



2024

ANNUAL PUBLIC RAIL TRANSIT SAFETY REPORT

NEW JERSEY STATE SAFETY
OVERSIGHT AGENCY

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The cover photo captures PATCO's remarkable effort in managing the transportation of crowds during the Philadelphia Eagles Championship Parade. Although the parade took place in 2025, it is essential to timely recognize their achievement in successfully executing this challenging task.

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NJ Transit: River LINE, Newark Light Rail & Hudson-Bergen Light Rail

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Introduction

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of New Jersey's State Safety Oversight Agency's (NJ SSOA) program.

Pursuant to 49 Code of Federal Regulation (CFR) Part 674.11, "Every State that has a Rail Fixed Guideway Public Transportation System [RFGPTS or Rail Transit System (RTS)] must have a State Safety Oversight (SSO) program that has been approved by the Administrator [of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA)]. The FTA will audit each State's compliance at least triennially, consistent with the regulation, 49 [United States Code] U.S.C. 5329(e)(9). At minimum, an SSO program must:

- Explicitly acknowledge the State's responsibility for overseeing the safety of the rail transit systems within the State;
- Demonstrate the State's ability to adopt and enforce Federal and relevant State law for safety in rail transit systems;
- Establish a State Safety Oversight Agency (SSOA), by State law, in accordance with the requirements of 49 U.S.C. 5329(e) and this part;
- Demonstrate that the State has determined an appropriate staffing level for the SSOA commensurate with the number, size, and complexity of the rail transit systems in the State, and that the State has consulted with the Administrator for that purpose;
- Demonstrate that the employees and other personnel of the SSOA who are responsible for the oversight of RTSs are qualified to perform their functions, based on appropriate training, including substantial progress toward or completion of the Public Transportation Safety Certification Training Program (PTSCPT); and
- Demonstrate that by law, the State prohibits any public transportation agency in the State from providing funds to the SSOA."

Under 49 CFR Part 674.13(a)(7), the State must report, at least once a year, the status of the safety of each RTS to the Governor(s), the FTA, and the board of directors of each RFGPTS.

Executive Order 65 (1997) designates the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) as the SSOA. New Jersey Administrative Code (N.J.A.C.) 16:53E establishes rules concerning the State's oversight of the safety of RFGPTSs through the NJDOT.

NJDOT (or the NJ SSOA as designated by E.O. 65 (1997)) provides rail transit system safety oversight, reviews projects in engineering and construction, performs accident investigations, approves corrective action plans, and conducts compliance audits for four RTSs in the State of New Jersey. These rail systems are the River LINE, Newark Light Rail (NLR) and Hudson-Bergen Light Rail (HBLR) which are all owned by NJ Transit, and the Port Authority Transit Corporation (PATCO)'s Speedline.

What is the State Safety Oversight Program?

The NJ SSOA oversees the safety of four RTSs to ensure they are upholding industry-wide safety standards for riders, employees, equipment, facilities, and the right-of-way (land on which railroad track is located). The program verifies and enforces federal safety regulations throughout each RTS by use of the federally mandated Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP), and further ensures that each system incorporates a Safety Management System (SMS) throughout its operation, utilizing a top-down system of safety promotion and accountability.

The Role and Responsibility of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA)

The FTA monitors each State Safety Oversight Agency (SSOA) via quarterly check-ins and audits completed every three years. The monitoring is accomplished by utilizing standard evaluation criteria tied directly to FTA regulations. The FTA confirms that SSOA programs are both compliant with federal regulations and effective in safety oversight. The FTA evaluates previous audit findings, risks, and newly identified issues at an SSOA and/or Rail Fixed Guideway Public Transportation System (RFGPTS).

FTA safety-related regulations provide several ways for the FTA to provide safety oversight for the SSO programs and the RFGPTS:

- The FTA may join/participate or lead an investigation or audit. (49 CFR Part 674)
- The FTA may issue a General Directive (49 CFR Part 670) – The Administrator may issue a general directive that is applicable to all recipients or a subset of recipients due to an unsafe condition or practice, or a combination of unsafe conditions and practices exists such that there is a risk of death or personal injury, or damage to property or equipment or any situation where the public interest requires the avoidance or mitigation of a hazard or risk.
- The FTA may issue a Special Directive (49 CFR Part 670) – The Deputy Administrator may issue a special directive to one or more named recipients due to a recipient engaging in conduct, or there is evidence of a pattern or practice of a recipient's conduct, in violation of the Public Transportation Safety Program (PTASP) or any regulation or directive issued under those laws or an unsafe condition or practice, or a combination of unsafe conditions and practices exists such that there is a substantial risk of death or personal injury, or damage to property or equipment.

The Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act established the authority for the FTA to temporarily assume direct administration of a SSO program in the event of a nonconforming, inadequate, or incapable SSO program. Specifically, the statute outlines three situations where the FTA may assume the safety oversight of an SSO program:

- SSO program “is not being carried out in accordance” with 49 U.S.C. § 5329;
- SSO program “has become inadequate to ensure enforcement of Federal safety regulation”;
- SSO program “is incapable of providing adequate safety oversight consistent with the prevention of substantial risk of death or personal injury”.

While monitoring SSO programs, should the FTA uncover risks/issues that reach a level of concern, in which regular check-ins do not remedy the situation, the FTA can escalate identified risks/issues to the FTA Administrator, who will determine if temporary direct administration of an SSO program is required. If required, the FTA performs an assessment to inform the forthcoming assumption of decision. The assessment begins the FTA’s process, which consists of the following five distinct phases:

- **Assessment:** Gather and validate information on the SSO program identified as potentially at risk of nonconformance or ineffectiveness;
- **Decision:** Determine if it is necessary to temporarily administer the SSO program;
- **Planning:** Develop a tailored plan for the FTA to temporarily assume direct administration of safety oversight of an SSO program;
- **Execution:** Conduct direct safety oversight for the SSO program and assist the SSO to resolve deficiencies;
- **Relinquishment:** Recertification of an improved SSO program per 49 U.S.C. 5329(e)(8)(B)(ii).

The State Safety Oversight (SSO) Program Funding

Congress establishes funding for the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) grant programs. This funding is used by the FTA to issue grants for up to 80% of the reasonable costs of an SSO program. Every state is expected to use these funds to strengthen their program and comply with federal regulations. The New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) applies toll credits for the remaining 20% of the grant. These grants are made available annually to NJDOT. The NJDOT Office of Fixed Guideway applies for and manages the grant funding. **Table 1-1** presents the apportionment made available for the New Jersey State Safety Oversight Agency (NJ SSOA) program for calendar year 2024.

Table 1-1: 2024 NJ SSOA Program Funding

Federal Grant Year(s)	Federal Allocation	State Allocation (toll credits)	Total
2024	\$1,832,078	\$366,415	\$2,198,493

The FTA reviews activities to ensure that grant recipients use the funds in a manner consistent with their intended purpose and in compliance with regulatory and statutory requirements. The FTA assesses state management practices and implementation of several formula grants. The reviews are conducted every three years and encompass seventeen areas of compliance. In the most recent triennial audit of the NJ SSOA, in 2021, no grant related issues were identified.

The State Safety Oversight Agency (SSOA)

Under 49 CFR Part 674.7, an SSOA is an agency established by a state that meets the requirements and performs the functions specified by 49 U.S.C. Section 5329(e) and the regulations set forth in this part.

