DEVELOPING & NURTURING A STRONG SAFETY CULTURE

With Walt Diangson, SWTA and John Filippone, RFTA

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Operations Route
INTRODUCTIONS

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Southwest Transit Association

Range of Membership

- AZ, AR, CO, KS, LA, NM, OK, TX

PROFILES

- Multi-Model

Tribal Transit
- ORT: Ozark Regional Transit
- KATP: KI BOIS Area Transit System

Rural Transit
- Rural BRT

Urban Transit
- Resort
- Special Event

Paratransit
- Local Fixed-Route

John Filippone

Walt Diangson
AGENDA

- What is a Safety Culture?
- What is its Role in Public Transportation Safety?
- Major Components of a Strong Safety Culture
- Some Indicators of a Poor Safety Culture
- Some Indicators of a Developing to Good Safety Culture
- Summary & Conclusion
WHAT IS A SAFETY CULTURE?

Developing & Nurturing a Strong Safety Culture
SAFETY CULTURE DEFINITION

“The attitude, beliefs, perceptions and values that employees share in relation to safety in the workplace.”

[Cox, S. & Cox, T. (1991)]

“Accident flowed from a deficient safety culture.”
SAFETY CULTURE DEFINITION

“The shared values & shared beliefs & attitudes that interact with employees, safety policies, procedures, & rules to produce behavioral norms.”
“LISTEN TO THE MUSIC”
CREATING & SUSTAINING A STRONG SAFETY CULTURE

• Involves more than safety rules or posters
• Takes commitment to safety as the first priority
• Requires complete shift in organizational mindset
• An organizational culture that emphasizes safety produces measurable results
THE BENEFITS OF A SAFETY CULTURE

Higher Organization Morale
More Effective Safety Management

Reduced Rider – Driver Confrontational Interface

Reducing in Damage
Lower Insurance Rates

Improved Customer Service
 Increased Service Quality

Improved Productivity

Lower Insurance Rates

Increased Service Quality

Improved Customer Service
THE FIRST PRIORITY

• **Your Mission Statement**

• **Examples**
  
  • *Pelivan Transit is committed to providing safe and reliable transportation to all people with mobility needs in the Pelivan Transit service territory.*
  
  • **VALUES STATEMENTS** Safety is RFTA’s highest priority.
SAFETY CULTURE IN PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

“The shared values & shared beliefs & attitudes that interact with employees, safety policies, procedures, & rules to produce behavioral norms.”

What is important to all public transportation employees who are delivering safe, efficient revenue service.

How the transportation system works & what individual employee roles should be.

The way we do our jobs, whether we are being observed or not.

* TCRP
OTHER WAYS TO DEFINE SAFETY CULTURE

• Safety is doing the right thing, even when no one is looking.
• Safety is a personal & organizational core value we all share.
• Safety takes priority over other competing goals.
• Safety is how we work and how we do everything.
WHAT IS ITS ROLE IN PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION?

Developing & Nurturing a Strong Safety Culture
FOUNDATION FOR ALL SAFETY PLANS, PROGRAMS & APPROACHES

- Hiring Smart
- Background Checks & Interviews
- Driver Training
- Refresher Training
- Employee Orientation
- Employee Development
- Scheduling
- Dispatching
- Pre-Trip Inspections
- Field Supervision & Support
- Fleet Maintenance
- Policies & Procedures
- Reporting & Data Mgmt.
- Budgeting & Finance
- Customer Service
- Marketing
- Eligibility
- Labor Agreement
- Purchasing
- Planning
- Safety Inspections & Reviews
- Incentive Programs
- Contractor Oversight

Safety Culture’s Heavy-Lift
SAFETY CULTURE SUPPORTS & BECOMES STRONGER THROUGH ...

