

DOT ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON HUMAN TRAFFICKING SUMMARY OF MEETING

MARCH 13, 2024

The Department of Transportation Advisory Committee on Human Trafficking (ACHT) convened its third meeting at 9:30 a.m. on March 13, 2024, virtually via Zoom. In accordance with the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, the meeting was announced in advance via a Federal Register Notice and was open to the public.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Chair: Rabbi David Saperstein, Director Emeritus and Senior Advisor for Policy and Strategy, Religious Action Center on Reform Judaism
Vice Chair: Esther Goetsch, Executive Director, Truckers Against Trafficking
Earlyne Alexander, Supplier Diversity Compliance Manager, Port Authority of NJ & NJ
Samuel Cho, Commissioner, Port of Seattle
Casey French, Deputy District Attorney, San Diego County District Attorney's Office
Heather Healey, Director of Employee Assistance Programs, Association of Flight Attendants – CWA, AFL-CIO
Annika Huff, Survivor Advocate Expert
Michael Krumm, Lieutenant Colonel, Michigan State Police
James Lewis, Communications Manager, Amtrak Police Department
Shamere McKenzie, CEO, Sun Gate Foundation; Training Manager, National Human Trafficking Hotline
Tiffany Wlazlowski Neuman, Vice President, Public Affairs, NATSO
Leslie Richards, Chief Executive Officer, Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority
Derrick Waters, CEO, Coach USA
Brad White, Associate Director of Safety, Werner Enterprises

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Scott Alexander, International Relations Director, Houston Airports
Lori Ann Chaussinand, Manager, Strategic Sales Development and Training, Pilot Flying J
Lori Cohen, CEO, Protect All Children from Trafficking (PACT)
Dr. Erin DiCesare, Associate Professor of Interdisciplinary Studies, Johnson C. Smith University
Margo Hill, Associate Professor, Eastern Washington University; Small, Urban, Rural and Tribal Center on Mobility, Principal Investigator
Bishop Donna Hubbard, Executive Director, Women at the Well Transition Center; Training Director, Airline Ambassadors International; Flight Attendant, American Airlines
David Lorenzen, Director, Systems Operation Division, Iowa Department of Transportation
Kezban Yagci Sokat, Assistant Professor of Business Analytics, San Jose State University

PRESENTERS IN ATTENDANCE

Amy Lauger, Senior Statistician, Bureau of Justice Statistics, U.S. Department of Justice
 Shawn MacDonald, Chief Executive Officer, Verité
 Colleen Phillips, Policy Counsel, Human Trafficking Prosecution Unit, U.S. Department of Justice

OTHER PARTICIPANTS IN ATTENDANCE

Chris Baglin, Consultant, United Against Slavery
 Cindy Cain, Regional Safety Director, Coach Canada
 Joe Connolly, Manager of Federal Affairs, Southeastern Pennsylvania Transit Authority
 Jake Elovirta, Director of Enforcement Programs, Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance
 Gregory Handy, Sergeant, Louisiana State Police
 Chandley Hayes-Crawford, Sr. Assistant City Attorney III, Houston Airport Systems/City of Houston
 Kyle Hummel, Director of Global Compliance, Brenntag, Inc
 Brittany Johnson, Licensed Mental Health Counselor,
 Nicholas Kleimola, Motor Carrier Officer, Michigan State Police
 Mary Lagdameo, Foreign Affairs Officer, State Department
 Brenna Lyles, Safety Policy Director, American Trucking Association
 Jimmie Lytle, Regional Safety Director, Coach USA/ Megabus
 Chad Schmitt, Motor Carrier Officer, Michigan State Police
 Larry Tonks, Regional Safety Director, Coach USA
 Christi Wigle, CEO & Co-Founder, United Against Slavery
 Donald Wood, Criminal Investigations Unit Commander, Georgia Ports Authority

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION STAFF IN ATTENDANCE

Maha Alkhateeb, Senior Advisor, OST Office of International Transportation and Trade
 Nicole Cacoza, Policy Analyst, Volpe Center
 Harrison Clark, Policy Analyst, Volpe Center
 Matthew Cox, Highway Safety Specialist, National Highway Transportation Safety Administration
 Ricky Huggins, Supervisory Railroad Security Specialist, Federal Railroad Administration
 Stacy Jeleniewski, Research Psychologist, National Highway Transportation Safety Administration
 Nicole McDavid, Chief, Commercial Drivers License Division, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration
 Elizabeth Pfenning, International Relations Specialist, OST Office of International Transportation and Trade
 Daniele Richards, International Relations Specialist, OST Office of International Transportation and Trade
 Shari Shaftlein, Director, Office of Human Environment, Federal Highway Administration
 Kevin Wandrei, Policy Analyst, Volpe Center

Welcome and Introductions

Designated Federal Officer (DFO) Maha Alkhateeb called the meeting to order, welcomed attendees, and introduced Chair David Saperstein.