The Role and Responsibility of the New Jersey State Safety Oversight Agency (NJ SSOA)

The Program Standard developed by the NJ SSOA follows all requirements stipulated in 49 CFR 671, 49 CFR 672, 49 CFR 673, and 49 CFR 674. This includes minimum standards for the safety of all Rail Transit Agencies and Systems (RTA/RTSs) within its oversight. These standards are consistent with the National Public Transportation Safety Plan (NPTSP), the Public Transportation Safety Certification Training Program (PTSCTP), the rules for Public Transportation Agency Safety Plans (PTASP) and all applicable federal and state laws.

Responsibilities of the NJ SSOA program include:

- Requiring Rail Transit Agencies and Systems (RTA/RTSs) to maintain a PTASP that complies with the NJ SSOA Program Standard and federal regulations;
- Requiring the RTAs to develop and follow safety standards based on a Safety Management System (SMS) approach for operations, command and control, and maintenance of the RTSs;
- Requiring the RTA/RTSs to develop, document, and administer a process for performing internal safety program compliance reviews/audits and overseeing the process;
- Conducting on-site safety program and SMS compliance audits of the RTA/RTSs safety program under the NJ SSOA program jurisdiction once every three years to assess the RTA/RTSs adherence of its safety program and SMS based on the PTASP;
- Requiring RTA/RTSs to notify the NJ SSOA and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) within a required timeframe of any reportable safety event or significant hazard, as defined in the Program Standard and federal regulations;
- Investigating (or causing to be investigated) any reportable event or significant hazard as defined in the Program Standard and federal regulations;
- Requiring RTA/RTSs to develop Corrective Action Plans (CAPs). Tracking progress and evidence of CAP resolution. Monitoring identified safety risks at the RTA/RTSs through reports, meetings, as well as visits to the RTA/RTSs;
- Providing required and requested information, data, and reports to the FTA;

- Participating in capital projects related to rail transit and safety program aspects of the project, including design through safety certification and successful transition from the project to revenue operations and maintenance.

Safety oversight is accomplished through transparent interactions and partnership with each RTA/RTS and monitoring of all requirements. These requirements are based on the federal and state regulations, the Program Standard, the PTASP and related minimum standards for safety. Any significant issues with meeting these requirements are communicated to the RTA in an appropriate timeframe and tracked. Priorities are established to achieve the following:

- Monitor each RTS's current safety performance compared to the RTA's board approved safety performance targets;
- Monitor each RTS's staff competencies, specifically those who are designated as responsible for audits, examinations, and investigations;
- Work to assure that the SSOA program development and processes are adequate to be aware of each RTS's safety performance and safety risks in operations, maintenance, and projects or modifications to the rail systems and infrastructure.

The FTA expects the states to staff and otherwise resource their SSO programs (appropriate to the size, number, and complexity of RTAs) with personnel skilled in investigation, analysis, auditing, inspections, administration, and as appropriate, engineering and capital projects management. The SSO program is responsible for ensuring that designated safety staff (individuals responsible for conducting audits and examinations of transit systems) are qualified through appropriate training, which includes completion of the Public Transportation Safety Certification Training Program. The staffing and training of employees must be approved by the FTA and the NJDOT is required to notify the FTA of any changes in staffing.

During this reporting period, the NJDOT met the FTA's recommendation for staffing, and designated safety staff completed and/or continued progress towards completing the FTA training requirements. As of 2024, 72% of the designated safety staff completed their PTSCPT, and the others are in progress.

For 2024, a total of 19,541 hours were expended, the combined efforts of both NJDOT and contracted staff.

State Safety Oversight Program Standard (SSOPS)

A State Safety Oversight Agency (SSOA) must develop and distribute a written State Safety Oversight Program Standard (SSOPS), consistent with the National Public Transportation Safety Plan (NPTSP) and the rules for the Public Transportation Agency Safety Plans (PTASPs). The SSOPS must identify the processes and procedures that govern the activities of the SSOA. Also, the Program Standard must identify the processes and procedures an RTA/RTS must have in place to comply. The New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) SSOPS is available on the Department's website for transparency with the RTAs/RTSs.

A review of the NJDOT SSOPS that meets the federal requirements set forth in 49 CFR Part 672, 49 CFR Part 673, and 49 CFR Part 674, was conducted in 2024 and a log of future updates is being maintained until the next version is ready for release.

Rail Fixed Guideway Public Transportation Systems (RFGPTS)

The New Jersey State Safety Oversight Agency (NJ SSOA) is responsible for overseeing the safety of four rail systems, within two rail agencies, that operate under the jurisdiction of the State of New Jersey. One system, Port Authority Transit Corporation (PATCO), also operates in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. **Table 1-2** presents the RTAs/RFGPTS.

Table 1-2: Rail System Information

RTA	RFGPTS	FTA Mode	Operated & Maintained by	System Length
Delaware River Port Authority	Port Authority Transit Corporation (PATCO)	Heavy Rail	PATCO	14.5 miles
NJ Transit	River LINE	Light Rail	Southern New Jersey Rail Group, LLC, under contract	34 miles
NJ Transit	Newark Light Rail (NLR)	Light Rail	NJ Transit	6.9 miles
NJ Transit	Hudson-Bergen Light Rail (HBLR)	Light Rail	21st Century Rail Corporation, under contract	17 miles

Port Authority Transit Corporation (PATCO)

Overview

PATCO is owned and operated by the Delaware River Port Authority (DRPA), a heavy rail line that travels between New Jersey and Pennsylvania. PATCO is unique as it is the only bi-state RTS regulated by the NJ SSOA. Oversight has been determined through a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between New Jersey and Pennsylvania. PATCO extends approximately 14.5 miles of double track grade separated system from Lindenwold, New Jersey to the City of Philadelphia. There are thirteen active rail stations that service an estimated 34,000 daily passengers. Passengers are transported on 60 married pairs of recently refurbished railcars (120 cars in total). PATCO uses the Benjamin Franklin Bridge to provide train service between New Jersey and Pennsylvania. The transit line includes 2.3 miles of downtown subway and 12.2 miles above ground track. The system has seven stations below ground as well as seven stations above ground. One of the subway stations, Franklin Square, has been reopened to passengers after its historic redevelopment; see page 30 for more information. PATCO operates a 24-hour-a-day service throughout the year. System safety is provided by Pulse Code Cab Signal System and Wayside Signals at interlockings. Train cars operate under an Automatic Train Control, from a Central Train Control Tower located in Camden. Train movement is powered by a 750 VDC third rail electric power system.



