FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION

Update on the FTA SMS Implementation Pilot at the Chicago Transit Authority

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Overview

- Pilot Program purpose and structure
- CTA Pilot
 - Timeline and milestones
 - Lessons learned so far
 - Key challenges

Pilot Program Purpose

- Safety Management Systems (SMSs) are new to the transit industry.
- Most SMS guidance comes from other industries.
- FTA is developing and testing technical assistance materials and tools to help the transit industry adopt SMSs.



Pilot Program Participants

- FTA develops and tests SMS implementation guidance for:
- Large multi-modal agencies
- Bus agencies of all sizes
- Rural transit operators
- Contractor-operated services





Montgomery County, MD



Frederick County, MD



CTA Pilot Timeline and Milestones

- Began in December 2014
- CTA has:
 - Assigned an SMS Implementation Lead and an SMS Implementation Team
 - Drafted a Safety Management Policy Statement
 - Offered Introduction to SMS training to managers
 - Conducted a safety culture survey (24% response rate)
 - Developed an SMS Implementation Project Plan and Safety Risk Management sub-plan

SMS Implementation Lessons Learned Leadership

- An SMS must be developed with agency leadership direction and buy-in.
 - The Accountable Executive
 - Minimize barriers between the SMS implementation effort and leadership.
- SMS implementation shouldn't just be a Safety Department initiative.
 - Safety as a business function across the agency

- Introduction to SMS video for GMs/CEOs
- Connect leadership across industries

SMS Implementation Lessons Learned **SMS Expertise**

- Basic SMS training may not be enough to make fully-informed decisions
- Need understanding of:
 - What a good SMS looks like in order to develop the agency's vision and goals for SMS;
 - Current safety management practices through SMS lens; and
 - How to transition the agency from current practices to future SMS.

- Competencybased training
- Practical guidance and tools to support decisionmaking

SMS Implementation Lessons Learned **Planning**

- Agencies benefit from SMS implementation planning.
 - Prepare the organization (reduce surprises, set expectations).
 - Sequence events.
 - Develop a realistic assessment of resources, and plan accordingly.
- Planning a multi-year, agency-wide effort is a unique challenge.
 - Draw from existing project planning experience, as appropriate.

- Planning support
- Integrate SMS gap analysis and planning efforts
- Planning vs resources tradeoff

SMS Implementation Lessons Learned Organizational Engagement

- SMS implementation is agency-wide and should have input from across the agency.
- Extensive engagement is resource intensive and can feel like a waste of time.
- Balance costs and benefits of engagement.
- Manage development, review, signoff and feedback activities.

- Consider positions to be involved, when, and how
- Position-based technical assistance and training materials

SMS Implementation Lessons Learned **SSOA Engagement**

- SSOAs are interested in how safety is managed.
- Engaging the SSOA early may be helpful.
 - A joint-learning opportunity
 - Develop common language and mutually-beneficial practices.
 - Set expectations for long-term changes.

- Educate SSOAs
- Help SSOAs and RTAs determine effective engagement strategies

