



*Federal Transit Administration (FTA)
National Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP)*

What's New:

August 12, 2005

NCHRP Report on "Availability & Accessibility of Liability & Excess Insurance for Public Transit & Private Coach Operators"

The National Cooperative Highway Research Program recently completed a report entitled, "Availability & Accessibility of Liability & Excess Insurance for Public Transit & Private Coach Operators". This report was finished as part of the work plan for the AASHTO Standing Committee on Public Transportation. It assessed liability insurance issues and identified and detailed alternatives to commercial insurance. [Read the report online](#) (PDF).

FTA Releases Guidance on Private Sector Participation

The new FTA brochure, "Private Sector Participation" is intended to be a user-friendly guide to private sector involvement for use by planning agencies, transit agencies, and private transportation providers. The brochure explains in plain English how and why private sector providers can be involved in delivering public transportation services. It also discusses the requirements for private sector involvement in Federally-funded transportation programs, from the early transportation planning stages to service delivery.

[Read the brochure](#). The brochure is also available on the [FTA website](#).

FTA Releases Guidance on Head Start Regulation

As part of United We Ride, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) is working closely with federal partners to identify opportunities to improve coordination of services. On January 18, 2001, the Head Start Bureau, a federal agency within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, issued detailed regulations concerning the transportation of children within its programs (45 CFR Part 1310). Full implementation is targeted by **January 18, 2006**.

This regulation, under 45 CFR part 1310.10, states that each agency must assist as many families as possible who need transportation in order for their children to attend the program in obtaining that transportation. Agencies have the option of providing transportation services either directly or by contract, or providing reasonable assistance to Head Start families to arrange transportation to and from its activities.

FTA has drafted an [overview](#) to provide clarification regarding use of FTA funds to purchase vehicles that may be used to transport Head Start participants as well as other riders in a coordinated system.

For more information on the regulation, visit the [FTA Website](#). View the [Overview](#).

FY06 Budget Increases Funding for Rural Transit

The President's FY06 Budget proposes funding for Non-Urbanized Area (Rural) Transit at \$392.6 million, up \$141.7 million from FY05, an increase of 56.5%. These funds are apportioned by a formula grant to states based on their non-urban populations under 50,000.

The total includes \$7.9 million to the states for the Rural Transit Assistance Program (RTAP), formerly funded from Transit Planning and Research Funds. The budget proposal does not include a line item for the National Rural Transit Assistance Program.

Moving the source of the state RTAP apportionment is part of a proposed overall shift of budgeting programs into two broad categories: Formula

Grants and Research (State administered programs) and Major Capital Investment Grants.

The Formula Grants and Research category, if approved by Congress, would include the Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) funded at \$163.9 million; the New Freedom Initiative at \$158.4 million; the University Transportation Research Centers at \$5.95 million; the Transit Cooperative Research Program at \$9 million and the National Transit Institute at \$4.4 million.

Funds for the Bus and Bus facilities program (\$669.6 million in FY 05) were not proposed and the dollars merged into other parts of the budget. A new performance incentive program focused on increasing transit ridership is funded at \$20 million for rural systems; \$180 million in urban.

[View the Transportation Budget \(PDF\)](#).

FTA Releases Information on Public Transportation for Schools

The Federal Transit Administration has released a Dear Colleague letter and brochure that covers Questions and Answers about appropriate use of public transportation buses for school transportation.

The link to the letter and brochure can be found under the [Dear Colleague Letters](#) in the "From the Administrator" section of the FTA website. For more information on this item in your state, please contact your FTA region office.

New FAQs on Mobility Devices and Public Transportation

The Federal Transit Administration has developed a new webpage with Frequently Asked Questions and Answers concerning personal mobility devices and public transportation vehicles in relation to the Adults with Disabilities Act (ADA). Visit the [FTA website](#) to see the new FAQs.

