

**National Transportation Safety Board**  
**Annual Performance Plan**  
**Fiscal Year 2018**



*Making Transportation Safer  
Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow*

May 2018



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# NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

## FY 2018 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE PLAN

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### Contents

Figures and Tables.....	1
Abbreviations.....	2
Executive Summary.....	1
NTSB At A Glance.....	3
About the National Transportation Safety Board.....	3
Mission.....	4
Legislative Mandate.....	4
Core Values.....	4
Performance Management.....	7
Strategic Goals Overview.....	8
Reporting on Progress.....	9
Assessment: Rating Scales and Success Criteria.....	9
Key Factors Affecting the Achievement of the Strategic Goals.....	9
Performance Management and Reporting.....	10
Strategic Goals, Objectives and Performance Metrics.....	12
Goal 1: Safety Leadership.....	12
Objective 1.1 Evolving Technology: Increase agency focus on awareness of emerging technologies.....	12
Objective 1.2 Data Analytics: Broaden the use of data and analysis to improve decision-making.....	13
Objective 1.3 Improve Transportation Safety: Promote transportation safety through response, products, recommendations, outreach, and proactive approaches and actions to remain resilient and effective.....	14
Key Challenges and Issues.....	18
Strategic Goal 2: Engagement.....	18
Objective 2.1 Stakeholder Engagement: Optimize outreach and build consensus with stakeholders.....	19
Key Challenges and Issues.....	21
Strategic Goal 3: Synergy.....	21
Objective 3.1 Empowerment: Cultivate creativity and innovation across the agency through effective leadership.....	21
Objective 3.2 Inclusive and Engaged Workforce: Promote an inclusive, and engaged workforce and eliminate barriers to equal employment opportunity.....	22



---

# NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

## FY 2018 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE PLAN

---

Key Challenges and Issues .....	23
Management Review .....	24
Addressing the Challenges to Goal Achievement .....	24
Data Management and Reliability .....	24



---

# NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

## FY 2018 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE PLAN

---

### Figures and Tables

Figure 1: NTSB Organization Chart.....	5
Figure 2: NTSB Regional Presence.....	6
Figure 3: NTSB Strategic Management Process Map.....	7
Figure 4: NTSB Priority Goals.....	8
Table 1. Abbreviations used in this report.....	2
Table 2. Performance Metrics Results Criteria .....	9
Table 3. Performance Metric: Define an emerging technology capability for use in decision-making .....	13
Table 4. Performance Metric: Define a data analytics capability for use in decision-making.....	14
Table 5. Performance Metric: Develop a digital transformation action plan resulting in increased efficiency and effectiveness.....	14
Table 6. Performance Metric: Number of products adopted by the board .....	15
Table 7. Performance Metric: Number of products to improve transportation safety .....	16
Table 8. Performance Metric: Number of delegated briefs conducted.....	16
Table 9. Performance Metric: Number of international investigations and cooperative activities completed.....	17
Table 10. Performance Metric: Percentage of emergency hearing convened within 30 days.....	17
Table 11. Performance Metric: Percentage of non-emergency cases closed within 180 days.....	17
Table 12. Performance Metric: Number of outcome-oriented safety results and outreach activities provided to transportation safety stakeholders .....	20
Table 13. Performance Metric: Number of stakeholder engagements implemented .....	20
Table 14. Performance Metric: Number of efficiencies or tools implemented to increase innovation and collaboration .....	22
Table 15. Performance Metric: Number of employee engagement & EEO/Diversity outreach initiatives implemented.....	23
Table 16. Performance Metric: Implement an agency rotational program.....	23



---

# NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD FY 2018 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE PLAN

---

## Abbreviations

Table 1. Abbreviations used in this report.

Abbreviations	Definition
ALJ	Office of Administrative Law Judges
APP	Annual Performance Plan
AS	Office of Aviation Safety
DOT	Department of Transportation
FAA	Federal Aviation Administration
FY	Fiscal Year
<b>GPRM Modernization Act</b>	Government Performance and Results Modernization Act of 2010
HS	Office of Highway Safety
MD	Office of the Managing Director
MS	Office of Marine Safety
NTSB	National Transportation Safety Board
OMB	Office of Management and Budget
RPH	Office of Railroad, Pipeline & Hazardous Materials Investigations
RE	Office of Research & Engineering
SRC	Office of Safety Recommendations & Communication
USCG	United States Coast Guard



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# NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

## FY 2018 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE PLAN

---

### Executive Summary

The National Transportation Safety Board's (NTSB's) Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 Annual Performance Plan (APP), outlines our strategies to achieve agency priorities, promote organizational change and improve agency performance. The FY 2018 APP provides stakeholders—the traveling public, the transportation industry, government agencies, and Congress—with a comprehensive view of our goals and objectives for the fiscal year. In addition, this APP will provide an understanding around our strategic performance goals for success by drawing a clear line from our mission to the strategic goals, objectives, key performance indicators through performance metrics and targets. The APP is guided by our [FY 2018 - 2022 Strategic Plan](#), and complies with the [Government Performance and Results Modernization Act of 2010](#) (GPRA Modernization Act) and the Office of Management and Budget's [\(OMB\) Circular A-11](#).

As we commemorated the agency's successes of the past 50 years, we see the challenges ahead posed by the evolving transportation world, and are focused on enhancing our expertise and credibility, which are keys to these past successes. Over the last three years, we have improved strategic management, planning, and performance reporting to support organizational change. Senior leadership challenged agency staff to improve current agency products, processes, technology and communication. Based on internal and external environmental assessments, two task forces were created. They provided valuable recommendations on performance data analysis, strategic thinking, continuous process improvement, and innovative solutions to achieve organizational goals and objectives. Senior leadership has engaged with staff to understand their concerns and suggestions through listening sessions, and we are working to implement the associated lessons learned.

