



U.S Department of Transportation
Office of Public Affairs
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590
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News

FRA 11-21
November 19, 2021
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Federal Railroad Administration Announces Rechartering of the Railroad Safety Advisory Committee, Adding New Voting Members to Increase Diversity of Perspectives

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The U.S. Department of Transportation’s Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) announced today that the charter of the Railroad Safety Advisory Committee (RSAC) has been renewed for a two-year period. FRA first established RSAC on March 25, 1996, as a Federal Advisory Committee Act forum for collaborative rulemaking and program development. RSAC includes representatives from all the agency’s major stakeholder groups, including railroads, labor organizations, suppliers, and manufacturers.

The renewed recharter will increase the number of represented organizations from 23 to 26 and will increase the number of individual voting members from 34 to 51. The three new represented organizations are the American Association of Private Railroad Car Owners, Association of State Rail Safety Managers, both previous members of RSAC, and the Commuter Rail Coalition (CRC). These changes will increase the diversity of perspectives and organizations represented on RSAC and will improve its ability to provide inclusive and balanced recommendations to FRA on key rail safety matters.

“This Railroad Safety Advisory Committee plays an important role helping the FRA improve the safety of passengers and workers throughout our rail industry,” said Deputy Administrator Amit Bose. “The steps we are taking today to renew the Committee’s charter and expand its membership will help DOT address key railroad safety challenges in the years ahead.

RSAC establishes expert working groups, with a balanced representation of perspectives, to generate advice and recommendations for the FRA Administrator regarding the development and revision of railroad safety regulations, as well as the identification of non-regulatory alternatives for improvement of railroad safety. In its history, RSAC has addressed 58 tasks and conducted almost 600 full committee, working group, and task force meetings on critical issues such as: passenger equipment

safety; locomotive engineer and conductor certification; risk reduction and system safety programs; track safety standards; and positive train control.

The previous RSAC charter went into effect on October 2, 2020, and limited RSAC membership to 34 individuals representing 23 organizations. The recharter will be substantially similar to the one in effect prior to May 2018, and will restore RSAC membership numbers to its previous level and remove the cap on membership limits in working groups. Through this action, FRA expects to build upon the legacy of accomplishments in issuing consensus-based rulemakings to ensure a safe rail transportation system and advance rail safety.

The next full meeting of the RSAC will take place virtually on December 8, 2021. Detailed information is available [here](#).

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