New RTAP Resources Available

National RTAP has just completed and distributed several new training and information resources. The new *Roles and Responsibilities of Transit Managers – Leading the Rural Transit Agency* Training Module is tailored to provide quick and easy-to-understand guidance for new transit managers, to refresh the knowledge of experienced managers and to provide greater understanding of management demands. The videos and lessons center around advice and best practices provided by community transit leaders at the local and state level.

In addition, National RTAP has completed a CD-ROM version of the online [National RTAP Training Resources Catalog](#) to provide State RTAP Managers with both a great training resource as well as an outreach and promotional tool. The CD-ROMs contain the same database of training resources found on the National RTAP website, that can be loaded onto your computer and provide you with a private resource that you can update at will.

Finally, National RTAP has sent to the State RTAP Managers, the TCRP Annual Report. This is another important resource that will provide managers with information on the activities of TCRP and can act both as a resource to inform local activities as well as giving a clear picture of the work areas and priorities occurring on a national level.

New Additions to Bus Transit Safety Resource Guide Website

Several new documents were recently added to the Bus Transit Safety Resource Guide Web Site. See below for links to the new resources and visit www.cutr.usf.edu/bussafety to see all the resources available.

State Policies and Plans - [Indiana Comprehensive Safety Response Plan](#) - Indiana Comprehensive Safety Response Plan is a compilation of sample policies, procedures and forms, to help Community Transportation Systems to construct a System Safety Program Plan (SSPP) to meet its unique safety needs.

Best Practices - [Minnesota – Transit System Safety/Security Workbook](#)

Safety Data Acquisition and Analysis - Texas - Safety Data Acquisition and Analysis Guide

Driver/Employee Training - PennSCORE- Operator Training Manual

Security - Immediate Actions for Transit Agencies for Potential and Actual Life-Threatening Incidents - (FTA Guidance Document)

NEW! National RTAP Training Resource Catalog NEW!

The National RTAP Program is proud to unveil the National RTAP Training Resource Catalog. You can access the catalog by using the link on the left side of this page or go to:

<http://www.nationalrtap.org/ResourceCatalog/>

The catalog is an excellent resource when you're looking for the latest training available. The catalog provides you with the ability to search more than 650 training resources. You can search by resource name, type, subject, author, agency, or keyword. The output of your search will tell you about each resource (i.e. how to access the resources, how much it might cost etc). You also have the option to update the materials in the catalog. So be sure to search through the catalog and find your own resources that might be available and make sure all the information is correct.

In order to keep the catalog up to date and relevant we vitally need your help. You have the capability to add new resources to the catalog. We hope you will take the time to add any resources that you might have available. The intent of this catalog is to keep it as a living document - ever growing in size and relevance. So be sure to come back often as new resources will be added.

FTA Emphasizes *United We Ride*

United We Ride -- a new five-part initiative-- to break down the barriers between programs and set the stage for local partnerships that generate

common sense solutions and deliver A-plus performance for everyone who needs transportation.

The *United We Ride* initiative includes:

- *A Framework for Action*. Created by a panel of experts from around the country that convened in August 2003, this publication is a self-assessment tool that States and communities can use to identify areas of success and highlight the actions still needed to improve the coordination of human service transportation.
- *State Leadership Awards*. These initial awards have recognized a select number of States that have accomplished significant progress in human service transportation coordination.
- *National Leadership Forum on Human Service Transportation Coordination*. This conference, held in late February 2004, brought together Governor appointed senior leadership teams seeking to raise the visibility of the issue among State leaders and secure commitments to action. The forum was used to provide technical assistance, as well as to recognize those States that have already taken significant steps to improve human service transportation services.
- *State Coordination Grants*. States participating in the United We Ride National Leadership Forum will be eligible to submit an application for State Coordination Grants, to address gaps and needs related to human service transportation in their geographic regions.
- *Help Along the Way*. This ongoing technical assistance program will build on the work of the Community Transportation Assistance Program (CTAP), the Rural Transportation Assistance Program (RTAP), Easter Seals Project ACTION and other stakeholders to provide hands-on assistance to States and communities in the development and delivery of coordinated human service transportation programs.