Chair Saperstein thanked everyone for their attendance and expressed his appreciation for the committee's work on their reports. He then turned the introductions to Vice-Chair Esther Goetsch.

Vice-Chair Goetsch also welcomed everyone to the third meeting of the ACHT and noted her appreciation for the committee members' passion and dedication.

She then introduced Brittany Johnson, a Licensed Mental Health Counselor and Consultant certified in several trauma modalities. Johnson will be providing on-call support to ACHT members and subcommittee members for upcoming ACHT meetings to foster trauma-informed, culturally sensitive, and psychologically safe spaces for all members.

Chair Saperstein then requested a motion to approve the minutes from the second ACHT meeting from December 13, 2023. Vice Chair Goetsch proposed the motion and Leslie Richards seconded. Chair Saperstein requested any objections. Hearing none, the motion was approved.

Department of Justice Presentation on Transportation-Related Human Trafficking Statistics & Considerations for Increased Data Coordination + Discussion

Chair Saperstein introduced Amy Lauger, a senior statistician at the U.S. Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS).

Lauger noted that Department of Justice (DOJ) has little to no data related to human trafficking offenses that involve commercial transit. There is also no comprehensive estimate of human trafficking prevalence in the United States. However, DOJ does track human trafficking offenses at all aspects of the criminal justice system, from victimization through corrections.

For victimization, the primary source of data for BJS is the [National Crime Victimization Survey](#). The survey asks respondents about whether they have been victimized within the last twelve months, whether reported or unreported to the police. However, the survey does not include questions asking specifically about human trafficking. A companion survey that BJS implements is the National Survey of Victim Service Providers, in which BJS does ask questions about services provided to survivors of human trafficking. In collaboration with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), BJS also uses [the National Incident-Based Reporting System](#) (NIBRS). Through NIBRS and its umbrella program, the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) program, the FBI receives information about crimes from state and local police departments; in 2013, these reports began to include reporting on incidents of human trafficking. The FBI has been transitioning to an incident-level data set that captures more detailed offense types, as well

as demographic and other detailed information about each crime incident known to law enforcement.

Both programs are limited by their non-mandatory reporting, but 77% of the U.S. population is covered by jurisdictions that report incident-level data. As a result of work by BJS and FBI, there are now national, statistically-based estimates available about these crimes at the national level. The Uniform Crime Reporting program uses two definitions for human trafficking – commercial sex acts and involuntary servitude. In 2022, there were 2,223 reported human trafficking incidents from 49 states.

The [2018 Survey of States Attorneys General Offices](#) asked about case referrals, outcomes, types of victims, charging practices, etc. Forty-three states, DC, and three territories responded. There was variance in the jurisdiction of each office – whether civil, criminal, or both. Offices in 26 states, American Samoa, and Guam reported having only criminal jurisdiction, 14 states and the Northern Mariana Islands reported civil and criminal jurisdiction, 2 states reported only civil jurisdiction, and 1 state and the District of Columbia reported no jurisdiction over labor trafficking cases. Thirty states, American Samoa, and Guam reported having only criminal jurisdiction, 11 states and the Northern Mariana Islands reported civil and criminal jurisdiction, 1 state reported only civil jurisdiction, and 1 state and the District of Columbia reported no jurisdiction over sex trafficking cases.

BJS is pursuing an effort to collect extracts from electronic court records from state courts. This will help generate better estimates about prosecutions, convictions, and sentencing. In addition, the Federal Justice Statistics Program compiles data from DOJ partners, but some partners only include the most serious offense charge in the data. Some “codes” from these reporting categories are more closely related to transportation than others.

Over time, there has been an increase in the number of human trafficking reports and convictions. The National Corrections Reporting Program data includes counts of who is in the custody of state prison systems for human trafficking crimes. Most states report this for their prison systems, providing a good indication of the frequency of human trafficking offenses among people imprisoned by the criminal justice system. There are a number of available resources, from dashboards to data sets.

