

**PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

**Rail Safety Division  
Rail Transit Safety Branch**

**Resolution ST-233  
July 16, 2026**

**R E S O L U T I O N**

Resolution ST-233. Granting Approval of the Final Report on the 2019 Triennial Safety Review of the San Francisco International Airport AirTrain.

**PROPOSED OUTCOME:**

- Approval of the Final Report of the 2019 Triennial On-site Safety Review of San Francisco International Airport AirTrain Automated People Mover system.

**SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS:**

- This resolution considers the safety and security of the public and employees who might be affected by the AirTrain system. The resolution approves a review report required every three years to comprehensively assess, evaluate, and improve safety and security of a rail transit system.

**ESTIMATED COST:**

- There are no costs associated with this resolution.

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**SUMMARY**

This Resolution approves the Rail Safety Division final report, titled "*2019 Triennial Safety Review of San Francisco International Airport AirTrain*" dated January 20, 2021. The report includes the results of the Commission staff review of the San Francisco International Airport AirTrain (AirTrain) System Safety Program and its compliance with its System Safety Program Plan, the Commission's General Order 164-E and applicable state and federal rules and regulations. The review identified 13 findings of non-compliance and Staff made 13 recommendations for corrective actions.

## **BACKGROUND**

General Order (GO) No. 164-E, "Rules and Regulations Governing State Safety Oversight of Rail Fixed Guideway Systems" requires Commission staff (Staff) to conduct on-site system safety and on-site system security reviews of the transit agencies operating rail fixed guideway systems at least once every three years.<sup>1</sup> These are commonly referred to as triennial safety and triennial security reviews.<sup>2</sup> Triennial safety and security reviews are conducted by Staff to evaluate compliance with an agency's own plans and procedures as well as safety and security laws and regulations applicable to the agency.

### **Triennial Safety and Security Reviews**

Staff conduct triennial safety and triennial security reviews in accordance with procedures found in the CPUC State Safety Oversight Program Standard Procedures Manual, which is approved by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) as part of our FTA Certification. The foundation of the triennial safety and triennial security reviews are the structured approach. The reviews are guided by checklists covering the required 21 essential elements of a System Safety Program Plan (SSPP), as listed in 49 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 659 and GO 164-E, Section 3.2, as well as checklists covering GO 172 (personal electronic device prohibitions) and GO 175-A (roadway worker protections). A number of the checklists include field reviews and inspections of system infrastructure and observations of operations and maintenance activities conducted by the transit agency. All checklists guide Staff's inquiries to determine whether an agency is following its established SSPP and its policies and procedures and to determine whether any gaps exist in the SSPP or procedures that an agency must address. Each checklist identifies safety-related elements and characteristics for that review area that Staff either inspects directly, or evaluates by reviewing reports, documents, and other records.

Staff reviewers are the engineers, inspectors, and analysts in the Rail Transit Safety Branch (RTSB) of the Commission's Rail Safety Division (RSD). Reviewers are assigned checklists by RTSB management based on expertise, skill sets, interest and knowledge of the area covered by the checklist. Most checklists are conducted by at least two Staff members. The checklist questions provide guidance during the review. However, as the

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<sup>1</sup> Commission Resolution ST-241 provided RSD Director with the flexibility to delay triennial audits that would otherwise have been scheduled during the COVID-19 Pandemic to avoid violating state public health protocols. On-site triennial reviews were paused for 22 months starting in early 2020.

<sup>2</sup> Staff's security review and report, "2019 Triennial Security Review of San Francisco International Airport AirTrain" is being brought before the Commission concurrently in Resolution ST-234.

agency is informed in the 30-day review notification and draft checklist transmittal letter, Staff are not limited by these questions and may make additional inquiries related to the subject matter based on any agency responses or any documents examined during the review.

RTSB Staff conducted an on-site system safety review of the AirTrain in June 2019. For the AirTrain triennial review, Staff developed 32 checklists covering the 21 essential elements (plus GO 172 and GO 175 checklists) to guide the review, which were shared with AirTrain in advance for review and comment; no comments were received from AirTrain. Staff conducted the triennial safety review and has compiled its final report, as attached to this Resolution.

The methods used to conduct the safety review included:

- a. Interviews with AirTrain employees (including the employees of its contractor, Bombardier) at all levels from rank and file through AirTrain management;
- b. Reviews of design, construction, procurement, testing, training, operation and maintenance programs;
- c. Reviews of records and procedures;
- d. Observation of operations and maintenance activities; and
- e. Inspections of equipment and facilities.

A full description of the safety review, including the scope, results, and recommendations, is contained in the final safety review report identified in this resolution as Attachment A.

