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Who Works in Transit? Establishing a Baseline of Transit Workforce Diversity

DATE September 3, 2024

TIME 12:00-12:30P.M. (PT)

0.5 PDH

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Thank you to the many experts who offered project advice and support

Research Objectives (as requested by APTA)

1. Provide baseline data on the status of the racial/ethnic and gender diversity of the transit agency workforce in the U.S., through analysis of EEO data submitted to the FTA

2. Identify potential barriers to, and promising practices for, diversifying the transit workforce

Today's Presentation

- Transit agency workforce diversity (EEO data)

- Transit agency diversity practices (original survey data)

- Recommendations

EEO Data Analysis

FTA EEO Data Requirements

To meet federal EEO law, FTA requires employee demographic reports from transit operators with 100+ employees that receive significant federal funds

Operators must submit an "EEO program plan" that includes data on the race and sex of their transit-related workforce (including contractors), broken out by job classification

Details: Federal Transit Administration. (2017). *Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Requirements and Guidelines for Federal Transit Administration Recipients* (Circular FTA C 4704.1A)

Value of the FTA EEO Data

The data permit national

__and__

longitudinal analysis

EEO Data Analyzed

- EEO Program Plans from 2018/20 and 2022 reporting cycles (received through FOIA requests)

- Of the 218 plans received, 152 contained usable workforce demographics data

EEO Data Quality Challenges

Problem	Examples
Missing data	● Data not disaggregated by job category ● Data not submitted for some job categories
Inaccurate data	● Data submitted for a larger pool of workers than just transit ● Data reported for multiple years instead of one year ● Agencies submit data for wrong job categories ● Employees missed because cannot be required to self-report
Data format	● Data submitted in pdf format only ● Illegible data (pdf with low resolution and small font) ● Data provided as percentages rather than raw numbers

