

APTA RT-S-OP-001-02, Rev. 4

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Operating Practices Working Group

Rulebook Development and Review

Abstract: This standard provides guidance for the development of a transit operating system rulebook introduction and provides suggested approaches for rulebook issuance and authority.

Keywords: authority, general rules, issuance, rail transit rulebook

Summary: This standard defines the authority to issue and revise a transit system rulebook, a document that serves as a central source of all rules written within a system. The "Requirements" section of this standard is divided into five sections, which cover a rulebook's purpose, application of the rules, rulebook development, rulebook issuance and rulebook revision.



Foreword

The American Public Transportation Association is a standards development organization in North America. The process of developing standards is managed by the APTA Standards Program's Standards Development Oversight Council (SDOC). These activities are carried out through several standards policy and planning committees that have been established to address specific transportation modes, safety and security requirements, interoperability, and other topics.

APTA used a consensus-based process to develop this document and its continued maintenance, which is detailed in the <u>manual for the APTA Standards Program</u>. This document was drafted in accordance with the approval criteria and editorial policy as described. Any trade name used in this document is information given for the convenience of users and does not constitute an endorsement.

This document was prepared by the Operating Practices Working Group as directed by the Rail Standards Policy and Planning Committee.

This document represents a common viewpoint of those parties concerned with its provisions, namely transit operating/planning agencies, manufacturers, consultants, engineers and general interest groups. APTA standards are mandatory to the extent incorporated by an applicable statute or regulation. In some cases, federal and/or state regulations govern portions of a transit system's operations. In cases where there is a conflict or contradiction between an applicable law or regulation and this document, consult with a legal adviser to determine which document takes precedence.

This document supersedes APTA RT-S-OP-001-02, Rev. 3, which has been revised. Below is a summary of changes from the previous document version:

- Reformatted to align with the new APTA rail transit standards.
- Changed name of document from "Standard for Rule Book Development and Authority" to "Rulebook Development and Review."
- Committee membership updated.
- Some global changes to section headings and numbering resulted when sections dealing with definitions and acronyms were moved to the end of the document.
- While there are many changes, the information was generally not deleted, just moved around or its wording cleaned up. The changes mainly involved the following two issues:
 - Simplifying and/or clarifying the intent and wordings.
 - Reorganizing sections in the document for ease of reading.
- Changed the definition of "authorized personnel." The change expanded the scope of this definition to include rail transit agency employees, such as managers and supervisors, who need to monitor and enforce compliance even if the rules do not govern their job function. The term "employees" was replaced with "authorized personnel" in several places because the rules apply to all workers, not just rail transit agency employees.
 - Old definition for "authorized personnel": Personnel who need to be aware of operating rules and procedures, particularly operators, controllers, and their supervisors, and others (employed or contracted) working on or near the right-of-way.
 - New definition for "authorized personnel": Rail transit agency personnel (employed or contracted) who need to be aware of and adhere to, or monitor adherence to, applicable rules and procedures contained in general and specialized/modal rulebooks.

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- Simplified the language and created a deliberate distinction between documents that do or do not supplement the rulebook and/or effect a temporary or permanent rulebook change:
 - Written instructions, including but not limited to bulletins, orders and/or notices, are official documents that have the authority to supplement rulebooks between rulebook revisions or effect a temporary or permanent rulebook change.
 - Reminder notices, or similar documents, may be used to provide greater detail, remind personnel of specific rules or to address specific work units rather than all authorized personnel. Reminder notices do not have the authority to supplement rulebooks between rulebook revisions or effect a temporary or permanent rulebook change.
 - As a result of this change, the standard uses only these two terms throughout the body of the document rather than intermingling the use of the terms "bulletins," "orders," "notices," etc.
- Added Section 2.5.1, "Initiating rulebook changes."
 - This section provides some guidance to a rail transit agency on how changes to the rulebook may be initiated, and not just how to incorporate changes once they are proposed.