This APP includes three priority goals supported by six strategic objectives, five strategic performance goals, six key performance indicators, and fourteen performance metrics.

The FY 2018 strategic priority goals are:

1. **Safety Leadership:** Serve as a global leader in conducting independent accident investigations, producing studies, and creating products essential to transportation safety.
2. **Engagement:** Engage external stakeholders to advance transportation safety.
3. **Synergy:** Promote employee teamwork, innovation, and engagement to optimize operations

This FY 2018 APP addresses our key challenges and leverages agency strengths. We continue to experience retirements necessitating a greater focus on staff and leadership development as well as capturing valuable institutional knowledge. Our greatest strength continues to be its dedicated,



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# NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

## FY 2018 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE PLAN

---

knowledgeable, and professional staff. It also captures the full spectrum of our activities to accomplish national priorities in all modes of transportation. This report is defined in the following sections:

**NTSB At A Glance** summarizes how the agency is organized, governed, and managed. This section includes a discussion of the agency's history and our role in transportation safety.

**Performance Management at NTSB** summarizes the agency's approach to performance management, strategic planning, and performance reporting, as well as how the agency uses data, evidence, evaluations, and reporting to manage performance.

**Performance Reporting and Planning** provides an organized view of this APP by strategic goal, strategic objective and performance goal. It shows up to three years of historical performance. This presentation provides a unique opportunity to see performance trends across multiple years within a program, as well as the linkages between multiyear performance goals and their annual components and how these performance metrics support the strategic objectives.



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# NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

## FY 2018 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE PLAN

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### NTSB At A Glance

#### About the National Transportation Safety Board

The NTSB is an independent federal agency charged by Congress with investigating every civil aviation accident in the United States and significant accidents in other modes of transportation—railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline. We determine the probable cause of the accidents we investigate, and issue safety recommendations aimed at preventing future accidents. In addition, we conduct special transportation safety studies and coordinate the resources of the federal government and other organizations to assist victims and their family members who have been impacted by major transportation disasters.

#### *History*

The NTSB originated in the Air Commerce Act of 1926, in which the US Congress charged the US Department of Commerce with investigating the causes of aircraft accidents. That responsibility was transferred to the Civil Aeronautics Board's Bureau of Aviation Safety when it was created in 1940. In 1967, Congress consolidated all US transportation agencies into a new US Department of Transportation (DOT) and established the NTSB as an independent agency within the DOT. In creating the NTSB, Congress envisioned that a single organization with a clearly defined mission could more effectively promote a higher level of safety in the transportation system than could the individual modal agencies working separately. Since 1967, the NTSB has investigated accidents in the aviation, highway, marine, pipeline, railroad and public transportation modes, as well as accidents related to the transportation of hazardous materials.

In 1974, Congress reestablished the NTSB as a separate entity outside of the DOT, reasoning that “no federal agency can properly perform such (investigatory) functions unless it is totally separate and independent from any other . . . agency of the United States.” Because the DOT has broad operational and regulatory responsibilities that affect the safety, adequacy, and efficiency of the transportation system, and transportation accidents may suggest deficiencies in that system, the NTSB's independence was deemed necessary for proper oversight. The NTSB, which has no authority to regulate, fund, or be directly involved in the operation of any mode of transportation, strives to for objectivity in its investigations recommendations.

#### *Role in Transportation Safety*

Since our inception in 1967, we have investigated more than 144,000 aviation accidents and thousands of surface transportation accidents. On call 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, our investigators travel throughout the country and to every corner of the world in response to transportation disasters.

We use investigate accidents to determine the probable cause, examine safety issues, and devise recommendations to prevent recurrence. We have issued more than 14,600 safety



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# NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

## FY 2018 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE PLAN

---

recommendations to more than 2,400 recipients in all transportation modes, over 82% of which have been implemented. Since 1990, we have compiled and published annually a *Most Wanted List* of transportation safety improvements which increases awareness of, and support for, the most critical recommendations needed to reduce transportation accidents and save lives.

Enabling us to better perform our mission we develop safety studies focused on broader safety questions and topic areas. Additionally, we serve as the appellate authority for enforcement actions involving aviation and mariner certificates issued by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and US Coast Guard, and we adjudicate appeals of civil penalty actions taken by the FAA.

### Mission

Making transportation safer by conducting independent accident investigations, advocating safety improvements, and deciding airmen and mariners' certification appeals.

### Legislative Mandate

**Maintaining** our congressionally mandated independence and objectivity;  
**Conducting** objective, precise accident investigations and safety studies;  
**Performing** fair and objective airman and mariner certification appeals;  
**Advocating** and **promoting** safety recommendations; and,  
**Assisting** victims of transportation accidents and their families.