Chair Saperstein then introduced Colleen Phillips, who serves as Senior Policy Counsel for the Human Trafficking Prosecution Unit (HTPU) in the Criminal Section of the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice.

Colleen began by noting that DOJ does not collect information specifically about transportation in human trafficking, but because transportation is used in trafficking cases, it is referenced in many reports. She referenced the Human Trafficking Institute (HTI)’s [Annual Federal Human Trafficking Report](#), which identifies and compiles public information from federal human trafficking cases, and analyzes them for a number of data points. In FY22, HTI added transportation-related data points for the name of the rideshare, bus service, train, or airline used in a trafficking scheme. They found that 54% of cases did not mention a transportation method, and in those that did mention transportation, private vehicles were mentioned most frequently.

There are not major differences between airlines based on the statistics available to DOJ from HTI, but one major difference emerges – Uber reportedly has far higher reported rates of human trafficking than Lyft.

[Polaris' On-Ramp, Intersections, and Exit Routes report](#) is helpful as well. Based on their research, though we lack a complete picture, it still seems like the vast majority of trafficking happens with traffickers' private vehicles. Every year, [DOJ releases data to Congress](#) on cross-government efforts to counter human trafficking, but there is not a transportation nexus in this. DOJ wants to align the data they collect and present to Congress with the policies and efforts in place at federal agencies.

Unfortunately, there are a lot of challenges to drawing conclusions about transportation-related human trafficking from DOJ's work. Where Polaris identified that transportation was involved, they don't focus on the role that transportation played. It is difficult to know how transportation was used and whether that was an explicit (or direct) part of the crime of human trafficking or tangential. For example, if someone takes a plane to the U.S. for a job and is then compelled into debt bondage, the transportation nexus is not clear, which makes reporting to Congress difficult. These are definitional challenges that must be addressed first.

There is also a civil remedy, which enables victims of trafficking to bring a lawsuit in civil court against their trafficker. This is generally not reflected in reporting about trafficking, especially because reporting is not mandated for these cases.

Chair Saperstein then opened the meeting to questions.

- Chad Schmitt: why doesn't NIBRS reporting always include trafficking when that occurs?
 - Amy Lauger: There are many reasons trafficking may not be included, and this causes underreporting, but prosecutors may charge different or related offenses instead of human trafficking.
 - Colleen Phillips: It is known that there is not consistency in NIBRS, and we cannot control how state-level data is reported. There are over 18,000 law enforcement agencies across the U.S., which makes checking reports difficult, though FBI is trying to train people on this.
 - Michael Krumm: As a law enforcement officer in Michigan, I don't think it would be possible to mandate reporting data completely. Every year, many local law enforcement agencies decline to report, but everyone reports differently and codes crimes differently.
 - Colleen Phillips: Compelling reporting requires significant resources and funding at the state or federal level.
- Leslie Richards: How can our report be helpful? Is there a legal reason some of the questions about reporting aren't being asked? Is it just that all agencies work individually and need better coordination?
 - Amy Lauger: BJS collects either administrative or survey data, but if there isn't an offense code for trafficking via commercial vehicle, we can't identify it short

of reading through all charging documents, but that requires a lot of resources. For survey data, perhaps the Bureau of Transportation Statistics could collaborate with BJS to create better questions about transportation-related trafficking.