- Open and effective safety communication & collaboration
- Management & employees willing to interrupt service for safety
  - Continually improving safety performance
  - Safety data-driven decision making
  - Greater trust & support between management & line employees
  - Visible action on all reported safety issues
  - Significant employee involvement

Ying : Yang = Pull : Push
JF & RFTA’S APPROACH

• Examples of unsafe behaviors, hazards in field operations, past accidents, root causes & contributing factors

• How organization responded, monitoring methods

• Accident lessons learned, solutions

• Operational lessons learned, solutions

• Addressing practical drift at RFTA

• Addressing 3 main causes of accidents: rushing, distraction & poor preparation

• Threats: Acts of God – wild fires, avalanches; Unsafe Conditions – weather, traffic; Unsafe Behaviors – drivers, customers, others
SOME INDICATORS OF A POOR SAFETY CULTURE

Developing & Nurturing a Strong Safety Culture
NO LOCK-OUT, TAG OUT FOLLOWED
The Safety Space

Baseline Performance

Agency Safety Plan
Policies & Procedures
Regulations, Rules,
Customer Service,
Standards & Training

PRACTICAL DRIFT

Accidents

Short-cuts
Modified Procedures
Complacency, New
Norms, Laziness,
Poor Judgment
PRACTICAL DRIFT IN TRANSIT

➔ Drifting Away from Rules & Training
PRACTICAL DRIFT – POOR CUSTOMER SERVICE
Why bend my knees?

One Way to Level-Up

2 Forklifts Are Better Than 1

Proper Ladder Use

Weighted Leverage
MAJOR COMPONENTS OF A STRONG SAFETY CULTURE

Developing & Nurturing a Strong Safety Culture
1. **Management Commitment to Safety**
   - Organizational commitment & support
   - Safety leadership – all levels

2. **Shared ownership and participation**
   - Employee/union cooperation
   - Employee empowerment

3. **Effective safety communication**
   - Internal safety communication among all areas
   - Training, safety meetings, safety promotion
4. **Being Proactive**
   - Use of safety data, key indicators & safety standards
   - Analysis, trending, identifying priorities

5. **Organizational Learning**
   - Collaboration among all areas
   - Learning from mistakes, reporting & data

6. **Consistent Safety Reporting & Investigation**
   - Crash & incident reporting
   - Investigation for future prevention & minimizing accidents
7. **Employee Motivation**
   - Recognition, rewards & incentives
   - Professional development

8. **Organizational Trust**
   - Empowerment & employee involvement
   - Relationship building
MAIN REASONS FOR ACCIDENTS

• Distractions
  • Cognitive, manual & visual distractions

• Rushing
  • Speeding for on-time performance
  • Cutting short – pre-trips, PMIs, screening & hiring

• Poor Preparation
  • Training gaps, not to competency
  • Inadequate job, task or project planning
  • Fatigue, unfit for duty
Distractions
Rail Operator Fatigue
Unsafe Behaviors
Misusing Tools & Equipment
Rushing
Taking Short Cuts

This is the shortcut I was telling you about!

Colorado Mountains
Developing & Nurturing a Strong Safety Culture
SAFETY POLICY, MANAGEMENT COMMITMENT, SUPPORT & ASSURANCE

OUR MISSION STATEMENT
To provide safe, efficient, cost-effective & customer-friendly public transportation.

Policy, Plan, Vision & Mission

Mgmt. Support & Involvement

Employee Engagement
SAFETY TRAINING & COMMUNICATIONS

Accident & Close Call Reporting, Data & Analysis

Lead by Example

Leading by Example & Walking the Talk

Training, Informing, Coaching & Mentoring

Recognition & Motivation
ORGANIZATION-WIDE SAFETY INVOLVEMENT

Typical Transit Organization

Depts. ➔ Silos of Specialization

Teamwork

Safety Culture – Increased Communications, Collaboration
KEY TAKEAWAYS

• **Safety culture** - “The shared values & shared beliefs & attitudes that interact with employees, safety policies, procedures, & rules to produce behavioral norms.”

• **Safety culture** – foundation for effectiveness of all safety efforts

• **Safety culture is also:**
  • Safety is doing the right thing, even when no one is looking.
  • Safety is a personal & organizational core value we all share.
  • Safety takes priority over other competing goals.
  • Safety is how we work and how we do everything.

• **Developing & nurturing a strong safety culture depends on key strategies & components** – Management Commitment to Safety Promotion
TECHNICAL RESOURCES

TCRP REPORT 174: Improving Safety Culture in Public Transportation

FTA Safety Management Systems (SMS) Framework -
THANK YOU AUDIENCE & NATIONAL RTAP