### **AirTrain's System Safety Program Plan**

AirTrain's SSPP has been in place since 2003. The requirements for SSPPs are found in General Order 164-E, section 3. GO 164-E requires specific elements to be included in the SSPP and requires AirTrain to evaluate the SSPP annually to determine whether any changes or updates are necessary to maintain compliance or address new or changed system risks. Updates must be submitted to Staff for review and approval.

The SSPP is the guiding document that incorporates safety into AirTrain's daily operations and requires the AirTrain Administration Office (AirTrain Manager and AirTrain Assistant Manager) to oversee its contracted operator, Bombardier, to conduct operations and maintenance activities in accordance with the procedures AirTrain has

established. Those procedures are specified in various procedural manuals, plans, and policies that supplement the SSPP. The SSPP and associated policies and procedures are intended to provide AirTrain personnel, including those of its operator, Bombardier, the guidance to properly perform tasks and to identify and eliminate, mitigate or control safety hazards and risks. Additionally, the SSPP and associated procedures are intended to ensure compliance with safety, health and environmental laws and regulations, as well as to establish requirements, lines of authority, and levels of responsibility and accountability within the organization for their implementation.

### **Monitoring Compliance**

As a routine element of the triennial review process, RSD requests Commission approval of the final report and requests the Commission order the agency to supply responses to each finding and recommendation and develop a corrective action plan to address them. Staff reviews the responses and corrective action plans to assure the identified issue(s) are being addressed and, if so, approves the corrective action plan. Staff then monitor implementation of the corrective action plans and field verifies their completion. Corrective actions may be simple and already implemented prior to issuance of the Final Report, and for some the agency may propose longer-term activities to correct.

### **DISCUSSION**

The final report, *"2019 Triennial Safety Review of San Francisco International Airport AirTrain,"* dated January 20, 2021, and included as Attachment A, identifies staff activities for each of the 32 checklists covering the 21 items that Title 49 of Code of Federal Regulations, Chapter 659 and the Commission's GO 164-E require for inclusion in each Rail SSPP.

A total of 13 findings of non-compliance were identified during the review, which resulted in 13 Staff recommendations for corrective action. The findings and recommendations are organized by source checklist number in the attached report.

AirTrain has responded appropriately in developing corrective actions of the identified findings. Follow-up meetings with AirTrain management indicate corrective actions have already been developed and implemented. Staff believes that AirTrain's implementation of Staff's recommendations have addressed the identified issues, and an enforcement action is not necessary at this time.

AirTrain developed and began implementing corrective action plans for the areas of non-compliance identified and comments in the report immediately, and all findings and recommendations have been closed out.

RSD Staff recommends that the Commission approve the final safety review report titled, *“2019 Triennial Safety Review of San Francisco International Airport AirTrain.”*

### **COMMENTS**

Public Utilities Code section 311(g)(1) provides that this Resolution must be served on all parties and subject to at least 30 days public review. Any comments are due within 20 days of the date of its mailing and publication on the Commission’s website and in accordance with any instructions accompanying the notice. Section 311(g)(2) provides that this 30-day review period and 20-day comment period may be reduced or waived upon the stipulation of all parties in the proceeding.

The 30-day review and 20-day comment period for the draft of this resolution was neither waived nor reduced. Accordingly, this draft resolution was mailed to parties for comments and will be placed on the Commission's agenda no earlier than 30 days from today. \_\_\_ comments were received.

### **FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS**

1. The RSD RTSB staff conducted an on-site safety review of AirTrain in June 2019. Staff conducted a post-review exit conference with AirTrain management on January 24, 2020.
2. The safety report results show 13 findings of non-compliance were identified during the review. These non-compliant items along with 13 recommendations for corrective actions are described, where applicable, in the Comments/Findings and Recommendations section of each checklist and in the body of the final report.
3. AirTrain has developed and implemented corrective action plans for all the areas of non-compliance identified in the report and all of the findings and recommendations contained in the report have been closed out to Staff’s satisfaction.

**THEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED THAT:**

1. The Rail Safety Division's request for approval of the final safety review report titled, "2019 Triennial Safety Review of San Francisco International Airport AirTrain" dated January 20, 2021, is granted.
2. This Resolution is effective today.

I certify that the foregoing resolution was duly introduced, passed, and adopted at a conference of the Public Utilities Commission of the State of California held on July 16, 2026; the following Commissioners voting favorably thereon:

Commissioner Signature blocks to be added  
upon adoption of the resolution

Dated \_\_\_\_\_//\_\_\_\_\_, at San Francisco, California

## **ATTACHMENT A**

2018 Triennial Safety Review Report of  
San Francisco International Airport AirTrain.

CS# 608782563

<http://docs.cpuc.ca.gov/SearchRes.aspx?docformat=ALL&DocID=608782563>