- Colleen Phillips: We need a definition for “use of commercial transportation in human trafficking.” The federal government also does not ask about specific demographic information about victims of crime, because it can dissuade reporting. It’s hard to change data collection without funding and direction from Congress.
- Leslie Richards: Is there an amount that would make a difference?
 - Amy Lauger: It takes at least a couple of million for surveys and representative sampling.
- Margo Hill: How does this impact tribes who have to work with FBI and rely on them for reporting in Indian country?
 - Colleen Phillips: The Bureau of Indian Affairs can be requested by tribes to have jurisdiction, and states now have concurrent jurisdiction, so it’s difficult, but I think the U.S. Department of Justice’s [Indian Country Investigations and Prosecutions Report](#) that the FBI issues yearly is a fairly good resource for this.
- Kezban Yagci Sokat: It could be helpful to look at data points related to transportation violations for H1-A and H1-B visa violations. I know there are prosecuted cases in California at the state-level, but I don’t know if there is any collaboration between DOJ and DOL on this.
 - Colleen Phillips: There is definitely compulsory labor where the means to compel the labor include the traffickers limiting the modes of transportation or repayment for transportation. We can look further into this link.
- Donna Hubbard: I think it’s interesting that we saw fewer reports of trafficking on airplanes, given that it’s so global. Is there a space where there is no oversight, such as in international waters, where crimes are committed and not reported?
 - Colleen Phillips: Our data collection is constrained to where we have jurisdiction. International waters are free of jurisdiction, so the defendant or victim would need to be a U.S. national or resident, or the crime occurs within U.S. boundaries. It’s almost impossible for DOJ to get information about international incidents.
 - Donna Hubbard: I think this is the problem with not sharing data between non-profits and federal agencies.
 - Colleen Phillips: The senior policy operating group at DOJ is working on sharing within and across the federal government. The Human Trafficking Institute shares data with us yearly, and we always welcome NGOs to present to us so we can better understand ongoing research and use it to inform our views. But many NGOs don’t trust the federal government.

Training & Awareness Subcommittee Update

Vice Chair Goetsch introduced Lt. Col. Michael Krumm, Deputy Director for the Michigan State

Police overseeing the Professional Development Bureau and chair of the Training and Awareness Subcommittee.

Krumm updated the committee on the state of the Training and Awareness draft report. At this point, the initial draft submitted to the DOT and has gone through two rounds of reviews.

The subcommittee referenced existing resources, including the DOT/DHS Blue Lightning Initiative (BLI) and TAT training. The report found that lack of information on victims and insufficient analysis of existing data creates a gap, and there is difficulty identifying where trafficking victims are. Another issue in the existing anti-trafficking landscape is training fatigue or lack of ongoing training – though self-paced and shorter trainings, including messaging on social media, could help address this. Finally, the subcommittee found that lack of adequate funding to fully support anti-trafficking initiatives makes it difficult to tackle the problem.

The subcommittee found that there are a number of robust anti-trafficking training courses available, and more people are being trained with them, which was a concern of the 2019 ACHT Report. They also identified some areas of improvement:

- Training efficacy is difficult to gauge. With the exception of TAT's reporting, there are few assessments of whether a particular training is effective.
- Non-frontline workers (e.g., administrative staff, etc.) are less likely to take trafficking awareness training, which is a weakness because trafficking does not necessarily take place on the front lines.
- There is a continued need to use collaborative, victim-centered approaches as best practice and work with survivors to improve law enforcement identification and response.

Krumm shared that the subcommittee recommends exploring a certification system for training courses to ensure they meet core objectives (or minimum standards). Certifications for transportation workers at all levels should have compulsory trafficking training included.

They also recommend developing training and awareness toolkits and engaging in periodic review of domestic and international processes, to make sure people are apprised of changes in both trafficking and anti-trafficking enforcement technologies. Guides for where to post trafficking awareness materials in federal, state, local, and private facilities, and model language or activities can make it easier for agencies and localities to develop anti-trafficking measures. There must be a compliance audit for existing and future mandates and laws, especially if there is funding attached.

Finally, the subcommittee recommends whole-year awareness campaigns, since human trafficking doesn't necessarily peak around major sports events as previously thought. As many people as possible should participate in voluntary reporting and training programs. Potential strategies for implementing these are incorporating QR codes and phone apps in public awareness campaigns to make reporting easier and more visible. Transportation companies should show pre-departure announcements for reporters and victims. Organizations, like labor unions, should participate in anti-trafficking initiatives.

Krumm emphasized that training should remove barriers and fears of reporting human trafficking cases. He noted other subcommittee suggestions for convening meetings and/or training to engages both private and public stakeholders to develop stronger connections, offering annual sector-specific refreshers on human trafficking, providing funding for training organizations and to fund public awareness campaigns advertising space. Victims of trafficking should always be treated as paid experts and should be central in crafting survivor-informed trainings from initial development to implementation and evaluation.

Vice Chair Goetsch noted that the subcommittee seemed to have identified two missing sets of data, one about victims and how they travel and a second is about law enforcement activities and convictions related to human trafficking. She suggested that surveys might be able to gather data on the former, and for the latter possibly a set of best practices for reporting human trafficking for state attorneys general. She also said that Truckers Against Trafficking is working with third-party and private security companies to potentially train them on identifying trafficking. Lt. Col Krumm said that kind of training would help the Michigan State Police's private partners. Committee members then offered comments and reactions to the Training and Awareness report.