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Introduction

This introduction is not part of APTA RT-S-OP-001-02, "Rulebook Development and Review."

All transit operating agencies require written expressions of their policies, rules, regulations and procedures for the following reasons:

- the need to coordinate the numerous activities necessary to ensure safe, efficient and timely operation
- the specialized jobs and job tasks associated with transit systems
- the highly visible nature of public transit agencies
- the need to protect the benefit that transit services provide to the public in urbanized areas
- the need to provide a common set of operating practices for all employees engaged in the provision or support of transportation

APTA recommends the use of this document by:

- individuals or organizations that operate rail transit systems;
- individuals or organizations that contract with others for the operation of rail transit systems; and
- individuals or organizations that influence how rail transit systems are operated (including but not limited to consultants, designers and contractors).

Scope and purpose

This standard covers the preparation of the rail transit agency rulebook introduction and its issuance authority. This standard's purpose is not to define the contents of the rulebook itself, but to address rulebook application, development, issuance and revision in an organized manner.

Note on alternate practices

Individual rail transit systems may modify the practices in this standard to accommodate their specific equipment and mode of operation. APTA recognizes that some rail transit systems may have unique operating environments that make strict compliance with every provision of this standard impossible. As a result, certain rail transit systems may need to implement the standards and practices herein in ways that are more or less restrictive than this document prescribes. A rail transit system may develop alternates to APTA standards so long as the alternates are based on a safe operating history and are described and documented in the system's safety program plan (or another document that is referenced in the system safety program plan).



Documentation of alternate practices shall:

- identify the specific APTA rail transit safety standard requirements that cannot be met;
- state why each of these requirements cannot be met;
- describe the alternate methods used; and
- describe and substantiate how the alternate methods do not compromise safety and provide a level of safety equivalent to the practices in the APTA safety standard (operating histories or hazard analysis findings may be used to substantiate this claim).

Rulebook Development and Review

1. Rulebooks

Rail transit agencies shall develop one or more rulebooks that establish the minimum requirements governing the safe and efficient operation of rail transit operations. The rail transit agency shall determine the areas in which any operating rulebook is needed.

1.1 General rulebook

The general rulebook provides requirements for all authorized personnel or other personnel as designated by the rail transit agency. Each agency shall define which rules constitute its general rulebook.

1.2 Modal and specialized rulebooks

Rail transit agencies that operate more than one mode of rail transit shall determine if modal differences necessitate the development of separate modal rulebooks or separate rulebook sections pertaining to each mode. Agencies may also develop separate specialized rulebooks targeted to specific aspects of rail transit operations, such as mainline operations, yard operations, safety, administrative rules or other aspects of rules.

Specialized rulebooks provide requirements for each department's authorized personnel that are specific to the functions of the department or, at a broader level, to each mode. For example, specialized rulebooks may contain operating instructions that provide detailed guidance for specific operating processes and activities. Rules covering specialized categories may also be incorporated into the general rulebook that contains the general rules.

The rail transit agency shall evaluate any change to any rulebook for implications on other rulebooks or procedures of the agency.

1.3 Written instructions

The rail transit agency shall employ the use of written instructions, including but not limited to bulletins, orders and/or notices, which are official documents that have the authority to supplement rulebooks until incorporated into the next rulebook revision or to effect a temporary rulebook change within a time frame prescribed by the agency. Written instructions are the equivalent of a rule and are approved and distributed according to agency policy or procedure. Written instructions should have a visual distinction, such as title, format or paper color. Receipt and acknowledgment of written instructions should be according to rail transit agency policy.

The rail transit agency shall determine if different types of instructions require a hierarchy, and if so the rail transit agency shall designate a process for establishing a hierarchy of written instructions where applicable.

1.4 Reminder notices

The rail transit agency shall use reminder notices or similar documents to provide greater detail and/or to remind personnel of specific rules. Reminder notices do not have the authority to supplement rulebooks

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between rulebook revisions or to effect a temporary or permanent rulebook change. Reminder notices shall have a visual distinction, such as title, format or paper color. Receipt and acknowledgment of reminder notices shall be according to rail transit agency policy.