### Core Values

***Integrity***

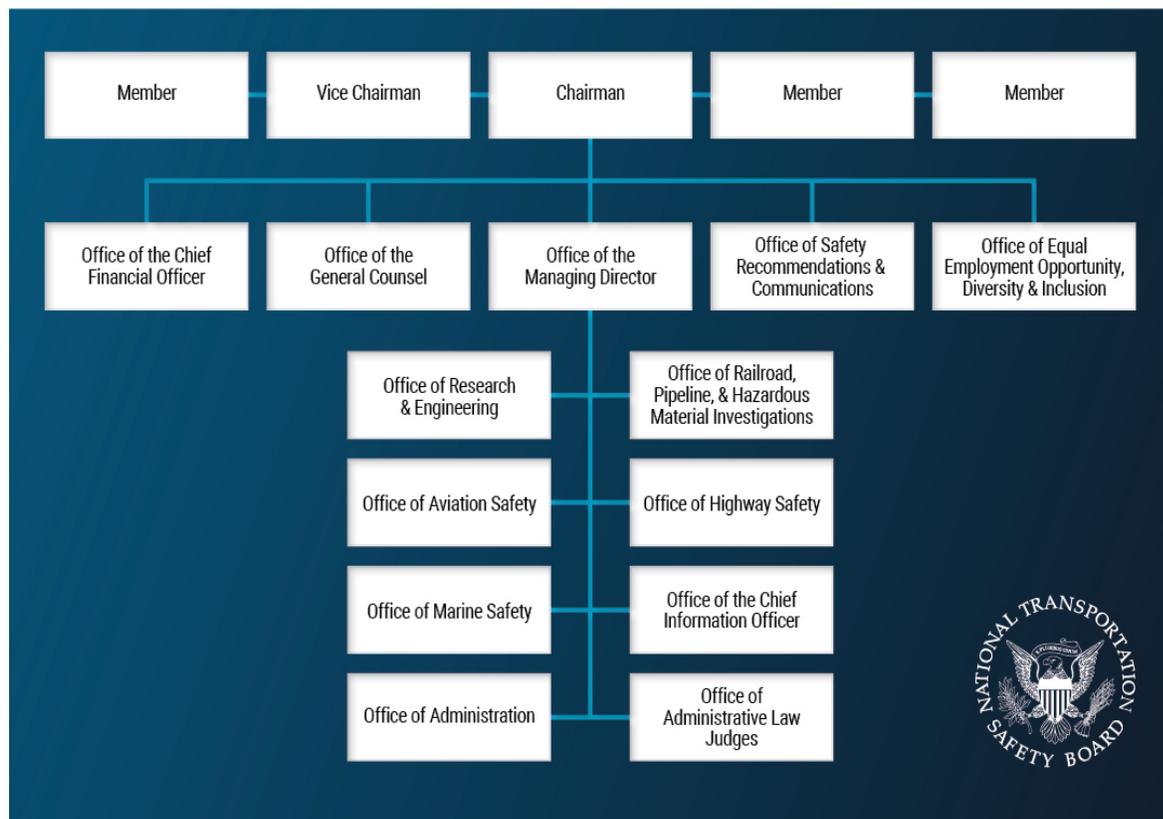
***Transparency***

***Independence***

***Excellence***



# NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD FY 2018 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE PLAN

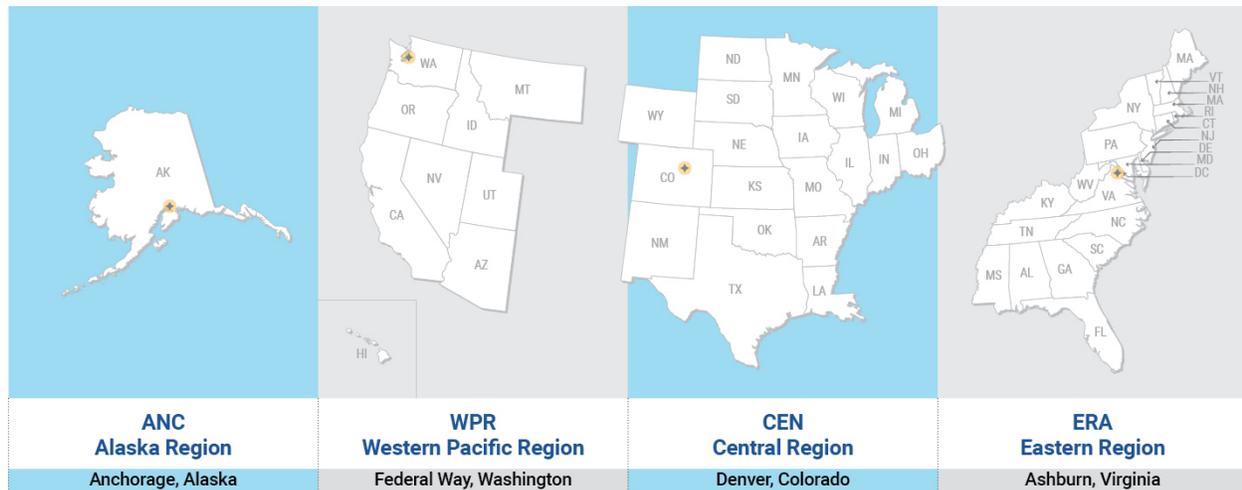


**Figure 1: NTSB Organization Chart**

Our organizational structure is designed around sound business and management principles. We have five Board Members, each nominated by the President and confirmed by the Senate to serve 5-year terms. One Member is designated by the President as Chairman and another as Vice Chairman, each for a 2-year term. The chairmanship requires separate Senate confirmation. When there is no designated Chairman, the Vice Chairman serves as Acting Chairman. Figure 3 shows our organizational structure.



# NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD FY 2018 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE PLAN



**Figure 2: NTSB Regional Presence**

The NTSB is headquartered in Washington, DC. We also have investigators located in regional offices in Ashburn, Virginia; Denver, Colorado; Anchorage, Alaska; and Federal Way, Washington (Figure 4 shows the NTSB’s US regional presence).



# NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD FY 2018 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE PLAN

## Performance Management

In accordance with the *GPRA Modernization Act of 2010*, the NTSB’s strategic management process and performance framework begins with the agency’s strategic plan. Our strategic plan serves as the foundation for establishing long-term priorities and developing performance goals, objectives, and metrics by which we can gauge our success. As prescribed by our senior leadership, this new process helps us demonstrate progress toward our performance goals and priorities, which will be measured using data analysis and holding quarterly strategic performance reviews for future decision-making. This focus promotes active management and staff engagement across the agency. Figure 1 depicts a cyclical process map of how we measure success.



Figure 3. NTSB Strategic Management Process Map

Performance goals, key performance indicators, and metrics are powerful tools to advance an effective, efficient, and productive agency. We regularly collect and analyze performance metric data to inform decisions. We constantly strive to achieve meaningful progress and find ways to achieve positive impacts.

On an annual basis, we will define our performance goals, key performance indicators and metrics and evaluate our progress toward achieving them. These items are powerful tools to advance an effective, efficient, and productive government. We regularly collect and analyze performance metric data to inform decisions. Our staff constantly strive to achieve meaningful progress and find ways to achieve positive impacts.



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# NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD FY 2018 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE PLAN

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This performance-based culture has remained a focus of agency management and staff over the past several fiscal years, and it continues to be enhanced through this plan as we develop and evaluate our performance metrics and target levels each year. As we continually improve this process, we will be able to demonstrate more mission-related performance results and make the best use of the resources entrusted to the agency. We are optimistic that our results-oriented culture will continue to evolve and promote better governance in the future, leading to further improvements in transportation safety.

## Strategic Goals Overview

We developed a new strategic plan in 2017 to encompass fiscal years 2018 to 2022. This plan, identifies three priority strategic goals and six related objectives which influence the day-to-day work at the NTSB. The three priority strategic goals are:



**Figure 4. NTSB Priority Goals**



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# NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

## FY 2018 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE PLAN

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### Reporting on Progress

Continuous improvement rests on ongoing cycles of assessing performance, examining data, and employing lessons learned to improve practices internally and externally. Creating a culture of continuous improvement <sup>1</sup> is at the heart of our efforts to achieve better performance results overall. In 2017, we implemented a new strategic management performance portal which tracks the performance metrics for the agency. This new system allows for a more streamlined process of identifying success and provides for necessary validation and verification by each office.

### Assessment: Rating Scales and Success Criteria

We evaluate our progress towards achieving our performance metrics on a traffic light rating system (i.e., green, yellow, and red). We use this success criteria, combined with explanations of the performance and sources provided by program officials, to review and validate each metric's results and ratings. On occasion, we will assign a gray rating to a performance metric that cannot be assessed against its success criteria for various reasons including a change in data availability or a re-assessment of the metric determined as not feasible for measurement.

**Table 2. Performance Metrics Results Criteria**

Rating	Status
Green	Target or milestone achieved
Yellow	On-going Progress
Red	Minimal progress or late milestone achievement
Gray	Not assessed or target review

### Key Factors Affecting the Achievement of the Strategic Goals

Our ability to achieve our strategic goals may be influenced by the changing balance of industry operations, other federal, state, and local government activities, national priorities, market forces, and resource availability. The following factors may affect the achievement of strategic goals for fiscal year 2018:

- ❖ Advances in new technologies in all modes of transportation
- ❖ Effectively managing pilots' and mariners' appeals
- ❖ Effectively issuing and closing safety recommendations
- ❖ Recruiting, retaining, and developing staff
- ❖ Budgetary constraints, including fluctuations in appropriations.

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<sup>1</sup> Edward Deming; PDCA (plan–do–check–act) is an iterative four-step management method used in business for the control and continual improvement of processes and products)



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# NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

## FY 2018 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE PLAN

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### Performance Management and Reporting

The strategic objectives support and complement the strategic goals. Each strategic objective has performance goals and key performance indicators with measurable metrics and targets. Performance metrics use available data to provide a way to determine if our goals and objectives are met in the proposed time frame. Targets serve to establish line of sight toward achievement. We review performance metrics and targets to assess the effectiveness of programs and consider how risks and opportunities impact achieving our strategic goals and objectives. This assessment allows the agency to adjust and improve performance throughout each year, as well as to re-evaluate the agency's strategic plan objectives and metrics, if necessary. Below is a summary of our FY 2018 strategic goals and objectives:

**Goal 1 Safety Leadership:** Serve as a global leader in conducting independent accident investigations, producing studies, and creating products essential to transportation safety.

- ❖ **Objective 1.1 Evolving Technology:** Increase agency focus on awareness of emerging technologies
  - *Performance Goal: Strengthen and Increase Our Expertise*
  - *Key Performance Indicator: Awareness in new technologies*
  
- ❖ **Objective 1.2 Data Analytics:** Broaden the use of data and analysis to improve decision-making
  - *Performance Goal: Strengthen and Increase Our Expertise*
  - *Key Performance Indicator: Expand the agency's data analytics program*
  
- ❖ **Objective 1.3 Improve Transportation Safety:** Promote transportation safety through response, products, recommendations, outreach, and proactive approaches and actions to remain resilient and effective.
  - *Performance Goal: Demonstrate our impact on improving transportation safety*
  - *Key Performance Indicator: Contribution to transportation safety*

**Goal 2 Engagement:** Engage external stakeholders to advance transportation safety.

- ❖ **Objective 2.1 Stakeholder Engagement:** Optimize outreach and build consensus with stakeholders
  - *Performance Goal: Enhance External Stakeholder Engagement*
  - *Key Performance Indicator: Stakeholder management*



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## NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD FY 2018 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE PLAN

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**Goal 3 Synergy:** Promote employee teamwork, innovation, and engagement to optimize operations.