River LINE

Overview

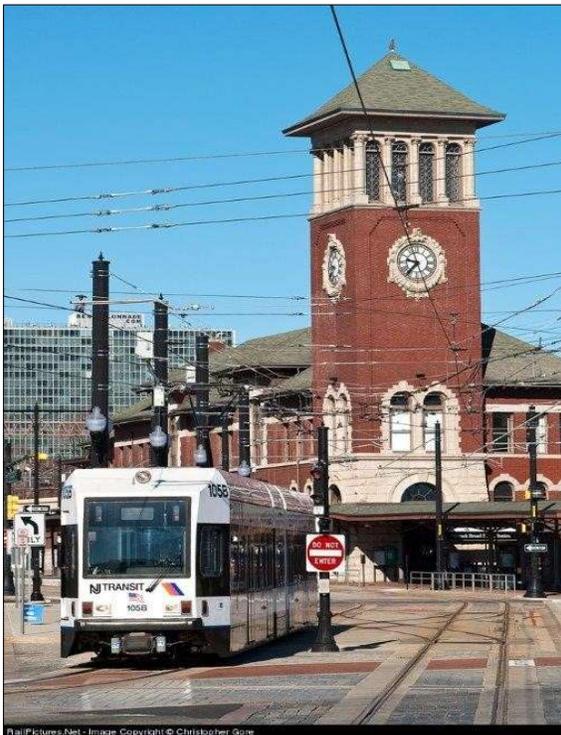
The River LINE is owned by New Jersey Transit and operated and maintained by Southern New Jersey Rail Group, LLC. The River LINE operates twenty married pairs of articulated vehicles. The light rail transit system operates for approximately 34 miles between the cities of Trenton and Camden, New Jersey. The River LINE provides service to major New Jersey locations including the Waterfront Entertainment Center, Rutgers University, Walter Rand Transportation Center in Camden, the Trenton Transportation Center, and towns throughout Burlington County. The River LINE operates as a Light Rail Transit in the city of Camden, in street running mode. The alignment has 73 grade crossings, 21 station stops, and 23 rail bridges. It travels through small towns and sensitive wetland areas. Outside the City of Camden, the River LINE operates on a comingled track with Conrail operating over the track at night. Train safety is provided by Wayside Signals with Positive Inductive Train Stop for absolute stop signals. Train movements function according to the Northeast Operating Rules Advisory Committee (NORAC) using the Central Traffic Controls (CTC) from a command office in Camden. The River LINE provides service to approximately 5,500 passengers daily.



Newark Light Rail

Overview

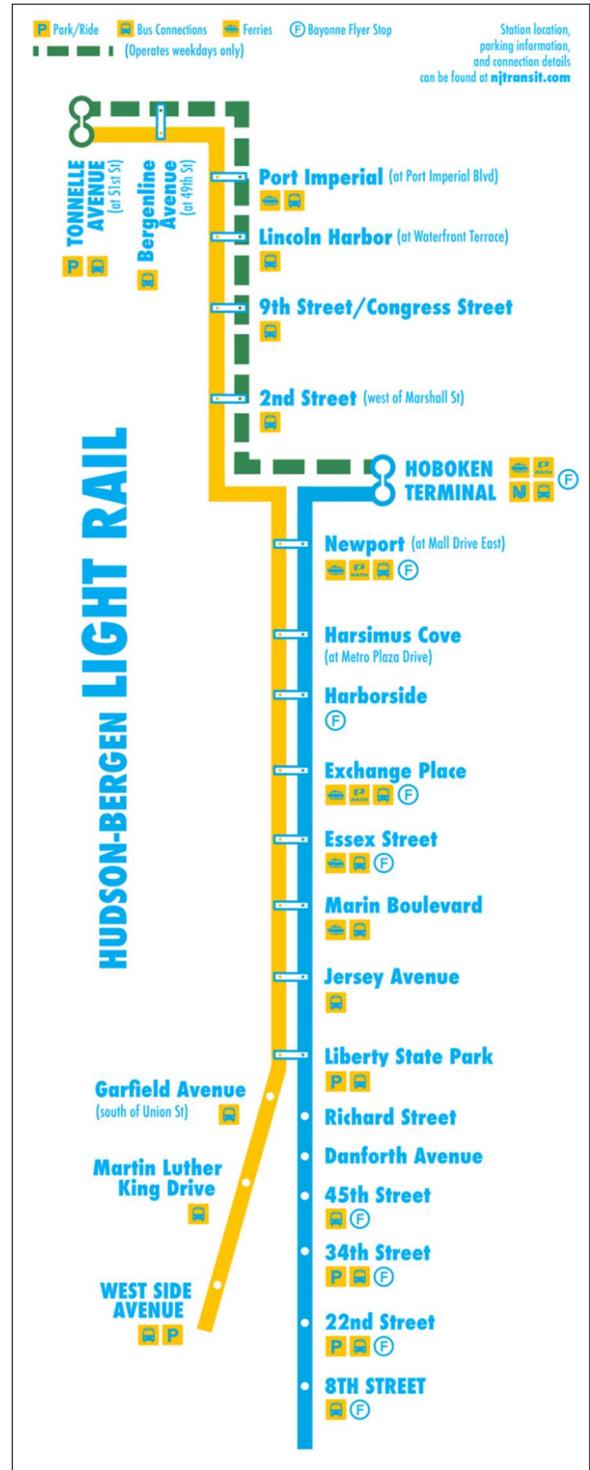
The Newark Light Rail (NLR) System is owned and operated by New Jersey Transit. It is a 6.9-mile light rail line that operates as a rapid transit link between terminal stations at Penn Station in Newark, NJ and Grove Street Station in Bloomfield, NJ, with an extension connection from Penn Station to Broad Street Station. The double-tracked light rail line has 4 distinct running areas: underground tunnel for 1.7 miles, street running territory for approximately 1 mile, depressed cut and at grade for approximately 3.8 miles. The light rail transit vehicles are virtually identical to those used on Hudson – Bergen Light Rail, without the running gear. The NLR system is powered by a direct current (DC) variable tension catenary electrical system. The system serves approximately 16,000 passengers daily and operates 21 hours a day, 7 days a week.



Hudson-Bergen Light Rail

Overview

The Hudson Bergen Light Rail Transit System (HBLR) is owned by New Jersey Transit and operated and maintained by Twenty First Century Rail Corporation. The system operates for approximately 17 route miles of double track between Bayonne, New Jersey and North Bergen, New Jersey. HBLR operates 52 recently refurbished and extended, electrically powered train cars, operating in married pairs. The trains are powered by a direct current (DC) catenary system. The HBLR line provides service to approximately 52,000 passengers daily while running 20 hours a day, 7 days a week. The high-speed rail service provides 24 station stops and 2 employee flag stops. The line starts above ground at the southern terminus in Bayonne, NJ and operates primarily on grade separated right-of-way with approximately two miles of street running in mixed traffic. The at-grade crossings are equipped with transit signal priority to automatically change the traffic signal to favor the light rail transit system. Train movements are governed by a multi- aspect color signal system. The rail line progresses north through a double track 4,096-foot-long tunnel to the northern terminus at North Bergen, NJ.



Implementation of New Federal Regulations

Bipartisan Infrastructure Law

On November 15, 2021, President Joseph R. Biden Jr. signed the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, enacted as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, which continues the public transportation safety program for fiscal years 2022-2026. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law amended 49 U.S.C. §5329 to require State Safety Oversight Agencies (SSOAs) to conduct risk-based inspections of the rail fixed guideway public transportation systems that the SSOA oversees. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law also added a provision directing FTA to issue a Special Directive to each SSOA on the development and implementation of risk-based inspection programs (see 49 U.S.C. §5329(k)(5)).

Federal Transit Administration (FTA) issued a Special Directive 22-38 on October 21, 2022, that required the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) to develop and implement a risk-based inspection program as required by 49 U.S.C. § 5329(k). In accordance with 49 U.S.C. §5329 and 49 CFR Part 670, FTA directed NJDOT to: (1) submit documentation that demonstrates the SSOA has developed a risk-based inspection program in accordance with this Special Directive and the criteria set forth in U.S.C. §5329(k) within two years of the issuance of this Directive; and (2) within one year of FTA's approval of the SSOA's risk-based inspection program, submit documentation that demonstrates the SSOA has implemented that approved program for at least six months.

The SSOA submitted its risk-based inspection program on April 30, 2024. In consultation with the FTA, the SSOA made several adjustments to the plan and began a pilot period for monthly data reporting lasting from June 15th through November 1st. The SSOA's submission was approved by the FTA on August 7, 2024. Enhancements to the Program include increasing staffing from 7 to 10 FTEs, providing inspectors with official identification and meeting with the NJ Office of Information Technology about improving data collection and storage. The SSOA must demonstrate six months of implementation prior to August 7, 2025.