Examples of reminder notices may include, but are not limited to, rule reminder, rule of the day, presentation of trends to remind people of rules, seasonal clothing changes, or rule of the week.

2. Requirements

2.1 Purpose

The rail transit agency shall establish a procedure governing all matters pertaining to the application, development, issuance and revision to the rules.

2.2 Application of the rules

The rail transit agency shall identify all authorized personnel who are required to abide by the provisions of any rulebook. The general or modal/specialized rulebook shall apply to all authorized personnel. Adherence to all general rules is mandatory to ensure safety, consistency and integration of activity performance across the organization. It also applies to each employee using the system for transportation, whether on or off duty.

Unless otherwise stated by the rail transit agency, the modal/specialized rulebooks shall apply only to authorized personnel within the department that issued the modal/specialized rulebook or to authorized personnel within the specific job classification for which the rules and procedures are intended.

2.3 Rulebook development

The rail transit agency shall establish a Rulebook Committee to review and recommend for approval all the rules in the rulebook. The committee shall operate in accordance with any bylaws prescribed by the rail transit agency. The Rulebook Committee and its chairperson may be composed of senior managers from operations, maintenance, training, safety, security and other departments as applicable. The rail transit agency shall determine the frequency of meetings and the size of the committee in accordance with its public transportation agency safety plan (PTASP), if applicable.

The Rulebook Committee shall consist of members of the departments governed by the rulebook.

Smaller organizations may have smaller Rulebook Committees. In such cases, rulebook revisions may require consideration of input and review from operations, maintenance, training, safety, security and other departments as applicable.

A rulebook custodian shall be identified and responsible for maintaining the actual document and for incorporating all revisions to both the general and modal/specialized rulebooks. The rulebook custodian shall also be responsible for maintaining a summary of changes for each general and modal/specialized rulebook revision.

2.4 Rulebook issuance

The rail transit agency shall establish a program of issuing rulebooks to all authorized personnel. The rail transit agency shall review and reissue the rulebook at an interval not to exceed a maximum of five years. The rail transit agency will reissue the rulebook, in part or in total, as it determines. Some rail transit agencies may consider alternative methods of rulebook reissuance that do not necessitate a full replacement of existing rulebooks, but instead a changing of affected rules or pages with affected rules.

2.4.1 Authority

The general rulebook shall be issued under the authority of the accountable executive or appropriate authority, which may include an oversight group such as a board of directors, and it shall comply with the Safety Management Systems (SMS) approach to transit safety.

The general rulebook shall be issued under the signature of the accountable executive and other individuals as identified by the rail transit agency. All of the above shall concur with the general rulebook content based on reviews and approvals or comment by each affected department.

Modal/specialized rulebooks shall be issued under the authority of the department head or appropriate authority with concurrence or input from the safety office or various other relevant departments representative of operations, safety, engineering or maintenance. If the rail transit agency determines the need for higher approval, then the signature of the chief operating officer may be required.

Modal/specialized rulebooks shall undergo a similar development and update process as determined by the rail transit agency.

2.4.2 Rulebook promulgation

General, specialized and modal rulebooks shall be issued in accordance with written policy and/or requirements stated in the rail transit agency PTASP or another document referenced in the PTASP.

2.4.3 Document control and tracking changes

A document control process shall be established, and records shall be kept verifying that the general rulebook has been received and acknowledged by all affected authorized personnel. Records shall also be kept that the modal/specialized rulebooks have been received and acknowledged by all affected departmental authorized personnel. The rail transit agency shall track rulebook changes and document those changes.

The rail transit agency shall have a process whereby modified rulebooks are fully distributed and tracked/recorded by the rail transit agency.

2.4.4 Responsibilities

The rail transit agency shall require all affected authorized personnel and offices to maintain an up-to-date copy of the general and modal/specialized rulebooks (as applicable) and to ensure that personnel are familiar with its content.

