



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 19, 2015

Contact: Stelios Pavlou (303) 869-2833
stelios.pavlou@state.co.us

RTD NEEDS TO IMPROVE OVERSIGHT OF VEHICLE OPERATORS' COMPLIANCE WITH KEY SAFETY REQUIREMENTS

DENVER—An audit commissioned by the Colorado Office of the State Auditor (OSA) has found that the Regional Transportation District (RTD) needs to improve its oversight of compliance with key safety requirements by vehicle operators, particularly those bus operators employed by private carriers under contract with RTD.

RTD is statutorily charged with developing, maintaining, and operating a public mass transportation system for the benefit of the communities within its service boundaries, which currently includes all of Jefferson, Boulder, and Denver counties, and portions of Adams, Arapahoe, Broomfield, Douglas, and Weld counties, serving about 57 percent of Colorado's total population. RTD contracts with private carriers to operate a significant portion of its bus route services, spending about \$115 million on these contracted services in Fiscal Year 2014.

Bus and light rail train operators must adhere to numerous federal and state regulations, as well as policies and procedures established by RTD, related to the safe operation of buses and light rail trains.

Auditors found that RTD's handling of incidents involving electronic device use by operators while driving appeared inconsistent or insufficient given the nature of the violations. For example, RTD imposed 20-day suspensions on five operators who were using mobile phones to text or view applications while the bus was in motion, but imposed only 3-day suspensions on four other operators for the same violation. Further, auditors concluded that RTD's overall system for disciplinary action does not appear to reflect the public safety risks that use of an electronic device creates.

Auditors found that RTD's oversight of private carriers was not sufficient to ensure full compliance with key operator safety requirements. Specifically, auditors reviewed files for a sample of

(continued)



We Set the Standard for Good Government

511 private carrier operators, and found that 25 percent of those files lacked documentation, such as a copy of a current driver's license, motor vehicle records, or medical certification, required to substantiate operators' fitness for service. Separately, during a 1-month review period, auditors also found instances of private carrier bus drivers working more than the federal limits allow. The limits are in place to help prevent driver fatigue and promote rider safety. Private carriers were also unable to provide drug and alcohol screening test results and other required documentation for 47 of the 320 sampled operators (15 percent).

The audit was conducted by Two Hills Accounting and Consulting and makes two recommendations. RTD agreed with the audit recommendations.

The full report is available electronically on the OSA's website, <http://www.state.co.us/auditor>, via the link called "OSA Audit Reports."

Under the direction of the State Auditor, the OSA is the state's nonpartisan, independent external auditor with broad authority to audit state agencies, departments, institutions of higher education, and the Judicial and Legislative Branches. The OSA's professional staff serve the people of Colorado by addressing relevant public issues through high-quality, objective audits and reviews that promote accountability and positive change in government. Performance audits address whether programs operate in compliance with laws and regulations and in a manner that accomplishes intended program goals. Financial audits include annual audits of the state's basic financial statements and federal grants on a statewide level. IT audits review procedures and technology to ensure the confidentiality, integrity and availability of the state's critical computer systems and taxpayer data. The OSA also tracks about 4,000 Colorado local governments for compliance with the Local Government Audit Law.