Sex, by job type

Job Type	Male	Female
Total	71%	29%
Officials and Administrators	70%	30%
Professionals	63%	37%
Technicians	76%	24%
Protective Services	82%	18%
Paraprofessionals	52%	48%
Administrative Support	34%	66%
Skilled Craft	95%	5%
Service and Maintenance	71%	29%
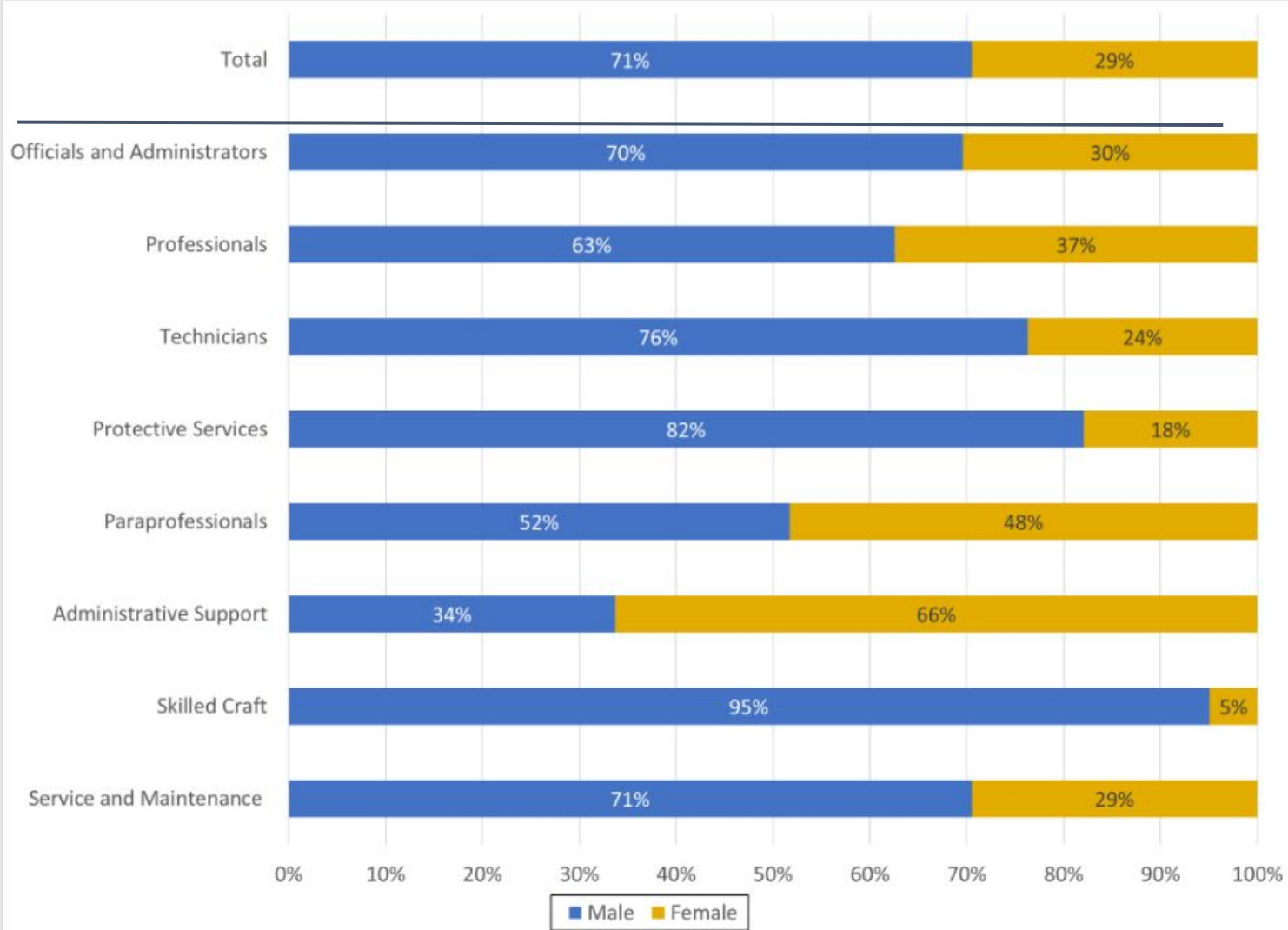
Race and ethnicity, by job type

Job Type	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian
Total	36%	40%	17%	6%
Officials and Administrators	58%	23%	11%	6%
Professionals	44%	29%	14%	12%
Technicians	42%	25%	24%	7%
Protective Services	48%	25%	19%	7%
Paraprofessionals	41%	29%	21%	6%
Administrative Support	30%	42%	22%	4%
Skilled Craft	47%	27%	17%	7%
Service and Maintenance	25%	53%	17%	4%