Donna Hubbard commented that most people do not "say something when they see something," because of the fear that they are wrong. The most important thing for training is that it teaches people how to recognize and report and create that data trail. She also noted that training must include survivors in order to be credible and suggested oversight that includes reviews of programs by survivors in order for them to receive funding. Chair Saperstein noted that people fearing trouble for reporting trafficking is a major hurdle. Heather Healy suggested creating a validated screening tool that employers can provide to front line workers to help alleviate the fear of reporting. She suggested a checklist of indicators that a worker could click through on a phone or digital pad to confirm concerns and reduce liability while instilling confidence.

Derrick Waters said that it is crucial to work on educating senior leadership so that concern around human trafficking can be supported throughout an organization.

Kezban Yagci Sokat said that in her experience the largest barrier to analysis is the lack of adequate data overall.

Vice Chair Goetsch thanked Lt. Col Krumm and the subcommittee for their work identifying strengths and gaps in existing work. She closed the session. DFO Alkhateeb announced a break for lunch.

Lunch Break

Research and Data Subcommittee Update

Chair Saperstein introduced Kezban Yagci Sokat, an Assistant Professor at San Jose University. Yagci Sokat updated the committee on the work the Research and Data subcommittee completed since the last public meeting on December 13, 2023. The subcommittee has continued to investigate additional data, including recent developments, and conduct practitioner interviews

and solicit expert input. They have been working to incorporate comments on the first draft report.

She presented a selection of the existing resources that they have used to inform the report, highlighting the recently released [United Against Slavery National Outreach Survey for Transportation](#). She noted that the survey had almost 4,000 respondents, including survivors, transportation workers, and law enforcement officers, and worked with 54 transportation organizations. Regarding the earlier discussion with the Training and Awareness subcommittee, the survey found that 85% of respondents have never reported a sign of human trafficking, and that 48% have concerns about misidentifying signs of human trafficking. She also noted other resources that the subcommittee included in the draft. In one study that Professor Sokat was involving, they used newly published research on [expanding transit agency capacity](#) to monitor transit points for human trafficking as a way to combat trafficking with better data analytics. They also brought in research on how [privacy issues and autonomous vehicles](#) interact with anti-human trafficking efforts, an investigation of the link between [Western car brands and forced labor abuses](#), and a [UN Office of Drugs and Crime study](#) on the impact of Covid-19 on transportation and trafficking, that found that traffickers followed more complex and longer trafficking routes compared to pre-covid.

The subcommittee found that the limited and inconsistent data across agencies and organizations was the most significant gap in the field. They found few specific data sources from federal or law enforcement agencies, particularly for transportation data. Notable examples are the National Hotline, which provides quarterly data aggregated with Truckers Against Trafficking, as well as a partnership between TAT and the Florida DOT statewide transit training program and the University of South Florida. Another gap is debate over the “quantity” of the trafficking problem because without data on details or modes, experts disagree on the scope of trafficking. There is a need for more research on the transportation supply chain and on the intersection of labor trafficking victims and their intersection with transportation.

The recommendations focus on evaluation, tracking, and support of data and research. The subcommittee suggested using a mixed methods approach to evaluate existing and any future awareness campaigns and trainings and underscored the importance of tracking existing and proposed legislation impacting human trafficking for outcomes or results of that legislation. This would include specific data sets, such as for commercial driver’s licenses (CDL). As others have said in the meeting, it is also important to track the financial support for legislative mandates. The subcommittee also recommended additional research and advocacy on human trafficking, either through funding research or through accessibility for potential data sources that already exist. In addition to increasing the amount of available data, the subcommittee recommended improving the quality of the data collected by adding new layers and metrics to correctly identify indicators of human trafficking. One suggestion from a survivor was that DOT should issue a Request for Proposal to promote and support research with the survivors.

Chair Saperstein opened the presentation to questions.

- Esther Goetsch: What is the CDL data set you mentioned?