State Safety Oversight (49 CFR Part 674)

State Safety Oversight (49 CFR Part 674) – the FTA completed rulemaking March 16, 2016, for new regulations based on 49 U.S.C. Section 5329 instead of Section 5330. The new regulation for SSO programs went into effect on April 15, 2016, and states had three years to complete development and approval from FTA through a certification process for their Part 674 compliant SSO program. This three-year period has elapsed and the previous SSO regulation, 49 CFR Part 659, has been repealed along with its authorization, Section 5330. On October 18, 2024, FTA published a final rule. This final rule implements new requirements of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (enacted as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA)), removes outdated references, and simplifies notification requirements. **The effective date of this rule is January 1, 2025.**

Public Transportation Agency Safety Plans (49 CFR 673)

On Wednesday, April 26, 2023, FTA published a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) in the Federal Register proposing new requirements for the Public Transportation Agency Safety Plans (PTASP) regulation. The public comment period closed on June 26, 2023.

On April 11, 2024, FTA published a final rule. This final rule includes requirements for Agency Safety Plans (ASP), joint labor-management Safety Committee, cooperation with frontline transit worker representatives in the development of ASPs, safety risk reduction programs, safety performance targets, de-escalation training for certain transit workers, and addressing infectious diseases through the Safety Management System (SMS) process. This final rule also finalizes revisions to the regulation to coordinate and align with other FTA programs and safety rulemakings. These changes take effect with the 2025 ASP cycle.

National Public Transportation Safety Plan (NSP)

[National Public Transportation Safety Plan | FTA](#)

On May 31, 2023, FTA published a Federal Register Notice regarding proposed updates to FTA's National Public Transportation Safety Plan (NSP). The NSP serves as FTA's primary guidance document to improve transit safety performance. The public comment period closed on July 31, 2023.

FTA is publishing proposed revisions to the NSP to address new requirements in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, enacted as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, to continue to mature FTA's national safety program, and to further advance transit safety.

The National Public Transportation Safety Plan introduces the use of the transit-specific SMS framework, safety performance measurement, and concepts of managing risks and assuring safety performance at transit agencies that are proactive and based on SMS. This plan also introduced the FTA's intended requirements for safety performance criteria that the transit agencies are required to base their safety performance measures and targets on for improvements documented in their Public Transportation Agency Safety Plans. The current version of the National Safety Plan was published in April 2024.

- **Safety Performance Measures:** The proposed NSP identifies seven new safety performance measures for all transit providers. These changes would double the number of required safety performance targets that transit agencies must set for their modes of public transportation. These changes are responsive to the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and an increased focus on bus collisions and transit worker safety.
- **Safety Risk Reduction Programs:** The proposed NSP identifies eight measures required for safety risk reduction programs. Transit agencies receiving urban formula (Section 5307) funds and serving an urbanized area with a population of 200,000 or more must set targets for these measures based on a three-year rolling average of data the agency has reported to the National Transit Database.
- **Voluntary Minimum Safety Standards and Recommended Practices:** The proposed NSP includes an updated listing of voluntary minimum safety performance standards for public transportation vehicles used in revenue operations and voluntary minimum safety standards to ensure the safe operation of public transportation systems. It also includes recommended practices that may support the transit industry in assessing and mitigating safety risk and improving safety performance.

Public Transportation Safety Certification Training Program (49 CFR 672)

The document outlines proposed changes to the Public Transportation Safety Certification Training Program (PTSCTP) requirements under 49 CFR 672. The main purpose of these changes is to enhance the technical proficiency of individuals conducting safety audits, reviews, inspections, and other safety oversight activities for public transportation systems. The mandatory requirements will apply to State Safety Oversight Agency (SSOA) personnel, rail transit agencies, and their employees and contractors directly responsible for safety oversight. The document details the specific training requirements, including initial and refresher training, and establishes procedures for evaluating prior certifications and training.

On August 14, 2024, FTA published the final updates to the PTSCTP regulation. The updates refine the PTSCTP communication process, add administrative requirements and clarify voluntary PTSCTP participation and recertification training requirements. The regulation maintains the existing minimum training requirements for State Safety Oversight Agencies (SSOA) personnel and employees and contractors who are directly responsible for the safety oversight of a rail fixed guideway public transportation system. **The effective date of this rule is November 1, 2024.**

Rail Transit Roadway Worker Protection (49 CFR 671)

On October 31, 2024, the FTA published the RWP final rule, effective December 2, 2024. This regulation establishes minimum safety standards for a rail transit agency's RWP program to ensure safe operation of public transportation systems, and prevent safety events, fatalities, and injuries to transit workers who may access the roadway in the performance of work.

Each RTA/RFGPTS must complete the development of an RWP Program and have it approved by the NJSSOA and implemented no later than December 2, 2025. Thereafter, the NJ SSOA must submit the approved program to the FTA within thirty (30) days of approval.

Transit Worker Hours of Service and Fatigue Risk Management

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) issued a Request for Information (RFI) on September 5, 2024, seeking input from transit agencies regarding their hours of service (HOS) policies and fatigue risk management programs (FRMP). This effort builds on an earlier Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPRM) aimed at understanding existing industry practices related to managing worker fatigue and ensuring safety. The FTA's request aimed to collect data on current policies, state and local laws, and procedures transit agencies use to monitor and address fatigue. The information gathered will help the FTA evaluate the need for potential minimum federal safety standards concerning HOS and FRMPs.

The FTA asks agencies to submit documents such as policies on work-hour limits, fatigue monitoring, and fatigue-related investigations, as well as research or data that supports these practices. The deadline for submission was December 4, 2024, and all responses will be part of the public record in the ongoing rulemaking process.

State Safety Oversight Reporting and Data Collection

Electronic Reporting

The collection and evaluation of data is essential to improving safety. The New Jersey State Safety Oversight Agency (NJ SSOA) focuses on collecting and analyzing meaningful and actionable data. The data in this report is compiled from the annual submission to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for calendar year 2024, as submitted via the FTA’s State Safety Oversight Reporting (SSOR) database. SSOR fulfills the following requirements:

- 49 CFR Part 674.39 states data “must be submitted electronically through a reporting system specified by FTA.”
- 49 CFR Part 674.33(a) includes “the criteria and thresholds for accident notification and reporting are defined in a reporting manual developed for the electronic reporting system specified by the FTA as required in 49 CFR Part 674.39(b), and in appendix A.”

In addition to data collection and submission of transit safety data to the FTA, the web based SSOR system provides: Data Analytics, Communications (between FTA and NJ SSOA), and an Event Discrepancy Tracker. The NJ SSOA met the FTA SSOR annual reporting deadlines for calendar year 2024.

New Jersey State Safety Oversight Agency (NJ SSOA) Databases

The NJ SSOA maintains databases created to collect and store data, the Electronic Accident Reporting (EAR) database and Accident / Incident Database (ACID). The Rail Transit Agencies and Rail Transit Systems (RTA/RTSs) enter data into the EAR database, which is then imported into ACID by the NJ SSOA. This data is evaluated for accuracy and monitored as part of the oversight process. Portions of numerous reports are shared with the FTA and utilizing a systematic verification process increases the data’s credibility. These two databases have continued to ensure the accuracy and efficiency of reportable events as well as the flow of communication between the NJ SSOA and the RTAs. **Figure 1-1** shows the interface of the NJ SSOA’s ACID database.