❖ **Objective 3.1 Empowerment:** Cultivate creativity and innovation across the agency through effective leadership

- *Performance Goal: Improve Agency Efficiency and Effectiveness*
- *Key Performance Indicator: Employee contribution to process improvement and innovation*

❖ **Objective 3.2 Inclusive and Engaged Workforce:** Promote an inclusive and engaged workforce to eliminate barriers to equal employment opportunity

- *Performance Goal: Enhance Staff Engagement and Inclusiveness*
- *Key Performance Indicator: Employee participation and engagement*



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# NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD FY 2018 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE PLAN

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## Strategic Goals, Objectives and Performance Metrics

### Goal 1: Safety Leadership

**Serve as a global leader in providing conducting independent accident investigations, producing studies and creating products essential to transportation safety.**

To maintain our status as a globally recognized leader in transportation accident investigations and relevant safety studies, we must gain knowledge on transportation system advances and use that knowledge to create products that meet the needs of our stakeholders. Effective decision-making, continuous process improvements, and improved products will require greater use of data analysis and a global understanding of emerging technologies in transportation.

#### Objective 1.1 Evolving Technology: Increase agency focus on awareness of emerging technologies

Technological advances are transforming transportation at an astonishing rate. These advances are a harbinger of dramatic improvements in transportation safety, but they also pose new challenges for manufacturers and operators of transportation conveyances and the traveling public. Despite challenges with the safe implementation of new technologies in transportation, technology advances are dramatically improving the tools available to investigate the causes of transportation accidents.

It is critical that we remain aligned with changing trends in transportation technology. Recent innovations in transportation, such as autonomous vehicles, commercial space transportation, hyper-speed rail, solar-powered airplanes, and new recording technologies, make it increasingly important to remain up to date on emerging developments and techniques for mitigating, preventing, and investigating transportation accidents.

We strive to understand and use the most advanced tools and latest technologies to analyze transportation accidents, to enhance safety, and to prevent future accidents. Our ability to conduct comprehensive investigations requires the continuing development of staff expertise and the acquisition of essential tools and equipment necessary to understand these advanced systems and technologies.

Our success in achieving this objective will be accomplished by *strengthening and increasing our expertise* through the following strategies:

- Training staff in emerging technologies and segments of transportation safety.
- Evaluating initiatives to explore innovative safety solutions for emerging technologies.



# NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

## FY 2018 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE PLAN

- Developing and applying innovative and efficient investigative tools to better inform risk management and decision-making.

**Key Performance Indicator: Awareness in new technologies**

**Performance Metric: Define an emerging technology capability for use in decision-making<sup>\*2</sup>**

The following offices will report on this metric: Aviation Safety (AS); Highway Safety (HS); Marine Safety (MS); Railroad, Pipeline & Hazardous Materials Investigations (RPH); and, Research & Engineering (RE).

**Table 3. Performance Metric: Define an emerging technology capability for use in decision-making**

Office	FY 2015 Result	FY 2016 Result	FY 2017 Target	FY 2017 Result	FY 2018 Target
AS	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1 capability
HS	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1 capability
MS	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1 capability
RPH	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1 capability
RE	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1 capability

### Objective 1.2 Data Analytics: Broaden the use of data and analysis to improve decision-making

We look to increase transparency and effectiveness by reinforcing the agency’s focus on data and the quality of data analysis. We strive to improve agency efficiency through two programs, Data Analytics and Digital Transformation, to gain opportunities to collaborate, evaluate processes and products, as well as create techniques to assist us in accomplishing our mission.

By leveraging data gathered in our investigations and from other transportation stakeholders, industry and academia, we will add value to the existing body of research in transportation safety. Informed, methodologically sound data analyses will help us better understand emerging threats to safety, assess the scope and scale of critical safety issues identified in our investigations and studies, issue the most relevant safety recommendations, and improve agency strategy development and decision-making.

Our success in achieving this objective will be accomplished by **strengthening and increasing our expertise** through the following strategies:

- Improving organization efficiency and effectiveness through the expansion of two agency programs, Data Analytics and Digital Transformation.

<sup>2</sup> Asterisk metrics are new for FY 2018.



# NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

## FY 2018 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE PLAN

- Developing an operational analytics and management strategy to inform decision-making.
- Ensuring processes and databases are accessible internally and externally for monitoring trends.

**Key Performance Indicator:** Expand the agency’s data analytics program

**Performance Metric:** Define a data analytics capability for use in decision-making\*

The following offices will report on this metric: Aviation Safety (AS); Highway Safety (HS); Marine Safety (MS); Railroad, Pipeline & Hazardous Materials Investigations (RPH); and, Research & Engineering (RE).

**Table 4. Performance Metric: Define a data analytics capability for use in decision-making**

Office	FY 2015 Result	FY 2016 Result	FY 2017 Target	FY 2017 Result	FY 2018 Target
AS	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1 capability
HS	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1 capability
MS	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1 capability
RPH	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1 capability
RE	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1 capability

**Key Performance Indicator:** Expand the agency’s data analytics program

**Performance Metric:** Develop a digital transformation action plan resulting in increased efficiency and effectiveness\*

This is an agency-wide metric.