- Kezban Yagci Sokat: We are trying to figure out if any data about trafficking convictions for CDL holders that the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) or state DMVs might collect is being tracked or shared. To the best of our knowledge, it is not, there may be an effort to analyze and include later.
- Esther Goetsch: So, states that required training for CDL holders, you want to collect incidents related to human trafficking via CDL schools, federal agencies or DMV?
- Kezban Yagci Sokat: Yes, a general effort, to see if there is a correlation between training and increase or decrease in cases of trafficking identified.
- Esther Goetsch: You had recommendations for transportation accessibility for victims and survivors after they have left a trafficking situation?
 - Kezban Yagci Sokat: We want to collect specific data on that and suggest there should be performance metrics. In California, there is a specific state reporting requirement to monitor how much money is allocated to transportation in their grant programs to support survivors.

Chair Saperstein thanked Kezban for the report and for her contribution to the forced labor working group and the NOST project. Vice Chair Esther Goetsch paused the meeting for a fifteen-minute break.

Verité Presentation on Human Trafficking Risks in Transportation Supply Chains Presentation + Discussion

At 1:50 p.m., Vice Chair Esther Goetsch reconvened the meeting. She introduced Shawn MacDonald, the CEO of Verité, a civil society organization that promotes workers' rights in global supply chains through research, consulting, training, assessments, and policy advocacy.

MacDonald explained that Verité works globally to monitor different supply chain practices. They work closely with government agencies, unions, NGOs, and workers to improve approaches to labor rights protection. They have been active for 25 years and work in 70 countries. Verité focuses on assessments, independent research, consulting, and training on labor issues including labor rights, child labor, forced labor, discrimination and equality, and the promotion of decent work.

The Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) defines what trafficking is. There is a key emphasis on the “use of force, fraud, or coercion.” While those are major factors, forced labor is anytime that work is extracted under menace of penalty, or when person has not offered himself voluntarily. This includes deception about the job, restrictions on movement, taking identity documents, and other tricks like withholding wages or exploiting debts, such as those they incur during the recruitment process. Mandatory deductions for food and transport are two such examples. Abusive and degrading working conditions and the threat or presence of physical or sexual violence are also indicators of forced labor.

Work that is not voluntary with threats or coercion present is forced labor, as opposed to simply exploitative conditions. The International Labor Organization (ILO) developed and recently updated an [indicator framework](#) that includes more nuance and detail. The basic framework is the same, but the details and methods of forced labor can be different when looking at the palm oil industry in West Africa versus Southeast Asia or Ecuador or Guatemala. Using a consistent framework is important to avoid confusion in identification of forced labor and policy development to combat it.

It's important to dispel myths of forced labor only happening in certain countries or sectors. Forced labor happens not just in "sweatshops," but also in electronics, forestry/agriculture, manufacturing and elsewhere. It also occurs frequently in fast-moving consumer goods, mining, and transportation. Information from the U.S. Department of Labor [lists more than 100 products](#) from a wide variety of sectors made with forced labor.

This is not a problem that only affects the poorest countries; it also happens in dynamic and affluent countries, where people move for work. Forced labor is on the increase because many of the jobs that people used to have, such as subsistence agriculture, forestry, or fishing are going unfilled when people move to other, often urban, areas. It is increasingly common that traffickers coerce or trick people into taking those jobs. People may also migrate from an impoverished country to a wealthier one for a job opportunity, and pay to do so, which makes them already indebted and vulnerable. The biggest risk factor for forced labor is status as a migrant.

MacDonald noted that in the past 10 to 15 years there has been more attention to the issue, with more international standards and frameworks on how to define and fight forced labor. The U.S. has laws on the books like the TVPA, passed in 2000, and the Tariff Act of 1930, which banned forced labor-created goods, but they were not well enforced until more recently. In 2010, California passed the Transparency in Supply Chains Act, in 2012 an executive order applied anti-trafficking requirements to all federal contractors, not just large multinationals. In 2015, the Tariff Act was revised to close loopholes and allow anyone to petition Customs and Border Protection (CBP) to investigate if a product has been made wholly or in part by forced labor. CBP can then detain imported goods until the company can prove forced labor was not involved. Another supplement to the Tariff Act, the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act, classified all goods made in the Xinjiang region of China or goods made by Uyghur laborers elsewhere in China as goods made with forced labor, unless proven otherwise. Many jurisdictions around the world, such as the EU, Australia, Japan, South Korea, Canada, Mexico, already have their own versions of laws barring forced labor goods.

