed within the Research and Innovative Technology Administration’s (RITA) Transit Safety Institute (TSI) serves as the primary training unit for FTA’s Office of Transit Safety and Security. Its courses equip transit personnel with the skills needed to effectively operate, maintain and manage public transportation systems. Its mission is “to provide the transit industry with timely and professional training to better ensure that employees operate with high standards of safety and security while contributing toward a system of greater mobility for the American public.”

Courses and materials include the following:

• Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design course (two days)
• Effectively Managing Transit Emergencies course (four days)
• Threat Management and Emergency Response to Bus Hijackings seminar (one day)
• Threat Management and Emergency Response to Rail Hijackings seminar (one day)
• Transit Explosives Incident Management seminar (five hours)
• Transit System Security course (five days)

Learn more about TSI at www.tsi.dot.gov.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
In 1979, President Jimmy Carter formed the Federal Emergency Management Agency by consolidating several government organizations. That same year Congress appropriated funds to transfer the Civil Defense Staff College (CDSC), United States Fire Administration (USFA) and National Fire Academy (NFA) into FEMA.

The Civil Defense Program (CDP) had been established in 1947 under the Department of Defense. Training was first offered under this authority in the spring of 1951 at three federal facilities. In 1954, CDSC was founded in Battle Creek, Michigan, as a national adult resident training center under CDP to administer the civil defense training program. At the time of transfer to FEMA, the CDSC was redesignated as the
Emergency Management Institute (EMI) to reflect its new and significantly broader mission to train and educate the nation’s emergency management community.

The EMI Independent Study (IS) Program, a web-based distance learning program open to the public, delivered extensive online training from 62 courses and trained more than 2.8 million individuals.

EMI replaced its Incident Command System (ICS) curricula with courses that meet the requirements specified in the National Incident Management System (NIMS). EMI developed the new courses collaboratively with the National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG), the United States Fire Administration and the United States Department of Agriculture.

Classes include the following:

- IS-100.a (ICS 100) Introduction to Incident Command System
- IS-200.a (ICS 200) ICS for Single Resources and Initial Action Incidents
- IS-700.a NIMS, An Introduction
- IS-800.b National Response Framework, An Introduction

Learn more about FEMA EMI IS at http://training.fema.gov/IS/NIMS.asp.

**Louisiana State University, Law Enforcement Innovation Center**

The Law Enforcement Innovation Center’s mission is to provide innovative and technologically based training and technical assistance (services) to law enforcement agencies and communities. Classes include the Transit Terrorist Tools and Tactics (T4) class.

**Funding sources for transit security awareness training**

**Department of Homeland Security via the Preparedness Grants**

**DHS’ Transit Security Grant Program for Tier I or a Tier II Agency**: Jointly managed by the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) (security priorities and eligibility criteria) and FEMA (administration), the TSGP employs a risk-based prioritization in determining eligible passenger rail and transit agencies, funding allocations and evaluations for award. Priorities for TSGP funding focus the majority of available transit grant dollars on the highest-risk systems in our country’s largest metropolitan areas. Priority project types are identified and placed into groups based on their effectiveness in reducing overall risk. The groups include the following:

- Training, Operational Deterrence, Drills, Public Awareness Activities
- Multi-user High Density Key Infrastructure Protection
- Single-user High Density Key Infrastructure Protection
- Key Operating Asset Protection
- Other Mitigation Activities

In managing this program, TSA emphasizes activities that ensure transit systems enhance their capabilities in implementing six core activities that provide the essential foundation for effective security programs. They are as follows:

- Protection of high-risk underwater/underground assets and systems
- Protection of other high-risk assets that have been identified through systemwide risk assessments
- Use of visible, unpredictable deterrence
- Targeted counterterrorism training for key frontline staff
- Emergency preparedness drills and exercises
• Public awareness and preparedness campaigns

**Buffer Zone Protection Program (BZPP) Grant:** Provides funding to increase the preparedness capabilities of jurisdictions responsible for the safety and security of communities surrounding high-priority pre-designated critical infrastructure and key resource (CIKR) assets.

**Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Grant Program:** Provides funding to improve emergency management and preparedness capabilities by supporting flexible, sustainable, secure, and interoperable emergency operations centers (EOCs) with a focus on addressing identified deficiencies and needs.

**Intercity Bus Security Grant Program (IBCGP):** Provides funding to create a sustainable program for the protection of intercity bus systems and the traveling public from terrorism. The program seeks to assist operators of fixed-route intercity and charter bus services in obtaining the resources required to support security measures such as enhanced planning, facility security upgrades, and vehicle and driver protection.

**Port Security Grant Program (PSGP):** Provides funding to port areas for the protection of critical port infrastructure from terrorism with the primary purpose of assisting ports in enhancing maritime domain awareness, enhancing risk management capabilities to prevent, detect, respond to and recover from attacks involving IEDs, WMDs and other non-conventional weapons, as well as training and exercises and Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC) implementation.