**Table 5. Performance Metric: Develop a digital transformation action plan resulting in increased efficiency and effectiveness**

Office	FY 2015 Result	FY 2016 Result	FY 2017 Target	FY 2017 Result	FY 2018 Target
Agency	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Action Plan Approved

**Objective 1.3 Improve Transportation Safety: Promote transportation safety through response, products, recommendations, outreach, and proactive approaches and actions to remain resilient and effective.**

Conducting independent accident investigations, developing relevant recommendations, and sharing lessons learned are critical components of our mission. They are accomplished with



# NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

## FY 2018 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE PLAN

integrity transparency, and excellence, which are NTSB’s core values. A key challenge is to identify incidents in aviation and accidents in each transportation mode that represent the most important targets of safety improvement opportunity, determining the scope and scale of the resulting investigations, and conducting safety studies to help prevent similar accidents from occurring in the future.

Our success in achieving this objective will be accomplished by *demonstrating our impact on improving transportation safety* through the following strategies:

- Demonstrating how we improve transportation safety through the variety of products we produce.
- Continuing to advance our role in international accident investigations and cooperative activities through collaborations with foreign stakeholders.
- Increasing advocacy and outreach efforts on emerging safety issues and safety recommendations through ongoing dialogue with all our stakeholders.

**Key Performance Indicator: Contribution to transportation safety**

**Performance Metric: Number of Products Adopted by the Board**

The following offices will report on this metric: Aviation Safety (AS); Highway Safety (HS); Marine Safety (MS); Railroad, Pipeline & Hazardous Materials Investigations (RPH); and, Research & Engineering (RE).

**Table 6. Performance Metric: Number of products adopted by the board**

Office	FY 2015 Result	FY 2016 Result	FY 2017 Target	FY 2017 Result	FY 2018 Target
AS	25	18	20	33	15
HS	18	20	12	13	9
MS	5	5	5	8	5
RPH	31	11	10	12	10
RE	10	8	2	4	2



# NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

## FY 2018 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE PLAN

**Key Performance Indicator:** Contribution to transportation safety

**Performance Metric:** Number of Products to Improve Transportation Safety

The following offices will report on this metric: Aviation Safety (AS); Highway Safety (HS); Marine Safety (MS); Railroad, Pipeline & Hazardous Materials Investigations (RPH); and, Safety Recommendations & Communication (SRC).

**Table 7. Performance Metric: Number of products to improve transportation safety**

Office	FY 2015 Result	FY 2016 Result	FY 2017 Target	FY 2017 Result	FY 2018 Target
AS	N/A	321	240	318	100
HS	N/A	8	15	20	7
MS	N/A	22	20	35	1
RPH	N/A	8	6	14	6
SRC	N/A	296	250	773	250

**Key Performance Indicator:** Contribution to transportation safety

**Performance Metric:** Number of Delegated Briefs Conducted\*

The following offices will report on this metric: Aviation Safety (AS); Highway Safety (HS); Marine Safety (MS); and, Railroad, Pipeline & Hazardous Materials Investigations (RPH).

**Table 8. Performance Metric: Number of delegated briefs conducted**

Office	FY 2015 Result	FY 2016 Result	FY 2017 Target	FY 2017 Result	FY 2018 Target
AS	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1000
HS	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1
MS	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	20
RPH	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2



# NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

## FY 2018 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE PLAN

**Key Performance Indicator:** Contribution to transportation safety

**Performance Metric:** Number of international investigations or cooperative activities completed

The following offices will report on this metric: Aviation Safety (AS); Managing Director (MD); Marine Safety (MS); Railroad, Pipeline & Hazardous Materials Investigations (RPH); Research & Engineering (RE); and, Safety Recommendations & Communication (SRC).

**Table 9. Performance Metric: Number of international investigations and cooperative activities completed**

Office	FY 2015 Result	FY 2016 Result	FY 2017 Target	FY 2017 Result	FY 2018 Target
AS	29	22	13	15	13
MD	N/A	N/A	N/A	2	2
MS	3	5	4	4	8
RPH	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1
RE	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	19
SRC	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	6

The Office of Administrative Law Judges (ALJ) will report on the follow two metrics:

**Key Performance Indicator:** Contribution to transportation safety

**Performance Metric:** Percentage of emergency hearings convened within 30 days

**Table 10. Performance Metric: Percentage of emergency hearing convened within 30 days**

Office	FY 2015 Result	FY 2016 Result	FY 2017 Target	FY 2017 Result	FY 2018 Target
ALJ	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	100%

**Key Performance Indicator:** Contribution to transportation safety

**Performance Metric:** Percentage of non-emergency cases closed within 180 days

**Table 11. Performance Metric: Percentage of non-emergency cases closed within 180 days**

Office	FY 2015 Result	FY 2016 Result	FY 2017 Target	FY 2017 Result	FY 2018 Target
ALJ	N/A	N/A	90%	58.6%	80%



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# NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

## FY 2018 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE PLAN

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### Key Challenges and Issues

#### ***Identification and selection of accident investigations***

A key challenge for the NTSB is to identify those accidents in each transportation mode that represent the most important targets of investigative opportunity and to determine the appropriate scope and scale of such investigations. This selection process must balance the significance of the safety issues involved against the limited investigative resources available to us and the depth of the investigation required.

#### ***Advances in new technologies in all modes of transportation***

Advances in transportation technologies are quickly changing the landscape of the transportation sector. NTSB must gain familiarity, increase technical knowledge and engage with industry leaders in the emerging technologies of commercial space, unmanned aircraft systems, high-speed rail, state of the art railroad technology, automated vehicles, database management systems, and data analytics. This will prepare staff to thoroughly investigate emerging technologies and facilitate smooth working relationships with all parties to investigations. Our equipment and analytical tools must keep pace with innovation to be at the forefront of investigating, mitigating, and preventing transportation accidents.

