

RTAP

BULLETIN

FLORIDA RURAL TRANSIT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

WINTER 2007—VOL. 5, NO. 1

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DRIVER'S QUALIFICATION
TRAIN-THE-TRAINER COURSE

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UPCOMING EVENTS

CLEAN, SOBER & SAFE
VIDEO DEBUT

Florida Makes Powerful Impact at National Conference

Florida's prominent leadership role in our nation's rural transit industry was well demonstrated at the Transportation Research Board's 17th National Rural Public Transportation and Intercity Bus Conference, held October 27-29, 2006, in Stevenson, Washington.

As reported in the most recent issue of the RTAP Bulletin, Florida's Catherine Brown, Executive Director of the St. John's County Council on Aging, accepted the Federal Transit Administration's award for outstanding public service to rural transit. The award recognizes Ms. Brown's contributions to the rural public transportation industry.

Participants at the four-day conference benefited from several opportunities to learn about the exciting and groundbreaking work being done in Florida. Faculty and staff from the USF Center for Urban Transportation Research (CUTR) shared their knowledge, expertise, and findings on a variety of topics, including rural transit safety and security, accident reporting, driving pat-

terns of Florida's older drivers, bus operator training, and organizational development.

CUTR's Lisa Staes and Amber Reep shared the success they have achieved through a transit operations program that unites and empowers many aspects

of both rural and urban transit operations. They discussed how their work has promoted a federal certification for bus operators and helped unite Florida's operations managers to improve agency-



CUTR's Lisa Staes, Amber Reep, and Deborah Sapper attend the TRB National Rural Public Transportation and Intercity Bus Conference

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Guidelines to Determining Bus Collision and Incident Recordability now available

In early 2007, the USDOT's Transportation Safety Institute (TSI) Transit Safety & Security Division published *Guidelines to Determining Bus Collision and Incident Recordability*. These guidelines were developed as a training tool to help determine

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to-agency communication, problem solving and information sharing.

Transit system security is a critical issue throughout rural America. Ms. Staes reported on Florida's technical assistance efforts in this area, Florida's mandate for transit system safety and security, and how the mandate came to fruition. Many in her audience found the presentation vitally important as they work to prepare their own hazard and security plans.

CUTR researchers Amber Reep and Deborah Sapper demonstrated their work on an innovative, cost-effective, and easy to use incident tracking system. The Microsoft Access-based system provides Florida's transit properties with a no-cost alternative to tracking incidents on their properties and vehicles, providing them with the ability to input incident data, track trends, and analyze the incident data through a series of queries, charts, report and tables.

CUTR graduate research assistant Oliver Page discussed the challenges of travel for older drivers who may have reduced their driving or lost their driving privileges, providing participants with insights on how future transportation choices and availability influence the migration of senior citizens in semi-rural Florida.

CUTR researcher Michael Audino helped participants better understand how to foster personal accountability and develop self-management skills, manage accelerated change, and achieve their potential. He also shared his insights on how successful rural transit organizations understand that their most valuable resource is their personnel. His interactive session helped participants recognize how "getting the right people on the bus" can help their organizations thrive.

The next TRB National Rural and Intercity Bus Conference will be held in 2008 in Omaha, Nebraska. It's not too early to think about how YOU might help carry the Florida rural transit banner!

the recordability of transit incidents and to provide transit incident review boards with transit-specific criteria for assessing collisions and incidents. Although collisions and incidents are not the same, transit properties often find it necessary to determine the recordability of incidents as well as collisions.

TSI coordinated the development of the guidelines in partnership with First Transit, Laidlaw Transit Services, Veolia Transportation, MV Transportation, the New York Public Transportation Safety Board, the Tennessee Transit Training Center, and the USF Center for Urban Transportation Research to ensure that the final guidelines could be utilized on a national level.

TSI's intent in developing these guidelines was to provide a tool for transit agencies to help determine the recordability/preventability of collisions and incidents based on a high standard of defensive driving principles. The guide provides a series of situations and incident scenarios along with examples of actions that would need to be taken by the agency to make it "recordable." This resource serves as a valuable guide and details a variety of situations and incidents, but also provides a great deal of leeway or discretion to a transit property, including the decision to formally adopt the definition of the word "reasonable" within their incident policies. Also included in the guidelines is a section on the development, organization, and operation of an Incident Review Board.