■ White ■ Black ■ Hispanic ■ Asian □ Other*
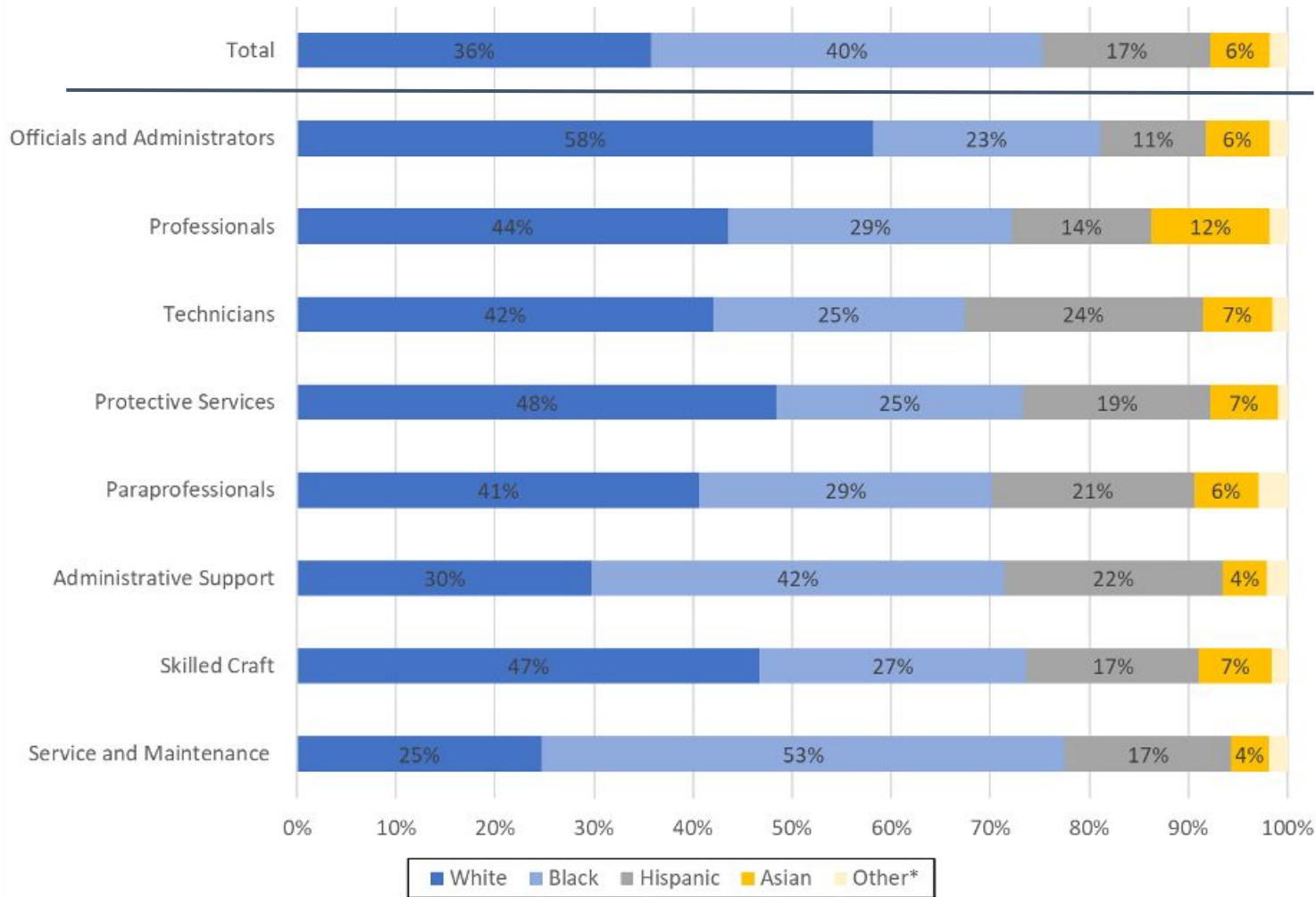
*Other includes American Indian/Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander, and multiracial

Utilization rates by race, ethnicity, & sex, by job type

Job Category	White		Black		Hispanic		Asian	
	M (%)	F (%)	M (%)	F (%)	M (%)	F (%)	M (%)	F (%)
Total workforce								
Officials and managers								
Professionals								
Technicians								
Administrative support workers								
Craft workers								
Service workers								

