

FTSN/FON/FTMC – 14-90, FAC Joint Committee Teleconference

October 15, 2015

Attendees:

Bob Southall (Lee Tran)
Jim Egbert (MCAT)
Jeanne Rougeau (Palm Tran)
Ed Clark (SJCCOA)
Mike Gloss (PSTA)
Stephen Berry (LYNX)
Paul Goyette (Lee Tran)
Bill Mayer (Votran)
Colin Mulloy (JTA)
Henry Lukasik (PSTA)
Randy Brewer (JTA)
Joe Cheney, Jr. (PSTA)

Rob Gregg (CUTR)
Melissa DeLeon (CUTR)
Mitch Spicer (CUTR)
Ed Bart (CUTR)
Lisa Staes (CUTR)

Overall, there were general comments about incorporating the Safety Management System Framework into the content of Chapter 14-90, Florida Administrative Code. Here are other suggestions/comments:

- Suggestion that System Safety Program Plan now be referred to as the “Agency Safety Plan” – to be consistent with FTA safety program.
- Further, it was suggested that 14-90 include language that is consistent with MAP-21 transit safety legislation and any guidance or guidelines issued by FTA.
- 14-90 should reference SMS principles.
- Should have adopt minimum guidelines for new bus operator training and annual refresher training – consistent with the guidelines developed by the FON and FTSN (see Appendices A and B). Committee members requested that these guidelines be sent to the group.
- Guidelines for annual refresher training should not be “necessarily” tied to specific content.
- Was a suggestion that there be a minimum set of “core” topics that are included in all annual refresher training.
- It was suggested that there be a standard on what is taught – content and duration.
- There was a suggestion that minimum standards be developed on what topics/modules must be included in new bus operator and refresher training.

- Was suggested that certain minimum content or “core” content be included, but without any specific minimum standards related to the duration of the training.
- Better incorporating – asset management, hazard management, and the holistic view of SMS into 14-90.
- Need to make a decision about what form is required for medical examinations – use just one. Suggested that USDOT certified medical examiner be used. There was some agreement on this.
- Accident review process – would like to see consistency in the determination of preventability and the overall safety review process itself: data collection, analysis, tracking, trending, developing mitigation measures, tracking the success of these measures, ongoing process/safety improvement cycle.
- Minimum criteria for what constitutes a “bad” driving record. Need consistency statewide – what content on a driving record would result in a potential hire being denied employment?
- Also some discussion about transit camera systems and protecting those records from release.

There were comments related to formatting:

- Chapter 14-90 be restructured by content – all requirements by a given topic included within the same section. Training requirements were noted as an example.
- It was suggested that in the redesign/flow of 14-90 FDOT should look at examples such as FTA’s drug and alcohol rules – look at Part 655 and replicate the flow of 14-90.

Recordkeeping:

- Better description of what safety data must be collected.
- Guidelines of data tracking, trending, and analysis.
- Guidelines on how to modify policies and procedures to address any negative trends that may be occurring.
- Database standardization needed.
- “Absolutely need help with databases.”
- “Agreed.”

Hours of Service:

- What is FMCSA doing? CUTR will provide update on activity from FMC at the Network meetings.
- 8 hours between shifts is not enough. Suggest go to 10 hours.
- Need to make sure the policy makers understand the significance and the requirements for this modification.
- Look at other national/state rules and regulations and see where 14-90 differs.
- Suggestion that the final determination be based on the science that supports the issue.
- Split shifts and limitations on total duty hours with hours between splits – NO.

Maintenance:

- Guidance on what is required in pre-trip inspections and what constitutes a condition that requires that a vehicle be taken out of service (referenced the “Commercial Vehicle Code”).
- There was discussion about the length of time an agency has to keep pre/post trip inspection forms. Many discussed issues with retaining them for more than two weeks.
- Want clarification on the language related to refueling – how do you define “closed building”?

