

**Remarks Prepared for FRA Administrator Amit Bose
Rail Share Inaugural Forum
St. Louis, Missouri
Tuesday, November 29, 2022**

Good morning, all.

I'm pleased to welcome you to this important event.

First and foremost, I would like to thank each and every one of you for your attendance and participation.

Your presence here is so greatly appreciated.

Rail Share represents an important starting point for building stronger relationships within our industry.

At FRA, our north star is and always will be safety. It's central to everything we do, and that's what this event is about.

Inspired by FAA's Info Share partnership program, we hope this inaugural meeting will foster sharing of best safety practices and encourage greater trust and collaboration between carriers, labor, employees, and regulators.

For decades our sister agency has demonstrated the benefits of such collaboration and we believe this kickoff will provide a starting point for our mode to do the same.

It is of the utmost importance that we continue ensuring the safe operation of our rail systems for the public, workers, and rail passengers.

This gathering will allow us to go beyond previous regulatory and non-regulatory efforts in find new and exciting ways to engage with one another.

While there will be many topics discussed over the coming days, I hope that Rail Share will create and foster a venue for candid information sharing in a safe environment, an open, honest exchange of ideas, listening to and learning from one another, an opportunity to be proactive in our thinking, and a forum for building trust among these key stakeholder groups.

I'd like to thank Karl Alexy, Brian Reilly, Larry Day and many others in our Office of Railroad Safety for their hard work and vision that brought us here today.

I'd also like to thank our FAA colleagues for helping us emulate their work for our mode.

This is an incredibly exciting time in rail, and thanks to the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, FRA has vastly expanded opportunities and resources that will allow us to be stronger.

It's important to note that the new law is not just about infrastructure investment. It contains ample opportunities to advance key rail safety measures that we're excited about.

As you know, we have issued and will issue several important rulemakings in pursuit of our safety mission, such as the proposed crew size rule and the final fatigue risk management rule.

I'm sure this group is aware that we recently extended the comment period for the proposed rule on train crew staffing until December 21 and will hold a public hearing both in person and virtually on December 14 to gather further input.

If you have not done so, we welcome you to review the proposal and submit views to the docket.

Also, earlier this month, FRA amended its Safety Glazing Standards for exterior windows on certain passenger rail equipment.

This action will codify long-standing waivers, add a new testing option to improve the consistency of glazing testing, and revise outdated section headings.

The changes update and clarify existing requirements to maintain and, in some cases, enhance safety while reducing unnecessary costs.

While rulemakings and enforcement are important to our mission, this week's event is about partnership, and I'm very pleased about several ongoing actions to expand and improve our longstanding programs.

We have already reactivated the Railroad Safety Advisory Committee, or RSAC, which will be meeting again on December 12.

Last month, Railroad Information Sharing Environment, or RISE stakeholders, met in Chicago to outline future goals and set up a temporary executive board.

This public-private partnership uses a data trust as the basis for safety improvements that would be difficult for individual railroads to achieve independently.

FRA's Confidential Close Call Reporting System, better known as C3RS, met earlier this year to continue improving this venue for railroads and employees to increase safety through confidentially reporting unsafe events and conditions without fear of discipline or FRA enforcement action.

Additionally, we appreciate all of your continued engagement in our Fatality Analysis of Maintenance-of-way Employees and Signalmen, or FAMES, Committee to eliminate roadway worker deaths and reduce the risk of future occurrences.

Similarly, sustained involvement in the Switching Operations Fatality Analysis, or SOFA, Working Group allows us to better understand and develop recommendations to address risks within switching operations.

There will be presentations this week on PTC, root cause analysis, workforce development, as well as innovative approaches to grade crossing safety and trespass prevention.

There will also be sessions on safety management systems, risk reduction programs, and safety culture writ large.

You'll hear much more about the work of and opportunities within these areas, which we will stimulate more discussion and new synergies among and between attendees.

In addition to the hundreds of FRA Office of Safety employees we have here this week, we're also joined by staff members from our new Office of Research, Data, & Innovation.

As you may know, FRA recently underwent an internal realignment that will allow us to more effectively manage safety-related research and development efforts with stakeholders.

Standing up this new office will allow us to build capacity and increase our focus on understanding our safety data and enhancing innovation in this space.

I'm also glad to have members of FRA's Office of Railroad Development here to discuss the important safety-related outcomes of some of our grant activities, such as the Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements, or CRISI, Program.

This widely used program has supported workforce development and training opportunities that we hope can be replicated, such as the Iowa Northern Railway and the American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association's Mobile Training Center Program.

On my recent travels to the Midwest, as well as other parts of the country, I've repeatedly stated that collaboration among stakeholders is necessary to reap the full benefits of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and seize this transformational moment for rail.

That statement rings truer than ever as we commence this meeting.

While FAA has decades of collaborative efforts in the safety arena, in some cases, we have decades of mistrust and miscommunication between the major players in our industry.

This is yet another opportunity for course correcting and confidence building with a shared commitment to safety.

While I recognize that will not happen overnight, we must refrain from being stuck in the past and instead look towards the future.

The railroad industry's continued vibrancy and success depends on our willingness to overcome prejudices and biases of old ways of thinking.

FRA is more than a regulator. We're here to work with you, help you, and achieve better safety outcomes for all.

I'm very excited about Rail Share's potential, and I truly hope this event lives up to expectations.

We welcome your feedback on this inaugural forum and hope you'll give us specific, honest feedback on how we can grow and better develop this initiative going forward.

Thank you all so much again for your attendance here this week and your hard work and dedication to bettering our industry.