#### ***Effectively managing pilots' and mariners' appeals***

The NTSB serves as the court of appeals for pilots and mariners facing loss or suspension of their licensing certificates or imposition of a civil penalty. As the country's transportation activity increases, the potential for transportation accidents increases, resulting in more enforcement cases; therefore, effectively managing the appeal process becomes more challenging. We will continue to promote transportation safety by adjudicating appeals of certificate actions and denials, providing due process to those affected, and ensuring the integrity of the aviation and maritime safety enforcement system.

### Strategic Goal 2: Engagement

#### **Engage external stakeholders to advance transportation safety**

Effective engagement with the range of stakeholders interested in transportation safety is an important ingredient for agency success. Communication, advocacy, outreach, and partnerships enhance and foster collaboration with stakeholders.

This goal also emphasizes the importance of promoting our [Most Wanted List](#), which is designed to increase awareness of, and support for, the most critical safety enhancements needed to reduce transportation accidents and save lives. By engaging, collaborating, and partnering with stakeholders, we can increase the potential for implementation our recommendations and strengthen our impact on improving transportation safety.



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## NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD FY 2018 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE PLAN

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### Objective 2.1 Stakeholder Engagement: Optimize outreach and build consensus with stakeholders

Collaboration with government agencies, the transportation industry, and advocacy organizations helps to identify and develop effective ways to advocate for and improve safety. Stakeholder outreach and consultations enable us to develop more concise recommendations that are likely to be enacted successfully. Additionally, stakeholder support of agency initiatives will support our efforts to promote safety of the entire transportation system.

Our success in achieving this objective will be accomplished by *enhancing our external stakeholder engagement* through the following strategies:

- Engaging the public and stakeholders through strong partnerships and collaborations to increase public understanding of lessons learned and transportation safety improvements.
- Increasing our access to and use of voluntarily provided safety information from industry stakeholders to support consensus-building on the issues most relevant to reducing safety risks in the transportation sectors we investigate.
- Leveraging social media and other online tools to communicate more effectively with external stakeholders.



# NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

## FY 2018 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE PLAN

**Key Performance Indicator:** Stakeholder management

**Performance Indicator:** Number of outcome-oriented safety results and outreach activities provided to transportation safety stakeholders

The following offices will report on this metric: Offices of Administrative Law Judges (ALJ); Aviation Safety (AS); Chief Financial Officer (CFO); Highway Safety (HS); Managing Director (MD), Railroad, Pipeline & Hazardous Materials Investigations (RPH); Research & Engineering (RE); and, Safety Recommendations & Communication (SRC).

**Table 12. Performance Metric: Number of outcome-oriented safety results and outreach activities provided to transportation safety stakeholders**

Office	FY 2015 Result	FY 2016 Result	FY 2017 Target	FY 2017 Result	FY 2018 Target
ALJ	N/A	N/A	N/A	4	2
AS	29	78	75	88	75
CFO	N/A	N/A	N/A	1	1
HS	25	29	20	30	20
MD	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	23
MS	4	15	10	26	12
RPH	13	46	25	33	25
RE	4	56	25	64	18
SRC	N/A	339	275	716	400

**Key Performance Indicator:** Stakeholder management

**Performance Indicator:** Number of stakeholder engagements implemented\*

The following offices will report on this metric: Aviation Safety (AS); Highway Safety (HS); Marine Safety (MS); Railroad, Pipeline & Hazardous Materials Investigations (RPH); and, Safety Recommendations & Communication (SRC).

**Table 13. Performance Metric: Number of stakeholder engagements implemented**

Office	FY 2015 Result	FY 2016 Result	FY 2017 Target	FY 2017 Result	FY 2018 Target
AS	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2
HS	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1
MS	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	3
RPH	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1
SRC	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2



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# NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

## FY 2018 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE PLAN

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### Key Challenges and Issues

#### ***Effectively Issuing and Closing Safety Recommendations***

Issuing appropriate recommendations to recipients is a necessity and remains important to the agency. One challenge we face when issuing recommendations is developing those that can be implemented in a more impactful way.

In addition, our limited resources create challenges to identify and encourage recipients to implement open safety recommendations. Another concern is how to increase our presence at state legislative sessions to elevate the priority of highway safety at the state level and advance legislators' understanding of the issues.

Further, we are challenged to ensure that the rulemaking process, which can take years, does not hamper the successful implementation of recommendations. For those recommendations requiring regulatory action, the duration and complexity of the rulemaking process make it difficult for recipients to act on safety recommendations in a timely fashion. This implies that we spend considerable time monitoring each recommendation.

### Strategic Goal 3: Synergy

#### **Promote employee teamwork, innovation and engagement to optimize operations.**

We will foster a culture of leadership, diversity, and accountability that enables decision-making while promoting teamwork and collaboration. We will strive to meet challenges with innovation and urgency. Collectively, these efforts support our goal of being a synergistic organization. Our employees can be most effective when they are motivated, engaged, and trained. We continue to ensure our staff are ready and equipped with the necessary skills to support the mission daily.

Being a forward-thinking agency drives synergy and creativity within the agency. To foster efficiency in an evolving transportation environment, we must be innovative at all organizational levels. We will build important strategic links among planning, program management, budgeting, human resources, and technology to ensure the agency is operating cohesively.