- Also want clarification and further guidance relating to refueling with passengers on board.
- Mirror issues noted – external rear view mirror blocking the view on the passenger side. St. Johns County moved them forward. Perhaps a standards on the location of mirrors in an effort to avoid blocking the view of the driver?
- Rear lighting configurations and current statutory restrictions.
- Wheelchair section needs clarification – inspect and maintain.
- Section 14-90.009 – who qualifies to inspect vehicles and who is qualified to repair?
- Preventive Maintenance standards needed.
- OSHA regs as part of refresher training for technicians.
- Suggested quality control plan for PMs (Lee Tran has this). 15% of PMs that are completed get a QC check.

Appendix A

Minimum Fixed Route Bus Operator Training Guidelines

	Training Category	Training Hours Per Operator	
		Recommended Minimum Hours Per Operator Trainee	Percent of Total Training Program ¹
Classroom Training (80 hours)	Safety and Security <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe Vehicle Operation • Defensive Driving/Accident Prevention • Hazard Recognition • Emergency Procedures 	24	12%
	Customer Service <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role of Transit Operator • Customer Basics • Communications • Difficult Situations • Customers with Disabilities and ADA 	24	12%
	Agency Specific <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Policies and Procedures • Fare Policies • Documentation and Paperwork • Reporting for Duty • Appearance • Code of Conduct • Employee/Operator Handbook 	16	8%
	Regulatory <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drug & Alcohol Program Training • Commercial Driver's License Training • Occupation Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Training • Americans with Disabilities Training • Rule 14-90 • Other Regulatory Training 	16	8%
Wheel Training (40 hours)	Technical Operator Skills (on bus training time) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vehicle Familiarization • Pre/Post Trip Inspections • Seat Positioning/Mirrors • Vehicle Start-Up Procedures • Steering/Maneuvering • Lift/Ramp Deployment • Securement • Signaling • Braking • Routine Procedures • Service Stops/Transfer Facilities • Driving Conditions/Adverse Weather • Simulator Training (if applicable) <p>Note: Of the Technical Operator Skills training, each operator trainee must spend a minimum of ten (10) hours of instruction/observation with a Certified TSI Bus Operator Instructor or equivalent.</p>	40	20%
Route Training (80 hours)	Route/Line Training (on-the-job training) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • System and Route Familiarization • Line Instructor Training and Observation • On The Job Training 	80	40%
TOTAL		200	100%

¹ The minimum training standards are for new bus operators. Training for experienced bus operators relocating to the agency can be adjusted at the discretion of the bus operator trainer/instructor. Hours are expressed in time per trainee. At the discretion of the instructor, times can be adjusted to accommodate class size.

Appendix B

Minimum Fixed Route Bus Operator Annual Refresher Training Guidelines

RECOMMENDED GUIDELINE

While it is not feasible to direct specific requirements to the content or format of annual refresher training for current fixed route bus operators, these Annual Bus Operator Refresher Training Guidelines include the development and implementation of annual refresher training that consists of a minimum of four (4) and preferably eight (8) hours per employee per calendar year. Each transit agency, while designing the annual refresher training approach to meet local needs and situations, should observe elements of all or most of the six (6) general training categories previously listed.

General Training Category Sub-Topic Detail

Annual refresher training topics vary from system-to-system and within systems from year-to-year depending upon industry topics, local situations, and critical needs. There are six general training categories that should be addressed in annual refresher training. Topics may include, but not be limited to those below.

1. Defensive Driving
2. Distracted Driving
 - a. Dealing with Passenger Distractions
 - b. Agency Guidelines for Use of Electronic and Wireless Communication Devices, Including Related Distractions
 - c. Dealing with Bicyclist Distractions
 - d. Dealing with Pedestrian Distractions
 - e. Dealing with Other Traffic Distractions
3. Passenger Relations
 - a. Passenger Wheelchair Securement and other Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Items
 - b. Dealing with Difficult Passengers
 - c. Customer Service
 - d. Passenger Boarding and Alighting
 - e. Passenger Assistance
4. Bus Operator Policies and Procedures
 - a. Agency Policies and Procedures
 - b. Drug and Alcohol Policies, Procedures and Education
 - c. Farebox and Fare Collection Issues
 - d. Rule 14-90 Updates
 - e. Fatigue Awareness