A copy of *Guidelines to Determining Bus Collision and Incident Recordability* is available on the Florida RTAP website at www.rtap.usf.edu. For further information, contact CUTR Research Associates Amber Reep at (813) 974-9823, reep@cutr.usf.edu, or Deborah Sapper at (813) 974-1446, sapper@cutr.usf.edu.



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RTAP BULLETIN

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OUR MISSION

The Florida RTAP provides training, continuing education, and technical assistance to those who provide or assist in the provision of public transportation services in rural and small urban communities in order to promote the coordinated delivery of safe, efficient, and effective transit services.

Editor: Yolanda Moore Designer: Wendy Teague

SCAT hosts the Florida Paratransit Driver's Qualification Train-the-Trainer Course

The Florida RTAP at the USF Center for Urban Transportation Research (CUTR) extends special recognition to Sarasota County Area Transit (SCAT) for hosting the Florida Paratransit Driver's Qualification Train-the-Trainer course. The Florida Department of Transportation and CUTR sponsor this course several times each year throughout the state. On January 9-11, SCAT was the first property to host the paratransit-specific training in 2007.



Congratulations to the graduates of the January 2007 Florida Paratransit Driver's Qualification Train-the-Trainer course.

Originally designed as a five-day session, the course was recently revised to a three-day session in recognition of the difficulty attendees may encounter when away from their property for an extended length of time. This hands-on, intensive training program includes such topics as ADA service requirements, passenger assistance and securement restraint, sensitivity training, and quality customer service. Elements of the course also include the role of training in a transit organization and teaching in various environments. A hands-on workshop on securement and passenger assistance focuses on delivery styles and methods.

Additionally, adult learning principles, facilitation skills, and the art of questioning the class while managing and encouraging participation are featured. Role-playing exercises, self-evaluation, and beneficial social-interaction skills are a part of this interactive course.

Individuals responsible for training paratransit bus operators (current and new hires), managers, and supervisors all can benefit from this course, which has received accolades for subject relevance.

Additional courses will be offered in the upcoming months. If your agency would like to host this three-day course at your property, please contact Amber Reep or Molly Buffington at CUTR, (813) 974-3120.



Class participants demonstrate skills learned in this hands-on workshop with focus on securement and passenger assistance.

2007 UPCOMING EVENTS

The classes and conferences listed below are sponsored by the Florida Department of Transportation and the Center for Urban Transportation at the University of South Florida in Tampa. If you would like to attend any of the courses, you may find a brochure and registration form for each course at www.cutr.usf.edu in the Upcoming Events and Training section. If you have any questions, please contact Molly Buffington at (813) 974-3120.

April 3-4, 2007

Transit Threat and Vulnerability
Assessment Course

April 25-26, 2007

NTI MultiModal Traveler Information
Systems

May 7-11, 2007

TSI Instructor's Course in Paratransit
Operator Training

May 16, 2007

Culture of Transit Safety

June 4-6, 2007

6th Annual FDOT/FPTA/CUTR Profes-
sional Development Workshop—
Embassy Suites, USF Tampa

June 11-15, 2007

Land Transportation Anti-terrorism
Training Program—Instructed by the
Federal Law Enforcement Training
Center.

July 9-13, 2007

TSI Transit Supervisor Certification
Course

September 10-13, 2007

TSI Effectively Managing Transit
Emergencies

November 6-8, 2007

3rd Bi-Annual NCTR *GIS in Transit*
Conference—Embassy Suites, USF
Tampa



Clean, Sober and Safe video debuts

This employee drug awareness video is the first in a series of training videos CUTR will produce in 2007. It begins by describing the incidents that led to the requirement of drug and alcohol testing in mass transit. The viewer is educated on the detrimental effects that the five prohibited drugs and alcohol can have on the mind and body and given an overview of the drug and alcohol testing program. Along with the accompanying handbook, this video will aid transit systems in meeting the 60 minutes of required training for all safety-sensitive employees. The video and handbook is available for download at <http://www.cutr.usf.edu/byrnessamsite>. For further information, contact Diana Byrnes at (813) 426-6980, byrnes@cutr.usf.edu.

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