Figure 1-1: ACID Database - Data Entry Selection



2024 Annual Safety Statistics

The following sections represent data submitted to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) using the State Safety Oversight Reporting (SSOR) database for the calendar year 2024. For uniformity, data is represented by Rail Transit Agency (RTA). Port Authority Transit Corporation's (PATCO) data is singular, and NJ Transit's data is an aggregate of three Rail Transit Systems (RTSs): River LINE, Newark Light Rail (NLR), and Hudson-Bergen Light Rail (HBLR).

Field Visits

Recognizing that each Rail Transit System (RTS) has unique characteristics, the New Jersey State Safety Oversight Agency (NJ SSOA) routinely visits each system to perform observations and build our knowledge. During the visits, the NJ SSOA examines the implementation of their safety program and performs inspections of vehicles, stations, and facilities. The intent of these activities is to identify and prevent potential safety concerns from developing into safety events. **Table 2-1** presents NJ SSOA field visits completed for the calendar year 2024.

Table 2-1: 2024 NJ SSOA Field Visits

RTA/RFGPTS	2024
DRPA - PATCO	14
NJ Transit (River LINE, NLR, and HBLR)	100
Total	114

Public Transportation Agency Safety Plans (PTASPs)

A PTASP describes a rail agency's safety policies, procedures, objectives, and responsibilities. Additional PTASP updates were required for compliance with the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. All PTASPs were approved by both the Joint Labor/Management Committee and their respective boards. Table 2-2 presents PTASP implementation dates for calendar year 2024.

Table 2-2: RFGPTS PTASP Implementation Dates

RTA/RFGPTS	Implementation Date
DRPA - PATCO	December 13, 2024
NJ Transit River LINE	February 13, 2024
NJ Transit NLR	February 13, 2024
NJ Transit HBLR	February 13, 2024

Accidents – Notification and Reporting

In accordance with 49 CFR Part 674.33, Appendix to 49 CFR Part 674 (shown below), and the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) State Safety Oversight Agency (SSOA) Program Standard, events that meet the thresholds in **Table 2-3** are required to be reported to and investigated by the NJ SSOA.

Table 2-3: Notification and Reporting of Accidents

Human Factors	Property Damage	Types of Events (Examples)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fatality (occurring at the scene or within 30 days following the accident) - One or more persons suffering serious injury 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Property damage resulting from a collision involving a rail transit vehicle or any derailment of a rail transit vehicle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A collision between a rail transit vehicle and another rail transit vehicle - A collision at a grade crossing resulting in a serious injury or fatality - A collision with a person resulting in a serious injury or fatality - A runaway train - Evacuation due to life safety reasons - A derailment (mainline or yard) - Fires resulting in a serious injury or fatality

As part of the Rail Transit Agency (RTA)’s responsibility, they must also report these events electronically to the FTA’s National Transit Database (NTD) within 30 days of an event. Submissions for events that meet the FTA’s threshold for a Reportable Accident are pre-populated into the FTA State Safety Oversight Reporting (SSOR) system, and categorized by the FTA into one of the following Event Types:

- Derailment
- Rail Grade Crossing (RGX) Collision
- Collision (Non-RGX)
- Fire (Causing Serious Injury or Fatality)
- Runaway Train
- Evacuation due to life safety reasons
- Fatalities (one or more within 30 calendar days of safety event)*
- Serious Injury*

**These events account for serious injuries or fatalities not otherwise attributed to a collision, derailment, fire, runaway train, or evacuation for life safety reasons.*

Accident Reporting in 2024

Table 2-4 presents the total number of accidents reported by the Rail Transit Agencies (RTAs) to the New Jersey State Safety Oversight Agency (NJ SSOA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for calendar year 2024:

Table 2-4: 2024 Accidents

RTA/RFGPTS	2024
DRPA - PATCO	9
NJ Transit (River LINE, NLR, and HBLR)	24
Total	33

2024: PATCO Accidents and Probable Causes

PATCO had nine (9) FTA-reportable accidents in 2024. **Table 2-5** presents the 2024 PATCO Count of Probable Cause by FTA Event Type. The probable cause is identified by PATCO unless the investigation remains open.

Table 2-5: 2024 PATCO Count of Probable Cause by FTA Event Type

FTA Event Type	Total by Event Type	Probable Cause	Total Count by Probable Cause	Serious Injuries	Fatalities
Collision (non-RGX)	4	Pedestrian Actions	2	1	1
		Operating Rule - Human Factor	1	0	0
		Suicides	1	0	1
Derailment	3	Operating Rule – Human Factor	2	0	0
		Other – Hi-rail vehicle configuration vs. track geometry – rear dual inner wheel did not clear over switch rail/running rail	1	0	0
All Other Categories	2	Equipment Failure	1	0	0
		Trespasser	1	1	0
TOTAL	9		9	2	2

National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) Investigation of Port Authority Transit Corporation (PATCO) Contractor Fatalities

On May 8, 2024, the NTSB concluded its investigation of the contractor fatalities that occurred on October 14, 2022. On that day, a westbound Port Authority Transit Corporation (PATCO) train struck and killed two subcontractor employees from JPC Group, Inc. on Main Track 2 of the Benjamin Franklin Bridge in Camden, New Jersey. The workers were in a close-clearance area before the track was officially taken out of service for scheduled nighttime construction work. The train operator, traveling at 33 mph, initiated emergency braking upon seeing the workers but could not stop in time.

The NTSB investigation found that a critical failure occurred in adhering to PATCO's Right-of-Way (ROW) Safety Plan. Required job briefings and communication protocols were not properly followed — especially the failure to include right-of-way safety information in the subcontractors' pre-shift briefing. Contributing factors included poor oversight, lack of real-time coordination, and gaps in PATCO's safety enforcement. Post-accident toxicology also revealed the presence of fentanyl in both contractors, but impairment could not be confirmed to indicate causation.

The NTSB concluded the probable cause was the workers being on track before the track outage was authorized, with contributing factors being PATCO's procedural lapses and failure to ensure safety protocols were followed. Following this accident, PATCO has held safety stand down

meetings and provided the required job briefings for all employees accessing the track areas, fulfilling the requirements outlined by the NTSB in October of 2023.

The published report (RIR-24-04) can be found in its entirety at <https://www.nts.gov/investigations/AccidentReports/Reports/RIR2404.pdf>.

2024: NJ Transit (River LINE, NLR, HBLR) Accidents and Probable Causes

There were twenty-four (24) FTA-reportable accidents in 2024. **Table 2-6** presents the NJ Transit Count of Probable Cause by FTA Event Type. The probable cause is identified by NJ Transit unless the investigation remains open.

Table 2-6: 2024 NJ Transit Count of Probable Cause by Accidents Category

FTA Event Type	Total by Event Type	Probable Cause	Count by Probable Cause	Non-Serious Injuries	Serious Injuries	Fatalities
Collision (non-RGX)	6	Trespasser	1	0	0	1
		Operating Rule - Human Factor	1	1	0	0
		Other – TBD (Awaiting NTSB Investigation)	1	22	1	1
		Other – Parked tractor trailer encroached right-of-way of tracks	1	1	0	0
		Other – Tree fell on overhead catenary system	1	0	0	0
		Other – Downed tree due to heavy rain and winds	1	0	0	0
Derailment	4	Operating Rule – Human Factor	2	0	0	0
		Other – Imbalanced load of ballast	1	0	0	0
		Other – TBD	1	0	0	0
RGX Collision	9	Action of Motorist	7	6	0	0
		Trespasser	1	0	0	1
		Operating Rule – Human Factor	1	0	0	0
Fire	2	Equipment Failure	2	0	0	0
All Other Categories	3	Equipment Failure	1	0	0	0
		Other – Mechanical Failure	1	0	0	0
		Other – TBD	1	0	0	0
Total	24		24	30	1	3

National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) Investigation of River LINE Fatality

The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) has initiated an investigation into the collision and subsequent fatality that occurred on October 14, 2024. The accident occurred when an NJ Transit light rail vehicle struck a downed tree that had fallen across the tracks. Upon seeing the obstruction, the operator activated the track brakes and emergency brakes; however, the vehicle did not decelerate enough to avoid collision with the tree, which broke the windshield of the cab and fatally struck the operator. Twenty-three (23) of the passengers on board were injured and were transported to a nearby hospital before being released.

