

Transportation Secretary LaHood Announces Recipients of New Railroad Safety Technology Grants



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U.S. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood today announced that seven projects will share \$50 million to help make the nation's rail system safer by facilitating deployment of Positive Train Control (PTC) collision avoidance systems and other advanced technologies. The projects will receive money through the new Railroad Safety Technology Grant (RSTG) program.

PTC systems use Global Positioning System (GPS) technology to monitor and control a train's movements, in order to enforce speed limits, prevent train collisions and, help keep rail workers safe.

Awards vary in size and scope ranging from \$500,000 to \$21 million, and include private corporations, academic institutions and public authorities.

"Safety is our highest priority," said Secretary LaHood. "This new program will help keep the rails safer by accelerating installation of positive train control technology where it is most needed."

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) received 41 grant applications requesting more than \$228 million. Decisions on the competitively awarded grants were based on technical merit, including the extent to which a project helps achieve interoperability between technologies, and the recipient's project management capabilities and financial commitment to share costs.

Noting that all railroads will benefit from the work funded by the program, Federal Railroad Administrator Joseph C. Szabo said, "We are funding projects that confer the greatest benefits to the entire railroad community."

FRA issued a Notice of Funding Availability on March 29, 2009 inviting applications from passenger and freight railroads, industry suppliers and state and local governments. Notably, the program requires that selected projects be ready for deployment within 24 months of receiving a grant award and that grantees share 20 percent of the total cost. Recipients must also have received FRA approval of a Technology Implementation Plan and PTC Implementation Plan, or successfully demonstrated that they could do so.

The RSTG program was authorized by the Rail Safety Improvement Act of 2008 (RSIA), which imposed a statutory deadline of December 31, 2015 for PTC implementation on mainline tracks that carry passenger trains and certain hazardous material shipments. The selected projects are distinct and will help achieve resolution of technical challenges affecting all stakeholders. Grant awardees for the Fiscal Year 2010 RSGT Program are as follows:

Grant Recipient and Location of work	Project Title and Description	Award Amount
Southern California Regional Rail Authority (SCRRA)	<p>Shared LA PTC Communications Infrastructure: The project will develop and test the communications best practices guide for all railroads that must implement a standard Vital Train Management System (VTMS) which requires an interoperable communication architecture that will allow trains to operate safely across railroad networks using the Los Angeles basin as the prototype.</p>	\$6,605,446
National Passenger Rail Corporation- (Amtrak) Washington, D.C.	<p>Advanced Civil Speed Enforcement System (ACSES) – Vital Train Management System (VTMS) Interoperability: The project will focus on achieving interoperability between the PTC system used on Amtrak’s Northeast Corridor, known as ACSES, and the VTMS being adopted by freight railroads.</p>	\$12,850,000
New York Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) – New Jersey Transit/Metro North Railroad, New York	<p>Advanced Civil Speed Enforcement System (ACSES) – Interface Control Documentation: The MTA will develop and test the interface specifications (i.e. Interface Control Document) for the major subsystems of the Amtrak Northeast Corridor ACSES PTC System.</p>	\$6,596,000
Meterocomm Communications Corporation- Renton, Washington	<p>220 MHz PTC Radio HW Design Integration testing and Locomotive Noise Study: The project builds the required radio platform for an interoperable communications network across multiple railroads deploying the Vital Train Management System (VTMS) technology using a 220MHz radio frequency.</p>	\$21,050,000
Howard University- Washington, D.C.	<p>PTC System Identity Management: The project will develop performance models for cryptographic key management required to ensure safe and secure interoperable PTC system communication.</p>	\$857,106
Railroad Research Foundation- Washington, D.C.	<p>Rail Corridor Risk Management: The project will enhance and provide ongoing implementation of the Rail Corridor Risk Management System (RCRMS) as a key enabling technology for the industry in accomplishing the objectives of the Rail Safety Improvement Act of 2008.</p>	\$1,541,448
Westinghouse Airbrake Corporation- Cedar Rapids, Iowa	<p>Video PTC Database Survey Verification: The project will prove the ability to use ordinary video currently collected in a locomotive run through a subdivision to validate PTC Survey location points.</p>	\$500,000

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