**Other DHS programs**

**Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP):** Although transit agencies are technically eligible recipients of some of these programs, these grants are distributed via the individual states. Because transit agencies may receive assistance through the TSGP, they tend not to receive direct funding from these programs. However, states may award these funds for risk mitigation and security enhancement projects in mass transit and passenger rail systems. These programs consist of the following:

• State Homeland Security Program (SHSP) enhances capabilities through planning, equipment, training and exercise activities.
• Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) Grant Program builds capabilities in 60 high-threat, high-density urban areas.
• Citizen Corps Program engages citizens in personal preparedness, exercises, ongoing volunteer programs and surge capacity response.
• State Homeland Security Program – Tribal (SHSP Tribal) provides supplemental funding to directly eligible tribes pursuant to the 9/11 Act.
• Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) Nonprofit Security Grant Program (NSGP) provides funding support for target-hardening activities to nonprofit organizations that are high risk of international terrorism attacks.
• Operation Stonegarden (OPSG) provides funding to enhance cooperation and coordination among local, state and federal law enforcement agencies to secure the nation’s land borders.
• Interoperable Emergency Communications Grant Program (IECGP) provides governance, planning, training and exercise, and equipment funding to states, territories, and local and tribal governments to carry out initiatives to improve interoperable emergency communications, including communications in collective response to natural disasters, acts of terrorism and other manmade disasters.

**Federal Emergency Management Administration**

FEMA does provide agencies with resources and/or funds to enhance preparedness for all hazards. For more information, visit [http://www.fema.gov/government/grant/tsgp/](http://www.fema.gov/government/grant/tsgp/).
Federal Transit Administration

Under the Safe Accountable Flexible Efficiency Transportation Equity Act/A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) Section 5307 requires the grantees to spend at least 1 percent of their annual allocations on security activities or certify that they do not need to spend their allocation on such activities.

- For grantees in the Urbanized Areas (UZA) populations of 200,000 or less: both operating and capital security expenses are eligible.
- For UZA populations over 200,000, only capital related security projects are eligible.
- SAFETEA-LU has expanded the definitions of these projects to include security training, development of emergency response plans, and emergency response drills.
References


Federal Transit Administration, Transit Watch, 2006.

Federal Transit Administration, “Immediate Actions (IAs) for Transit Agencies for Potential and Actual Life-Threatening Incidents,” 2004.

Transportation Security Administration Training Matrix.


Federal Emergency Management Agency, Training Operations Course Catalog (broad range of courses offered through federally sponsored programs and the National Preparedness Consortium with numerous training options to enhance capabilities to prevent and respond to security threats). https://www.firstrespondertraining.gov/webforms/pdfs/gt_catalog.pdf


Table 1, Basic Mass Transit Security Training Programs combines the reference materials above and Approved vendor contact information. Please keep in mind that the training programs are dynamic and change in scope and title. For the most current class information, contact the approved vendor.
Definitions

**chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear devices:** Devices using chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear materials to inflict mass casualties.

**criminal activity:** Any activity that violates federal, state or local statutes or ordinances.

**dangerous behavior:** Actions that pose an immediate threat to security or personal safety.

**deterrence:** An activity, procedure or physical barrier that reduces the likelihood of an incident, attack or criminal activity.

**good housekeeping:** Tidy working practices that cause as few emissions, as little waste and as few unsafe situations as practicable.

**improvised explosive device:** A bomb constructed and deployed in a way other than conventional military action.

**lost and found item:** Anything that the general public might leave behind or misplace that may be found by other members of the public or employees of a transit provider.

**security:** Freedom from danger, fear, or anxiety resulting from intentional harm.

**security awareness:** An initiative that sets the stage for training by changing organizational attitudes to realize the importance of security and the adverse consequences of security failure. Further, awareness reminds users of the importance of security awareness and the procedures to be followed.

**suspicious behavior:** Behavior that raises feelings of wariness or distrust because it is out of the ordinary for the time, place or circumstances.

**suspicious package or object:** A suspicious package or object can be any size (e.g., envelope, suitcase) but may be large enough to conceal a device capable of injuring people. It can be carried by a person or be unattended.

**suspicious vehicle:** A vehicle (whether occupied or unoccupied) that is in motion, placed or parked in an area that causes an observer to feel that it does not belong there.

**terrorism:** The use of violence and threats to intimidate or coerce, especially for political purposes.

**workplace violence:** Violence that originates from and threatens employees or employers, or bystanders within a workplace.
### Abbreviations and acronyms

- **APTA**: American Public Transportation Association  
- **BZPP**: Buffer Zone Protection Program  
- **CBRN**: chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (weapons)  
- **CBT**: computer-based training  
- **CDP**: Civil Defense Program  
- **CDSC**: Civil Defense Staff College  
- **CIKR**: critical infrastructure and key resource  
- **DHS**: Department of Homeland Security  
- **FEMA**: Federal Emergency Management Administration  
- **FTA**: Federal Transit Administration  
- **IBCGP**: Intercity Bus Security Grant Program  
- **IECGP**: Interoperable Emergency Communications Grant Program  
- **IED**: improvised explosive device  
- **IS**: independent study  
- **NFA**: National Fire Academy  
- **NTI**: National Transit Institute  
- **NIMS**: National Incident Management System  
- **NWCG**: National Wildfire Coordinating Group  
- **OPSG**: Operation Stonegarden  
- **PSGP**: Port Security Grant Program  
- **RITA**: Research and Innovative Technology Administration  
- **SAFETEA-LU**: Safe Accountable Flexible Efficiency Transportation Equity Act/A Legacy for Users  
- **SEPP**: Security and Emergency Preparedness Plan  
- **SHSP**: State Homeland Security Program  
- **SSI**: sensitive security information  
- **T4**: Transit Terrorist Tools and Tactics  
- **TSGP**: Transit Security Grant Program  
- **TSA**: Transportation Security Administration  
- **TSI**: Transportation Safety Institute  
- **TWIC**: Transportation Worker Identification Credential  
- **UASI**: Urban Area Security Initiative  
- **UZA**: Urbanized Areas  
- **WMD**: weapon of mass destruction