>100% = overutilization; 80% to 99% = parity; <80% = underutilization
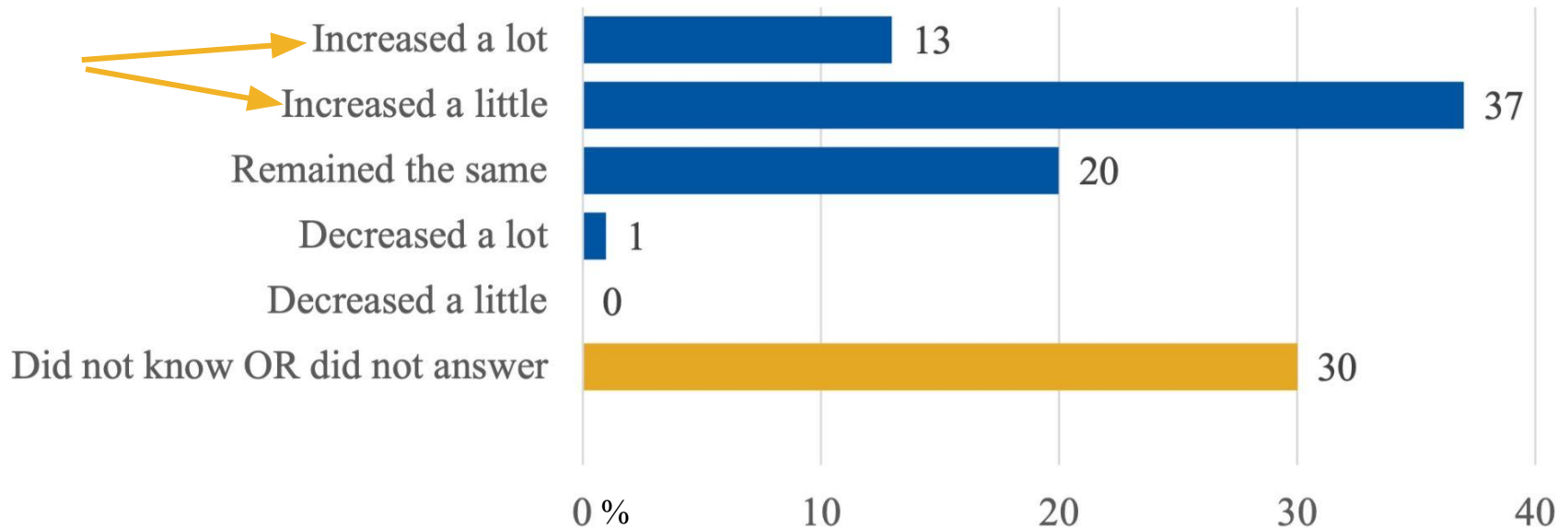
Data sources: EEO transit agency reporters and U.S. Census Bureau.

Analysis of Survey Data

Survey Methodology

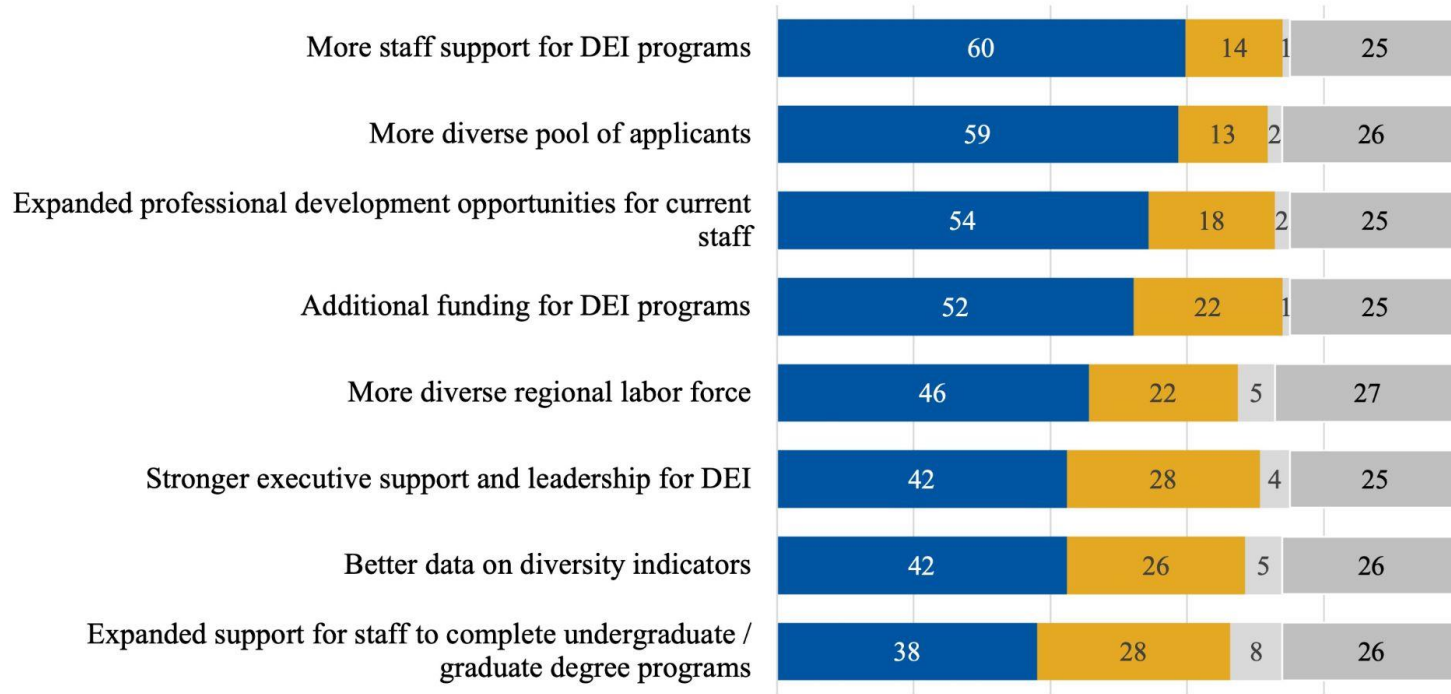- <u>Recruitment</u>: Invitation sent to the HR Directors of 544 public transit agencies that were APTA members