The NTSB’s investigation into this collision is ongoing. A preliminary docket has not yet been released to the public. All updates can be found at <https://www.nts.gov/investigations/Pages/RRD25FR001.aspx>.

Corrective Action Plans (CAPs)

As part of its responsibilities under the New Jersey State Safety Oversight Agency (NJ SSOA) program, the NJ SSOA oversees the Rail Transit Agency (RTA)’s development and implementation of CAPs. The purpose of a CAP is to establish the basis of a plan, developed by the RTA, which describes the discovery of a risk or hazard and the actions the RTA will take to minimize, control, correct or eliminate that risk or hazard; including the schedule for the planned actions and the responsible individual who will actualize and execute the plan (49 CFR Part 674.37). In addition, the RTA must provide periodic CAP updates to the NJ SSOA until the risk or hazard has been resolved, or until the risk has been lowered to an acceptable level; thereby keeping the safety issue in the forefront of the RTA’s efforts and preventing neglect.

A CAP is developed by the RTAs for the following activities: investigation reports, internal or external safety compliance audits, and three-year safety compliance reviews and audits (from the NJ SSOA program or Federal Transit Administration (FTA) triennial compliance audit of the NJ SSOA program). CAPs may also be developed from other sources such as hazard identification and analysis, risk assessments, and risk monitoring by the RTA or the NJ SSOA.

CAP Reporting in 2024

Table 2-7 presents the total number of CAPs reported by the RTAs to the NJ SSOA for calendar year 2024:

Table 2-7: Reported CAPs in 2024

RTA/RFGPTS	2024
DRPA - PATCO	12
NJ Transit (River LINE, NLR, and HBLR)	51
Total	63

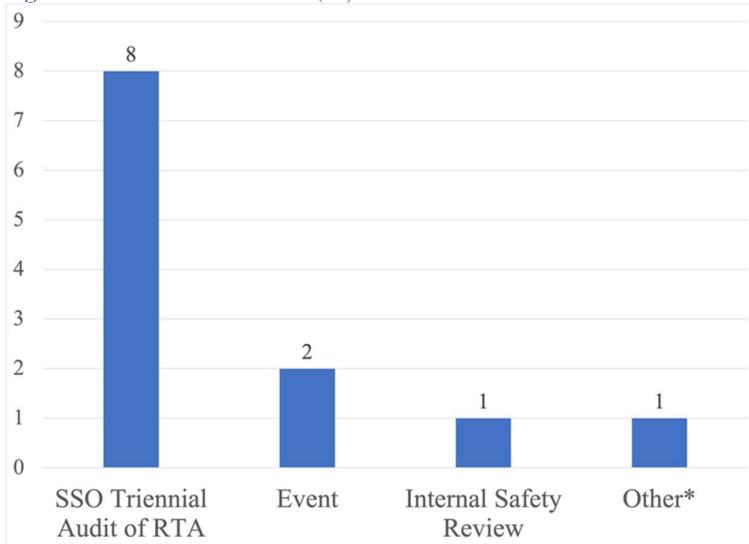
The FTA categorizes CAPs into the following **Source Types**:

- Event
- Inspection (Announced)
- Inspection (Unannounced)
- Internal Audit
- SMS Assessment
- SSO Triennial Audit of RTA
- Other

PATCO CAPs

Figure 2-1 presents twelve (12) CAPs reported by PATCO for calendar year 2024, categorized by FTA Source Type.

Figure 2-1: 2024 PATCO CAPs (12)

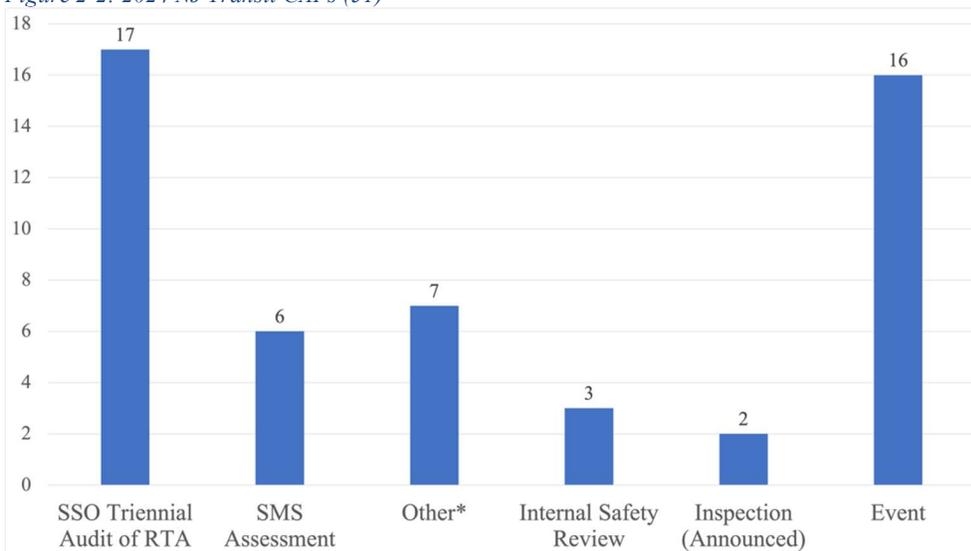


**Other: Roadway Worker Protection (RWP) Close Calls*

NJ Transit CAPs

Figure 2-2 presents fifty-one (51) CAPs reported by NJ Transit for calendar year 2024, categorized by FTA Source Type.

Figure 2-2: 2024 NJ Transit CAPs (51)



**Other: Safety Certification (5), Incident (1), Hazardous Conditions Identified During Routine Inspection (1)*

Hazards

Hazards are real or potential conditions that can cause injury, illness, or death; damage to or loss of the facilities, equipment, rolling stock, or infrastructure of a Rail Fixed Guideway Public Transportation System (RFGPTS); or damage to the environment; and that meet the Rail Transit Agency's (RTA) thresholds in their safety plans for reporting to the New Jersey State Safety Oversight Agency (NJ SSOA) program. **Table 2-8: Hazards** presents a generalized sample of hazard categories.

Table 2-8: 2024 Hazards

Hazard Category	Question
Unwanted Energy	Is there an environment capable of producing an unwanted release of energy?
Configuration	Is the workplace configured so that workers can be caught in, on, between equipment and that employees can strike an object?
Mechanical	Can an employee be struck by an object or be struck by a moving mechanical object?
Gravity	Is there potential for slipping, tripping, or falling due to gravity?
Chemicals/ Substances	Does the presence of chemicals or substances pose a threat to the safety and health of the workers and customers?
Overexertion	Could the employee overexert from pushing, pulling, bending, twisting, repetitive motion, vibration or lifting?
Environmental	Is the working or operating environment hazardous to safety and/or health?
Human Factors	Is the task designed to be either too complicated, too simple, or contribute to human error?