5. Emergency and System Security Issues
 - a. General
 - b. Awareness
 - c. How to Handle Emergency Situations
 - d. System Safety/Security Issues
 - e. Fire Extinguishers
 - f. Blood Bourne Pathogens
 - g. Hurricane/Mass Evacuation

6. Maintenance Related Issues
 - a. Pre- and Post-Trip Inspections Process
 - b. Reporting Bus Problems
 - c. Overview and Understanding of Bus and Bus Equipment
 - d. Interaction and Communication with Maintenance Division

BACKGROUND ON PROCESS

Bus Operator training is one of the cornerstones of the Florida public transit industry and falls into three general categories:

- New Hire Training

The Florida Department of Transportation's (FDOT) Florida Operators Network and Florida Transit Safety Network have jointly developed "Minimum Fixed Route Bus Operator Training Guidelines" for new bus operators. These guidelines provide for 80 hours of classroom training, 40 hours of behind the wheel training, and up to 80 hours of route training.
- Remedial Training

Remedial Training (or retraining) is required when an operator is involved in a preventable accident or observed operating the bus in an unsafe manner. The remedial training is designed to meet the specific situation and lead to corrective actions. Trainer road observation may also be conducted.
- Refresher Training

Refresher Training should be provided annually to all existing bus operators. Usually there are two components of annual refresher training: four (4) to eight (8) hours of classroom training plus behind the wheel observations and instructions.

The bus operator training can be supplemented with:

- Bus Simulator Training – this mimics actual driving and road conditions in a wide variety of circumstances and weather. It is used for both new operator training and refresher training classes. It allows the trainer to evaluate the driving skills of the operator in a safe environment.
- Safety Ride Along – this program is regularly conducted by supervisors and trainers. The supervisor/trainer conducts the road observation and determines if remedial training is needed.
- Safety Messages and Slogans
- Operator Notices and Memorandums
- Employee Newsletters
- Monthly or Quarterly Mandatory Operator Meetings

PROGRESS TO ESTABLISH MINIMUM GUIDELINES

Similar to the Florida Operators Network (FON) and/or the Florida Transit Safety Network (FTSN) training committees' effort to develop "Minimum Guidelines for Bus Operator Training," there has been overwhelming support for the development of similar minimum guidelines for annual bus operator refresher training.

A conference call among representatives of both the FON and FTSN was conducted on Thursday, October 16, 2014 to begin the process. Participants shared their agency practices for annual refresher training for bus operators. Refresher training is aimed at all agency bus operators and is above and in addition to remedial training that may be conducted for individual employees.

Based upon discussions with the operations, safety, and training representatives from Florida's public transit agencies, it was the consensus that, while the primary bus operator training currently provided is focused on new operator or on remedial retraining, it was important that transit agencies conduct formal and organized "refresher training" for all of its bus operators on a regular, re-occurring basis.

In late 2014, a survey was conducted to determine current annual refresher training practices for bus operators and identify those topics to be included in the guidelines. The survey was divided into two sections. The initial series of questions requested general information about each agency's annual bus operator refresher training. This was followed by questions that specifically requested input on those topics that should be offered in annual bus operator refresher training and allowed for additional comment.

FINDINGS

1. All agencies participating conducted some form of annual refresher training for its bus operators.
2. While the most frequent format of the training was annual training sessions, other agencies used their regular bus operator meetings (i.e., conducted on a monthly, quarterly, or semi-annual basis) to present refresher training topics.
3. The most popular training delivery methods were classroom training, handouts, and memos/notices. These primary methods were supplemented with posters, banners, computer based training, and employee newsletters.
4. The annual refresher training topics varied from system-to-system and within systems from year-to-year depending upon industry topics, local situations, and critical needs. The topical areas, however, focused on these six (6) general categories:
 - 1) Defensive Driving
 - 2) Distracted Driving
 - 3) Passenger Relations
 - 4) Bus Operator Policies and Procedures
 - 5) Emergency and System Security Issues
 - 6) Maintenance Related Issues