

# Establishing Caltrain Chief Safety Officer Position

February 2, 2023



# CURRENT STATUS

- Caltrain has identified a need for a dedicated rail safety officer focused exclusively on the railroad's safety needs, including supporting the transition to electrification.
- Governance MOU does not specifically address safety and security function. Currently, safety support is provided to Caltrain via SamTrans' Director of Safety and Security.
- SamTrans and JPB must mutually agree to any change that replaces a shared service function with a position directly reporting to the Caltrain Executive Director.

# BACKGROUND

- Caltrain reassessed its safety program and culture following a March 10, 2022 incident of a train striking on-track equipment.
- Caltrain's safety function and reporting structure are inconsistent with federal guidance and industry best practices.
- FTA requires all transit rail agencies to appoint a dedicated safety officer reporting directly to the accountable executive.
- As an FRA-regulated agency, Caltrain is subject to extensive operating and safety mandates requiring specialty expertise.

# GOVERNANCE REQUIREMENTS

- Section 2.F of the Governance MOU approved in August 2022 stipulates that, except for the five new direct report positions established as Caltrain direct services, “the JPB shall not have the authority to replace a function currently being performed through partially and fully shared services, unless SMCTD and the JPB mutually agree to the change, provided that such agreement shall not be unreasonably withheld by either party.”

# RECOMMENDATION

- Staff recommendations that the JPB authorize the execution of an agreement with SamTrans to establish the position of Chief Safety Officer reporting directly to the Caltrain ED.
- Note: The SamTrans Board of Directors considered and approved the same request at its February 1, 2023 meeting.