#### **Objective 3.1 Empowerment: Cultivate creativity and innovation across the agency through effective leadership**

We will support a transparent and collaborative decision-making process and will seek to continuously align organizational goals with daily actions. We will promote teamwork and innovation across our offices by empowering, enabling, and rewarding staff to seek out interdepartmental and external agency partnerships, emerging transportation technologies and safety risks, and collaborative relationships with stakeholders focused on understanding their



# NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

## FY 2018 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE PLAN

industry trends, constraints, and opportunities involving public safety to improve our processes, optimize operations and enhance our responsiveness to stakeholders.

Our success in achieving this objective will be accomplished by *improving agency efficiency and effectiveness* through the following strategies:

- Communicating consistently within the agency to increase transparency of strategic activities which allows for increased trust, empowerment, collaboration and efficiency.
- Teaching and promoting risk management principles at all levels of the organization to remain resilient to changing environments.
- Evaluating and redesigning processes to promote efficiency.

**Key Performance Indicator:** Employee contribution to process improvement and innovation

**Performance Metric:** Number of efficiencies or tools implemented to increase innovation and collaboration\*

This is an agency-wide metric.

**Table 14. Performance Metric: Number of efficiencies or tools implemented to increase innovation and collaboration**

Office	FY 2015 Result	FY 2016 Result	FY 2017 Target	FY 2017 Result	FY 2018 Target
Agency	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1 improvement per office

### Objective 3.2 Inclusive and Engaged Workforce: Promote an inclusive, and engaged workforce and eliminate barriers to equal employment opportunity

Employee engagement is the employee’s sense of purpose that is evident in their display of dedication, persistence, and effort in their work or overall attachment to their organization and its mission.<sup>3</sup> With increased demand for innovation and creative problem solving for complex problems, a diverse and inclusive workforce is critical. We strive to create a culture that fosters creativity and engagement through the motivation of our employees.

We will evaluate the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey results; internal Inclusive Intelligence (New IQ) data; enterprise risks; and, our strategic outcomes to identify strategies to raise awareness, enhance communication, and develop a high-performing, diverse workforce.

<sup>3</sup> Engaging the Federal Workforce: How to Do It and Prove It. United States Office of Personnel Management. September 2015.



# NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD FY 2018 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE PLAN

Our success in achieving this objective will be accomplished by *enhancing staff engagement and inclusiveness* through the following strategies:

- Encouraging cooperation and collaboration within the agency to enhance employee engagement and inclusiveness.
- Ensuring senior leadership engages with employees through effective communication, coaching, mentoring, conflict resolution strategies, and staff development.
- Developing strategies for improving the virtual workspace for remote and teleworking staff to increase their connection with their peers, supervisors, and senior leaders.

**Key Performance Indicator:** Employee participation and engagement

**Performance Metric:** Number of employee engagement & EEO/Diversity outreach initiatives implemented\*

This is an agency-wide metric.

**Table 15. Performance Metric: Number of employee engagement & EEO/Diversity outreach initiatives implemented**

Office	FY 2015 Result	FY 2016 Result	FY 2017 Target	FY 2017 Result	FY 2018 Target
Agency	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1 initiative per office

**Key Performance Indicator:** Employee participation and engagement

**Performance Metric:** Implement an agency rotational program\*

The Office of the Managing Director (MD) will report on this agency-wide metric for FY 2018.

**Table 16. Performance Metric: Implement an agency rotational program**

Office	FY 2015 Result	FY 2016 Result	FY 2017 Target	FY 2017 Result	FY 2018 Target
MD	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Cross-Training Action Plan Approved

## Key Challenges and Issues

### ***Recruiting, retaining, and developing staff***

The NTSB has earned a reputation for thorough and independent transportation accident investigations, which is attributed to the expertise and skillset of our employees. We are committed to continuously enhancing the managerial, leadership, and workforce skills needed to



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# NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

## FY 2018 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE PLAN

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ensure that we accomplish our mission. This initiative includes the entire NTSB organization—investigative offices, support offices, and agency leadership. We are faced with the challenge of developing our workforce in an environment of technological changes and dwindling resources.

### Management Review

NTSB uses a quarterly data driven strategic review process. Performance goals and metrics are assigned a goal leader to ensure success. Each designated goal leader is responsible for the progress in meeting the goals, reporting the results, and making operational adjustments. The Office of the Managing Director coordinates these quarterly reviews, review and analyze data, as well as provide reports to senior leadership at various intervals throughout the year.

### Addressing the Challenges to Goal Achievement

We address these challenges through effective long-range planning, open communication, and improved employee engagement. Long-range planning in human capital management and core operations ensures that we are ready to deal with future investigative needs. Effective communication at all levels of the organization improves planning and process. We will devote time and resources to thinking strategically, promoting employee engagement, and encouraging staff development. To achieve our long-term vision, we must effectively plan and communicate while maintaining our primary commitment to improve transportation safety. We believe that the initiatives in place will provide the necessary balance to foster the success of these strategic goals and priorities.

### Data Management and Reliability

Data management and reliability are important in determining performance outcomes. Currently, the data are reviewed and verified by Strategic Management Program Manager and finalized with the Office of Managing Director. In 2017, we implemented a new strategic management communication tool. This tool is a web portal where each office will be responsible for entering their data in this new tracking system for performance metrics. This new portal allows the strategic performance reporting process to be streamlined. This tool and processes support the validation of reported metrics. and create a reliable and valid tool for data management. An enterprise-level data quality assurance program, will support optimal capabilities for data storage, data-mining, and data analytics to support the agency's mission.