Hazards Reporting in 2024

Although no longer reported in the SSOR database, Hazards are tracked by the RFGPTS and communicated to the SSOA as part of the Monthly Reporting required by the Program Standard.

General Directive 24-1: Required Actions Regarding Assaults on Transit Workers

On September 25, 2024, FTA issued General Directive 24-1: Required Actions Regarding Assaults on Transit Workers. The General Directive required transit agencies subject to FTA's Public Transportation Agency Safety Plans (PTASP) regulation to conduct a safety risk assessment, identify safety risk mitigations or strategies and provide information to FTA via SMS Report on how they are assessing, mitigating and monitoring the safety risk associated with assaults on transit workers. NJ Transit and PATCO provided response to the FTA in the time allotted.

On January 16, 2025, FTA published Responses to General Directive 24-1. FTA's initial analysis of agency responses shows more than two-thirds of transit agencies determined that safety risk mitigations are necessary to reduce the risk of assaults on transit workers, and these agencies are working to roll out a variety of mitigation measures.

FTA Safety Advisory 24-2: Street Running Rail Vehicle Collisions

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has determined that street-running rail operations pose a heightened risk of safety incidents, given that rail vehicles operate in and among other roadway users, including privately-owned vehicles (POV), pedestrians, and bicyclists. On November 25, 2024, FTA issued Safety Advisory 24-2 (SA 24-2) to recommend that State Safety Oversight Agencies (SSOAs) direct Rail Transit Agencies (RTAs) operating street running rail systems in their jurisdictions to incorporate analysis of collisions involving street running rail vehicles with POVs or persons in shared rights-of-way (ROW) into their Safety Risk Management (SRM) processes. In addition, FTA recommends that SSOAs incorporate an evaluation of the RTAs' mitigation of street-running rail vehicle collisions into their oversight activities. FTA is issuing this Safety Advisory to address fatalities and injuries caused by street running rail vehicle collisions. A response is due by May 26, 2025.

Environmental Hazards: 2024 Earthquake

On April 5th, 2024, a 4.8 magnitude earthquake struck near Whitehouse Station, New Jersey. In response, NJDOT inspectors conducted thorough evaluations of bridges near the epicenter, finding no damage. Rail services, including NJ Transit and PATCO, were temporarily suspended for inspections of tracks, bridges, and trains. After completing inspections, services resumed later that day. Governor Phil Murphy reported limited damage statewide, and the State Emergency Operations Center was deactivated on April 6th. No damage to infrastructure was reported by NJ Transit or DRPA. Recommendations for a standardized Emergency Operating Procedure (EOP) across systems were suggested to address operational consistency.

Infectious Disease Measures

Bipartisan Infrastructure Law requires that PTASP includes strategies to minimize the exposure of the public, personnel, and property to hazards and unsafe conditions, and consistent with guidelines of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention or a State health authority, minimize exposure to infectious diseases.

Internal Audits by Rail Transit Agencies (RTAs)/Rail Fixed Guideway Public Transportation Systems (RFGPTSs)

Each Rail Transit System (RTS) is required to develop a three-year cycle of internal compliance audits of all aspects of the Public Transit Agency Safety Plan (PTASP), covering approximately one-third of the PTASP's components and subcomponents each year. The purpose of the internal safety audit is to compare the content of the safety program documentation to the activities that the RTS implements. Findings and changes may require the program documentation or minimum standards for safety to be updated to reflect current activities, or activities may need to be changed or added so the documents and activities match.

Each RTA/RFGPTS is required to provide the New Jersey State Safety Oversight Agency (NJ SSOA) program with an Annual Report by February 12th which includes: a listing of the internal safety audits/reviews conducted for that year, a discussion of where the RTA/RFGPTS is regarding its three-year audit/review schedule, and the status of all findings, recommendations and corrective actions taken/plans resulting from the audit/reviews conducted that year.

Table 2-9 presents the status of internal audits for calendar year 2024:

Table 2-9: 2024 Internal Audit Status

RTA	RFGPTS	2024
DRPA	PATCO	Completed
NJ Transit	River LINE	Completed
NJ Transit	NLR	Completed
NJ Transit	HBLR	Completed

Triennial Audits by the New Jersey State Safety Oversight Agency (NJ SSOA)

49 CFR 674.31 requires SSOAs to complete comprehensive safety audits of each Rail Transit System (RTS) under its oversight, once every three years. The audits at each system examine implementation of the safety program as documented in their Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP), including the minimum standards for safety and related documentation, NJ SSOA Standard and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) regulations. In 2024, the NJ SSOA had zero (0) audits scheduled. The Hudson-Bergen Light Rail (HBLR) and the River LINE systems were last audited in 2022, and Newark Light Rail (NLR) and PATCO systems were last audited in 2023. The focus of these audits was a detailed examination of system processes and procedures and the efficacy of their implementation.

FTA Triennial Review of the New Jersey State Safety Oversight Agency (NJ SSOA)

FTA conducted a Triennial Audit of SSOA on March 5th-14th, 2024. The Draft Report and Final Report were issued on May 7, 2024, and July 19, 2024, respectively. There were 3 findings in the Final Report, which are detailed below.

The New Jersey State Safety Oversight Agency (NJ SSOA) implemented changes to address the noncompliance identified during the recent FTA triennial audit. A finding of noncompliance is determined when FTA finds that a required element of a program does not meet one of the 49 CFR Part 674 requirements.

Table 2-10 presents the three findings of noncompliance in the NJDOT SSO program related to this audit.

Table 2-10: 2024 NJDOT Audit Review Findings by FTA

Finding	Required Actions	Compliance Status	Implementation Date
<p>1) Section 6.2 Part 674.25: NJDOT did not have an adequate process to verify that its RTAs' PTASPs included all the minimum requirements</p>	<p>NJDOT SSO will submit the revised HBLR's, River LINE's, and PATCO's PTASPs ensuring that minimum requirements are addressed.</p> <p>In addition to providing the approved PTASPs, NJDOT will provide FTA with Draft PTASPs prior to final approval.</p>	<p>Open</p>	<p>12/31/2025</p>
<p>2) Section 7.1 Part 674.27(a)(4) – NJDOT did not ensure that the RTAs internally reviewed all PTASP elements.</p>	<p>NJDOT will provide the revised PTASPs with the updated internal safety review schedules ensuring the requirements are addressed.</p> <p>NJDOT will provide the RTAs 2024 internal safety review reports ensuring that required elements are following the approved review schedule.</p>	<p>Open</p>	<p>12/31/2025</p>
<p>3) Section 8.1 Part 674.33(a) – NJDOT did not verify that PATCO notifies the SSOA within two hours of any accident.</p>	<p>The NJDOT will issue a letter to PATCO requiring them to provide refresher training, reinforce notification requirements, and add event notifications for tracking in the monthly safety committee meeting.</p> <p>NJDOT will provide FTA with a copy of the letter and safety committee agenda including the tracking of accident notification.</p>	<p>Open</p>	<p>1/31/2025</p>

Annual Major System Improvements

Table 2-11 presents major improvement projects that were either started, continued, or completed for calendar year 2024 at the Rail Transit Systems (RTSs).