- <u>Sample</u>: 92 responses from 68 public transit agencies, 27 of which were from the largest 50 transit agencies

- <u>Survey questions</u>: Diversity data use and collection, status of workforce diversity and diversity efforts, barriers to improving workforce diversity, recommendations to increase workforce diversity

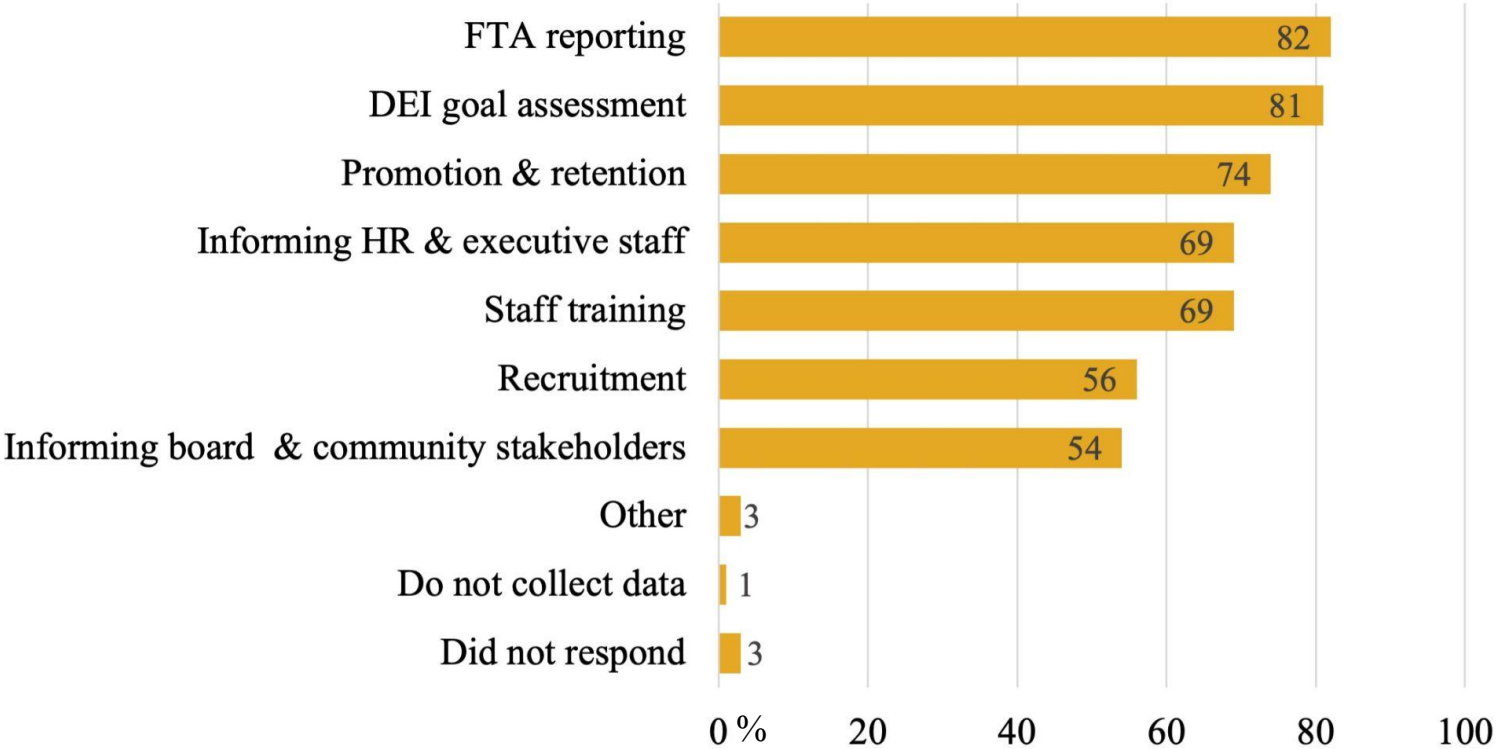# Perceptions of Change in Workforce Diversity (% of respondents)

