



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Transit
Administration**

Administrator

400 Seventh St., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20590

JUN - 4 2005

Dear Colleague:

I am pleased to announce that the revised State Safety Oversight Rule, 49 CFR Part 659: *Rail Fixed Guideway Systems; State Safety Oversight; Final Rule* was published in the Federal Register on April 29, 2005. You may download the rule at <http://transit-safety.volpe.dot.gov/Safety/SSO/Regulation.asp> or from the Federal Register at <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/index.html>

These regulations are effective May 31, 2005, and have a compliance date of May 1, 2006. This will provide sufficient time for States to make such legislative changes as may be necessary to implement the revisions.

As you know, this was a collaborative effort with the state safety and rail transit agencies. In response to our March 9, 2004, Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, nine state safety oversight agencies and six-rail transit agencies provided comments, which are addressed in the preamble to the rule published in the Federal Register. These comments represent formal input from a universe of 26 state safety oversight agencies and 44 individual rail transit systems.

We are now preparing the revised "Implementation Guidelines for State Safety Oversight" for distribution prior to the compliance date of the rule. Plans are underway to hold a series of seminars throughout the country later this year to explain the rule revisions and the "Implementation Guidelines." A State Safety Oversight Workshop, as part of the annual meeting, is planned for Fall 2005 in the Washington, D.C. area. An updated state safety oversight course for State and rail transit personnel will be developed by the Transportation Safety Institute by November 2005.

Our continued goal with your input is to enhance rail transit safety and security by the addition of these rule revisions and to assist the state safety oversight agencies and rail transit operators in carrying out these revisions.

I sincerely thank you for your contributions to the state safety oversight program over the past several years. A special thanks to those State and rail transit agencies which served on working groups and to those of you who participated in working sessions at the annual state safety oversight meetings.

Sincerely,

Jennifer L. Dorn