Verité worked with U.S. State Department's Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons to build [ResponsibleSourcingTool.org](https://www.responsible sourcing tool.org), which gives a broad view of some of these risks of forced labor and human trafficking. The site allows users to search by sector or industry and it will display a map of well-documented forced labor risks using UN, U.S. government and NGO sourcing.

For the transportation sector, Shawn noted many products or sectors with a history of forced labor in transportation and related industries. There are some allegations of severe exploitation in the motor vehicle industry, including in the United States. Construction has a great deal of

exploitation, because that work is isolating and dangerous. Migrants from South Asia, usually men, are recruited to work in the transportation construction sector and then fall victim to recruitment, abuse, and debt bondage. Extractive and mining industries are a big area of concern with the transition to electric cars. Minerals and aluminum mining are also known for being exploitative, with migrants recruited to do difficult work, usually in very isolated conditions. A lot of aluminum also comes from Xinjiang, so they are presumed to be the product of forced labor. Electronics is sometimes mistakenly seen as a “clean” sector, because factories are new and modern, but this is not always true. There is forced labor in some electronics factories and plants, such as in Malaysia.

Shawn also shared public resources from Verité and peers to help companies, policymakers, and other NGOs prevent forced labor:

- The [Responsible Sourcing Tool’s Due Diligence Toolkit](#) has information about how to establish procedures to prevent and moderate forced labor in supply chains with specialized toolkits for certain sectors.
- The new [Supply Chain Traceability Matrix](#) uses a number of data sources and technological tools like RFID tags, microchips, and genetic and isotope testing to trace supply chains by tagging a good when it is produced and following it all the way through the value chain.
- The [CUMULUS Forced Labor Screen](#) dashboard allows member companies to identify and analyze parts of their supply chain and perform due diligence reporting.
- Verité [training courses](#) on identifying forced labor, corruption in foreign worker environments, and a specialized course on trafficking risk in sub-Saharan African supply chains. It also has a Due Diligence training for U.S. Government officials based on the OECD Due Diligence Guidance teaching how to assess, monitor, and remediate human trafficking in the supply chain. It also outlines both good practice and bad practice looks like in due diligence and how to create a risk map for goods and products.

Shawn concluded his presentation and Vice Chair Goetsch opened questions from the committee.

- Esther Goetsch: With the responsible sourcing tool, it doesn’t look like there is a menu item for the transportation industry. Is there a toolkit for transportation specifically?
 - Shawn MacDonald: No, not specifically, but the base toolkit would apply. Every year we put out a new specialized toolkit to provide additional detail on how certain types of workers are more vulnerable. Because transportation includes so many different things, I like to reiterate there is a common problem of recruitment abuse and debt bondage. Whether working in a warehouse on Qatar or Malaysia, it’s about the recruitment agencies. If that’s something DOT and others are interested in pursuing in the future, that would be great to explore.
 - Esther Goetsch: Thank you. I’m from Truckers Against Trafficking, and one thing that came up earlier was related to private security, and working with large companies on the training side, but still addressing recruitment internally. We

have our Policies and Partnerships Subcommittee presenting next. I know similarly in the transportation sector, we're hearing more reports on how driver shortages are resulting in recruitment abroad, with international partners aiding in providing info and awareness on safety during recruitment for U.S.-based industries.

- Sam Cho: Shawn, thank you. I noticed that in the first map you provided that was shaded, I was surprised to see UK highlighted as vulnerable for both labor and child trafficking. I'm curious why that is the case?
 - Shawn: Off the top of my head, I wouldn't want to say I knew exactly why. I would note that the UK is similar to the U.S. – many migrants are seeking to go there, and you get a lot of fraudulent schemes to recruit people into jobs there. The UK is also like the U.S. as compared to the EU, with less enforcement of labor laws than in mainland Europe. It's a bit more laissez-faire, like here in the US. There's also a bit more impunity around labor conditions.
- Kezban Yagci Sokat: Thank you for the presentation. You mentioned that being a migrant is one of the highest risk factors for forced labor, but is there any data or research to support that?
 - Shawn MacDonald: Yes, I know the ILO has studies and official data on that. I will look and email that to you. If you look at other studies that have been done, the emphasis is on migrants as I keep emphasizing. It's the most common risk factor across the board.
- Kezban Yagci Sokat: You also mentioned legislation. What is your perspective on the potential EU-wide legislation about the issue? Will it have any general impact on the transportation supply chain in the U.S.?
 - Shawn: In the EU, the [Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive](#), a mandatory and enforceable level of human rights due diligence, has stalled. However, Germany has a version in force, and so do the Netherlands, France, and Norway. Provisions will continue to be enforced by Germany and those other major economies. When I was trying to make a point about U.S. companies here, it's only a matter of time before someone in Europe takes action. Canada does as well; as part of an agreement passed in Trump administration, Canada can bar products made with forced labor. I would guess because mandatory due diligence has stalled, a lot of energy will go into making sure the import ban passes.
- Kezban Yagci Sokat: Are you able to give some examples? Around 2015-2016, it looks like Verité analyzed the seafood supply chain? Are there any other examples with a transportation component?
 - Shawn MacDonald: I know there are some groups that are going to test out an import ban on anything that it is a "made in whole or in part" by forced labor. But the question that arises is, does this mean that if transportation is part of the "making" of that product, it should be banned? People are looking to submit a petition on those grounds and litigate that issue through the regulatory process – to see if "transport" can be deemed forced labor "in the making of" a product.