Increased a lot — 13
Increased a little — 37
Remained the same — 20
Decreased a lot — 1
Decreased a little — 0
Did not know OR did not answer — 30

0 % | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40

N=92 respondents

Perceived Helpfulness of DEI Strategies (% of respondents)

Strategy	Very helpful	Somewhat helpful	Not helpful	Did not respond
More staff support for DEI programs	60	14	1	25
More diverse pool of applicants	59	13	2	26
Expanded professional development opportunities for current staff	54	18	2	25
Additional funding for DEI programs	52	22	1	25
More diverse regional labor force	46	22	5	27
Stronger executive support and leadership for DEI	42	28	4	25
Better data on diversity indicators	42	26	5	26
Expanded support for staff to complete undergraduate / graduate degree programs	38	28	8	26

N=92 respondents

■ Very helpful ■ Somewhat helpful ■ Not helpful ■ Did not respond

Extent and Use of Workforce Diversity Data (% of agencies)

Category	%
FTA reporting	82
DEI goal assessment	81
Promotion & retention	74
Informing HR & executive staff	69
Staff training	69
Recruitment	56
Informing board & community stakeholders	54
Other	3
Do not collect data	1
Did not respond	3

N=68 agencies

Recommendations

Workforce development

Staffing and resources: More is always good; also. Develop in-house expertise (rather than using consultants)

Recruitment: Design marketing strategies to highlight the diverse careers available in transit. Work with local high-schools, trade schools, and colleges w/many minority students.

Develop in-house talent: Ongoing professional development opportunities for employees in every job category. Also, job shadowing to let people learn about different job opportunities within the agency.

Diversity data collection & analysis

FTA EEO program plans are an excellent tool, but implementation can be improved:

- Help agencies develop better tools for monitoring workforce data

- More carefully audit the the plans submitted to ensure data quality

- Require that workforce data be submitted in a spreadsheet format

- Encourage more employees to self-report about themselves

Develop a process for a regular review of industry-wide EEO data. This could come from within USDOT, from APTA, or perhaps another organization that advocates for diversity in the transit workforce.

Resources

Report available from the Mineta Transportation Institute here

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Thank you for joining us for

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