2.4.5 Rulebook distribution and receipt tracking

The rail transit agency shall maintain records of the distribution and receipt of the most current version of any rulebook, including any written instructions that superseded the current rulebook, to all affected employees.

2.5 Rulebook revision and management of change

The rail transit agency shall establish a formal process and schedule for reviewing and making appropriate updates to any rulebook. The rail transit agency shall determine how any general or modal/specialized rulebook update processes are contributing to or resulting from the rail transit agency's management of change protocols.

2.5.1 Initiating rulebook changes

Rulebook changes can be initiated in one of the following ways as stipulated by rail transit agency policy:

- By employee suggestions via rail transit agency policy or procedure.
- By the Rulebook Committee during periodic rulebook review as defined in the PTASP.
- By subject matter experts on behalf of their departments or the safety office, based on incident/accident investigations, immediate need or industry or rail transit agency oversight standards.
- By regulatory requirements.
- As a result of system modifications, including but not limited to new lines, extensions to existing lines, changes to existing infrastructure or systems, or transit projects identified in APTA RT-OP-S-022-17, "Operations Personnel Requirements in New Rail Transit Projects."

2.5.2 General rulebook

A written instruction shall be issued when a new or revised general rule or procedure is implemented. Revisions, both temporary and permanent, shall be issued by an official document that is the equivalent of a rule according to policy or procedure. The revised rules shall carry the same force as the rules in the general rulebook.

Permanent rule revisions intended to modify general rules and/or procedures governing the safe operation of trains prior to general rulebook reprint require the review and concurrence by the accountable executive and other individuals as designated by the rail transit agency. All rule changes shall be addressed by a formal management of change process, even those that need prompt implementation. Such revisions become a permanent part of the general rulebook and shall be included in the next reprint.

Temporary rule revisions intended to modify operating rules and/or procedures may be issued to accommodate a temporary condition, such as construction in or around the right-of-way. The rail transit agency shall establish requirements for individuals responsible for review and concurrence of any temporary rule revisions. Temporary revisions shall require approvals addressed by the rail transit agency's change control process but become null and void after the time frame designated by the rail transit agency.

The general Rulebook Committee shall make its recommendations for changes, corrections, additions, deletions and/or other improvements to the committee chairperson. The committee chairperson shall review all recommendations and include those approved in the next regularly scheduled update of the general rulebook. The schedule of regular updates to the general rulebook shall be established by written policy.

2.5.3 Modal/specialized rulebooks

A written instruction shall be issued when a new or revised modal/specialized rule is implemented. Revisions, both temporary and permanent, shall be issued by an official document that is the equivalent of a rule according to policy or procedure. The revised rules shall carry the equivalent of the rules in the modal/specialized rulebook.

Permanent rule revisions intended to modify modal/specialized rules governing the safe operation of trains prior to specialized rulebook reprint require the review and concurrence of the department head or other individuals as designated by the rail transit agency. All rule changes shall be addressed by the rail transit agency's management of change process, even those that need prompt implementation. The revision becomes a permanent part of the modal/specialized rulebook and shall be included in the next reprint.

Temporary rule revisions intended to modify an operating rule may be issued to accommodate a temporary condition, such as construction in or around the right-of-way. Temporary revisions shall require approvals

addressed by the rail transit agency's management of change or any rulebook change processes but become null and void after a set period of time.

The schedule of regular reviews and updates to the modal/specialized rulebook shall be established by written policy.

Changes in modal/specialized rulebooks shall not be in conflict with the general rulebook.

2.5.4 Resources for management of change

The rail transit agency shall consider the provisions of APTA RT-OP-RP-028-21, "Managing Short- and Long-Term Changes Affecting Rail Operations," for all types of rulebooks.

2.5.5 Promulgation of rulebook revisions

The rail transit agency shall issue new rules to all authorized personnel for general rules, and to all affected departmental authorized personnel for specialized rules. Receipt of such shall be kept in accordance with the rail transit agency's document control process. New rules may or may not be accompanied by oral explanation/training, depending on the nature of the material.