Table 2-11: Major System Improvement Projects

#	RFGPTS	Project	Value (\$Million)	2024 Status
1	PATCO	Franklin Square Station Reopening	26.8	On-going
2	PATCO	Lindenwold Control Center	19.4	On-going
3	PATCO	Woodcrest Station Platform Rehabilitation	22.8	On-going
4	PATCO	HVAC and Roof Replacement	15.2	On-Hold
5	NJ Transit	Glassboro-Camden Rail Line	2000	On-going
6	River LINE	Onboard Security Cameras	.7	Completed
7	River LINE	Right-of-Way Flooding Mitigation Study	1	Completed
8	River LINE	Fleet Repower	85	On-going
9	River LINE	Engine Fire Suppression	TBD	On-going
10	River LINE	Mid-Life Overhaul	TBD	On-going
11	NLR	Capacity Enhancement Program	33	On-going
12	NLR	Station Modernization and Access Program	130	On-going
13	NLR	Bloomfield Control Center Upgrade	TBD	On-going
14	NLR	LRV Master Controller Replacement	.5	On-going
15	NLR	Orange Street Crossing and Rail Replacement	1	On-going
16	HBLR	Hoboken Wye Bypass	89	On-going
17	HBLR	Central Instrument House Raising Phase 3	3.4	Completed
18	HBLR	Liberty View Drive Grade Crossing	.6	Completed
18	HBLR	Anti-Drag Feature (LRV doors)	1.8	Completed
20	HBLR	LRV Master Controller Replacement	1.3	Completed
21	HBLR	Elevator Upgrades: 22 nd & 34 th Street Stations	2.5	On-going

Safety Certification Projects

The System Safety and Security discipline oversees hazards and vulnerabilities throughout the entire lifecycle of a project, program, or activity by adopting a dedicated risk management approach. The SSOA ensures that an RFGPTS appropriately applies risk, hazard and vulnerability monitoring. Successful management of safety certification employs site visits, meeting attendance and coordination of inspections as the project progresses.

PATCO: Control Center

A new, state-of-the-art control center is under construction at the Lindenwold Shop and Yard Complex to replace the outdated Center Tower built in 1969. The new facility takes advantage of fiber-optic technology, which eliminates previous distance limitations caused by copper cabling, and improves both operational flexibility and safety by relocating away from a power substation. The building will include office space for Transit Services on the first floor and the main control center on the second. The project, estimated to cost \$19.4 million and projected to be completed in Spring 2025, was a recipient of the "2024 New Jersey's Leading Capital Construction Project Award" from the New Jersey Alliance for Action. **Figure 2-3** shows the Control Center under construction.

PATCO: Franklin Square Station Reopening

As a result of development surrounding Philadelphia's Franklin Square area, the historical Franklin Square Station is returning. Since its opening in 1936, the station, located near Seventh and Race Streets, has sporadically closed and reopened with the last period of passenger service between 1976 and 1979. **Figure 2-4** presents Franklin Square Station.



Figure 2-3: Control Center



Figure 2-4: Franklin Square Station

Glassboro-Camden Light Rail

The Glassboro-Camden Line (GCL) project is an 18-mile light rail transit (LRT) line intended to extend mobility to the Philadelphia-Camden metro area and reduce vehicular traffic. The GCL calls for fourteen new ADA accessible stations from Glassboro to Camden and would allow for passengers to transfer to the PATCO Speedline for expedited access to Philadelphia and other parts of Camden County. The line would run two sets of trains, each of which would carry 300 passengers, with departures every 15 minutes during peak/midday periods; a one-way trip would only take 35-40 minutes, serving as an invaluable option for local commuters.

Funded by the South Jersey Transportation Authority (SJTA) and managed by the Delaware River Port Authority (DRPA) on behalf of NJ Transit. The DRPA has contracted with South Jersey Transit Partners to perform the preliminary engineering to a 30% completion with the intention that the project be advertised as a design-build. The project is now with NJ Transit for further development.

More information may be obtained from www.glassborocamdenline.com

Annual Rail Transit System (RTS) Emergency Drills

Annually, each RTS conducts emergency drills in coordination with local emergency responders. Emergency drills are recommended by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) and American Public Transportation Association (APTA). NJ Transit drills are coordinated by the NJ Transit Office of Emergency Management (NJTOEM), and PATCO drills are coordinated by the Delaware River Port Authority Police Department (DRPA PD). The New Jersey State Safety Oversight Agency (NJ SSOA) attends drills as an observer and reviews the after-action report. A summary of the drills completed for the calendar year 2024 are detailed below.

PATCO Emergency Drills

On Tuesday November 19th, 2024, Delaware River Port Authority (DRPA)/Port Authority Transit Corporation (PATCO) conducted the PATCO Franklin Square Functional Exercise (FE). The FE was designed with three (3) Exercise Objectives in mind, focusing on notification, communication, and response procedures. The threat or hazard for the FE was a “Physical Convergence Cybersecurity Attack.” The planned exercise scenario was as follows: “An unknown assailant was interrupted by a maintenance worker tampering with a network cabinet in a secure area. There is concern that the integrity of DRPA/PATCO’s network has been compromised. The assailant escaped within the station area leaving behind tools and a backpack.”

State Safety Oversight (SSO) Inspectors and PATCO Safety Services observed the portion of the drill that took place at Franklin Square Station. The Emergency Operations Center (EOC) was activated off-site. After the initiating call from a PATCO employee, DRPA police responded to the scene at Franklin Square Station with a canine unit and Information Services (IS) support. The secured area was cleared by DRPA police, and the participants began their investigation, following DRPA/PATCO procedures. In one of the secure employee areas, an unidentified laptop was discovered, which prompted the participants to escalate the investigation to a cyber security threat level.

After the drill concluded, a hot wash was given at the Benjamin Franklin Bridge Administrative Building. The exercise revealed both areas of strength and areas for improvement. DRPA Police, IS, and the other participating organizations communicated and responded effectively.

NJ Transit Emergency Drills

River LINE

An emergency drill was conducted at the Cinnaminson Station (River LINE) on March 29, 2024, in which a Mass Casualty Incident (MCI) was staged to simulate a collision between a light rail vehicle and a motor vehicle. Local fire, police, and EMT participated in the drill. Triage was conducted on injured parties to ensure care was prioritized by severity.

Figure 2-5 shows the participants of the 2024 River Line Drill. **Figure 2-6** shows the staged crash and the response of the local fire department.



Figure 2-5: 2024 River LINE Drill



Figure 2-6: 2024 River LINE Drill

Newark Light Rail (NLR)

On September 1, 2024, NLR conducted a drill in which several staged protestors were extricated from barricades, in the style of a “sleeping dragon” demonstration. The latter scenario took over an hour to resolve using various power tools. The drill also involved apprehending two trespassers with the help of drones and a K-9 unit. The agency completed after action reports which indicated the drill was a success. **Figure 2-7** and **Figure 2-8** show attendants working to remove protestors from the barricades developed for this drill.



Figure 2-7: 2024 NLR Drill



Figure 2-8: 2024 NLR Drill

Hudson-Bergen Light Rail (HBLR)

On October 12, 2024, an active shooter exercise took place at 45th Street Station. Participants included NJTPD, NJT k9 Unit and Bayonne Police and Fire. No weapons were allowed past the safe zone and eye protection was required for everyone. After first responders neutralized the shooter, several other practice events took place and included smoke. All scenarios had passenger volunteers that had sustained various injuries. The passengers were offloaded and the injuries were surveyed. The agency completed after-action reports which indicated the drill was a success.

Figure 2-9 shows Transit Police response to the active shooter.



Figure 2-9: 2024 HBLR Drill

Key Activities 2025 and Beyond

The NJDOT SSOA upcoming activities include the following:

FTA Grant Application cycle –2025

Reopening of PATCO's Frankin Square Station

HBLR and River LINE Triennial Audits

*Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Requirements & FTA Special Directive –
Verification of Implementation*

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