

National RTAP Peer Call: Preparing for your State Management Review

Non-Review Year Preparations:

1. To show FTA Satisfactory and Continuing control over transit programs, oversight must be documented
2. Very important to note that if a process is not documented, in eyes of FTA, it did not happen
3. All written processes must be adhered to AS WRITTEN
4. The State SMP, any internal SOP's and Administrative guides, website data, etc must all coincide and mirror one another. Make sure you do not use contradictory language between policy documents.
5. If you can, update your SMP to reflect any policy changes (at a minimum, the SMP should be updated every 3 years)
6. All site visit reports, desk reviews, email documentation, etc. can be used as evidence of FTA oversight
7. FTA reviewer will request a copy of the State Management Plan (SMP) – can be sent alone and SMP should be written as useful to State staff and subrecipients
8. During the 3 year periods between reviews, saving Subrecipients email communications can be helpful in showing subrecipient oversight
9. You may be preparing 6-12 months prior to the review – you will need a lot of time in preparation for review.
10. The better your processes are defined and documented , the better you will fare during the review
11. During the SMR - 13 Program areas are reviewed: Program management, Grant administration, Project Management, Financial Management and capacity, procurement, DBE, Asset Management, Charter Bus, School Bus, ADA, Title VI, EEO, D&A program
12. The more completely you can complete the questions, in keeping with FTA regulations, the better you will fare during actual review.

How does notification of a SMR/Triennial Work?

1. FTA informs of SMR/Triennial Review dates in writing approximately 9 mos – 1 year prior to review dates.
2. FTA will have advised SMR Review Team of any concerns they have with your program.
3. This FTA insight will have some bearing on areas of focus for the SMR reviewer.
4. SMR and Triennial will likely be held concurrently.
5. FTA sends Grantee Information Request (GIR) developed by FTA Consultant Review Team for completion by State DOT recipient
6. The GIR questions closely follow the SMR Workbook (use FY16 version or current year)
7. The SMR agenda will be sent prior to review, but is subject to last minute changes.
8. This final agenda will be sent 1-2 weeks before actual review
9. The review package also contains dates on SMR review timeline

The Grantee Information Request (GIR)

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What is the GIR? –

1. Know what your previous deficiencies were – review old reports
2. The packet may also outline past deficiencies – these will be looked at closely in subsequent review to ensure CAP was followed and deficiencies were closed.
3. States that have repeat deficiencies will be subject to higher levels of oversight and/or enhanced reviews.
4. The GIR Review Package has a list of FTA Compliance areas and for each area it states whether they will conduct review using Desk Review, Pre-site visit, or during site visit
5. The GIR review areas follow the same exact sequence as the 5311 State Management Review Workshop Workbook in order of Table of Contents.
6. The State DOT must complete and answer the entire GIR Review Package contents and send accompanying documentation to show sufficient state management processes
7. GDOT found the SMR Workbook to be very, very useful in answering the questions. Using the SMR workbook as a guide will assist the state in areas that need strengthening within your program
8. The SMR Workbook will identify deficiency codes which could translate into findings for each program area.
9. How you answer the GIR questions helps the reviewers assess the Department's understanding of the program regulations.

Assembling and Sending the GIR

1. You may consult with your reviewer for their preference, if not specified in GIR instructions.
2. Follow same naming conventions as used in GIR document
3. Prefer PDF files placed on jump drives - Do not send piecemeal – send all at once to FTA reviewer
4. Avoid emailing GIR documents
5. May require a drop box due to size of files

How does the Review Work?

Desk Review – 1st stage

1. Conducted at the FTA regional office. During the desk review, FTA files pertaining to the grantee and TEAM-Web data are reviewed and discussed with FTA staff. The desk review is completed in advance of audit.
2. Reviewers review GIR responses prior to on-site visit and develop site visit agenda

On site: - 2nd stage

Staff/Office on-site review

3. The FTA Consultants come to the state office and conduct a 3 day review on a tight agenda timetable to discuss any outstanding issues & examine FTA funded facilities and equipment.
4. Ensure adequate staff availability

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5. Reviewers will ask questions along same lines as GIR – how you answer will be critical!
6. It is critical to have all of your electronic files organized for this 3 day period as they go rapidly through the agenda and ask for sample documentation to back up your responses in the SMR packet.
7. They will focus in on areas they have spotted as potential weaknesses or deficiency areas based on your answers to the GIR.
8. They are tough and no nonsense throughout the review.
9. There is a panel of reviewers, up to 5 or more along with the FTA in attendance.

Subrecipient Review & Site visit

10. A subrecipient(s) site visit is performed on the 3rd day where FTA representatives and the state discuss outstanding issues, examine FTA-funded facilities and equipment, review necessary additional documents, and visit selected subrecipients and contractors.

After Review:

Exit Conference – State DOT is provided a Draft Report of findings:

As part of FTA's ongoing effort to streamline the on-site review to minimize the use of the state's valuable staff time during the site visit and enable FTA to issue the draft report at the exit conference.

Exit report contains the comprehensive list of all the documents that will be needed and questions to be answered. You will use that to begin developing your corrective action plan and response to reviewer in a complete package.

Final Formal Report

This will be completed approximately two months after the review.

The State will have a deadline in which to close findings, issue Corrective Action Plans, etc.

The FTA may review and close findings depending on your responses and supporting documentation.

Corrective Action Plans and supporting documentation will need to be submitted to FTA to show that the finding was adequately addressed and corrected.

FTA may conduct a post SMR Review the following fiscal year after an SMR was conducted to insure post audit recommendations were put into place.

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