The revised rulebook or written instruction shall be posted or distributed according to rail transit agency policy.

The rail transit agency shall ensure that any rule changes are clearly communicated to employees via a summary of changes or other means. As necessary, the rail transit agency shall document the communication and acknowledgment of all rule changes.

3. Rail transit agency rule authority

3.1 Determination of authority

The rail transit agency shall determine the authority by which it issues rules and their applicability to rail transit agency authorized personnel or outside parties. The rail transit agency shall consider and include any authorities granted to other agencies, authorities, districts or other entities that affect or impact rail transit agency operations.

3.2 Establishing agency-specific authority

The rail transit agency shall establish a formal process for determining and approving any authority for its rules.

3.3 Enforcement of rules

The rail transit agency shall evaluate and implement, when necessary, enforcement mechanisms for its rulebook and rule authority, per formal, agency-established metrics. See APTA RT-OP-S-011-10, "Rule-Compliance Program Requirements," for additional information.

4. Standard operating practices

The rail transit agency may use an alternate practice of establishing SOPs to govern its processes and operations (in lieu of a rulebook).

In cases where the rail transit agency has both a rulebook (or rulebooks) and SOPs, the rail transit agency shall consider implications of rule compliance on the broad spectrum of SOPs and how violations of SOP elements would be handled for corrective action.

5. Safety department involvement in rulebook review

The rail transit agency shall identify the role that its safety department plays in reviewing rulebook development and updates, including consideration of safety risk management assessments and role of the rulebook in safety assurance and safety promotion.

6. Digital rulebook considerations

Some rail transit agencies may elect to utilize electronic technologies, such as tablets, for the distribution and use of rulebooks. If a rail transit agency uses electronic means instead of print, it shall establish protocols for the distribution and management of digital rulebooks.

Any rail transit agency considering any new technology involving rulebooks shall consider the implications and outcomes of any such change and the use of technology as part of the overall transition project.

If a rail transit agency considers the use of electronic tablets for distribution of rulebooks, bulletins and notices, it shall consider the following:

- compliance with rail transit agency electronic device policy (which electronic devices are acceptable/necessary)
- process for updating and pushing out updates.
- searchability
- training/familiarization
- restrictions on when certain apps can be used
- ability to take notes
- maps
- operating protocols in event of electronic device malfunction

Related APTA standards

APTA RT-OP-S-011-10, "Rule-Compliance Program Requirements"

APTA RT-OP-S-022-16, "Operations Personnel Requirements in New Rail Transit Projects"

APTA RT-OP-RP-028-21, "Managing Short- and Long-Term Changes Affecting Rail Operations"

Definitions

For the purposes of this standard, the following terms and definitions apply. The job titles listed below are used in this standard for informational purposes only. It is up to the individual rail transit agency to determine and use titles as it finds appropriate.

authorized personnel: Rail transit agency personnel (employed or contracted) who need to be aware of and adhere to, or monitor adherence to, applicable rules and procedures contained in general and modal/specialized rulebooks.

accountable executive: A single, identifiable person who has ultimate responsibility for carrying out the SMS of a public transportation agency; responsibility for carrying out transit asset management practices; and control or direction over the human and capital resources needed to develop and maintain both the agency's PTASP, in accordance with 49 U.S.C. 5329(d), and the agency's transit asset management plan in accordance with 49 U.S.C. 5326.

rail transit agency: The organization that operates rail transit service and related activities. Also known as the *transit agency*, *operating agency*, *operating authority*, *transit authority* or other similar terms.

rules: Written mandatory directives issued by the rail transit agency for its officers and authorized personnel. Rules require or prohibit specific actions, conduct, methods or procedures in connection with the employment duties and responsibilities of those officers and authorized personnel.

Abbreviations and acronyms

SMS Safety Management System SOP standard operating practice

PTASP public transportation agency safety plan

Document history

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