- Lori Cohen: Thank you. I know you said this was on labor trafficking, but I want to take the opportunity to talk on sex trafficking and raise what our organization has encountered. We focus on preventing child sex trafficking and co-administer a program with our international partners called ‘the CODE,’ which is a voluntary code of conduct with six steps to help reduce the risk of child sex trafficking, with a focus in travel and tourism. One of the voluntary principles is including a clause in contracts throughout value chain which states a zero-tolerance policy of sexual exploitation of children, which could be an analog to disallowing forced labor in the value chain in labor trafficking. What we found is that there are a lot of businesses that will happily sign this, but airlines resist because of this clause. Airlines have said they cannot really state this or that there is no way for them to verify it.
 - Shawn MacDonald: I guess one thing would be that prostitution and sex trafficking often thrives in conjunction with oil and gas, and mining sectors, as well as construction. Very often, companies think “sex trafficking isn’t our thing,” so there is a lot of education to educate them on how they are directly or indirectly participating in that. In terms of companies saying, “this is too impossible,” I feel like it’s important to say that no one expects there to be no trafficking in supply chains at this point in time. If you say there is no problem, it means you’re not looking.
- Lori Cohen: On the labor side, have you engaged with and gotten a response from airlines?
 - Shawn MacDonald: No, we have no direct experience with airlines. I participate in an inter-agency coordination group anti-trafficking committee, and we’ve recently had more exposure to airlines. One big challenge is in getting airlines to see the risk of trafficking. This is similar to hotels, and we train front desk people to raise an alarm bell if some creepy guy comes in, but they’re not thinking about their labor force (e.g., cleaning services, security, food service, etc.), materials, commodities. I think airlines might be similar. They can focus on sex trafficking and how to identify victims at the gate, as opposed to the aluminum coming from Xinjiang that is in the plane, or who the caterer is what their labor and product supply chain looks like. I also suggest looking at some Verité trainings for the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) which are similar to your work at DOT in regard to [supply chain regulations](#) and [procurement practices](#).
- Kezban Yagci Sokat: Thank you. In addition to the training, is there any source of research or data recommendations you could share with us? We all are facing the same problem -- limited or no data.
 - Shawn MacDonald: Thank you, and good luck. I will email any sources.

Policies and Partnerships Subcommittee Update

Chair Saperstein opened the Policies and Partnerships subcommittee presentation by introducing subcommittee chair Sam Cho, Commission President of the Port of Seattle. Sam Cho also

currently serves as the Director of Strategic Initiatives in the Office of Seattle Mayor Bruce Harrell. Under his leadership, the Port of Seattle has implemented trainings for recognizing and reporting human trafficking for all badged employees at SEA, engaged tenants in a pledge campaign to fight human trafficking, and coordinated anti-trafficking efforts with federal partners and airports across the country. In recognition of his work, SEA won the 2022 US Department of Transportation Combatting Human Trafficking in Transportation Impact Award.

DFO Alkhateeb introduced subcommittee vice chair Jessica Powers. Jessica is the Chief Safety Officer for the transit agency Trinity Metro in Fort Worth, Texas and an Army Veteran who served 8 years as an 88M Heavy Wheel Operator. She is on the Human Trafficking Prevention Task Force for Texas and participated in the Light the Way to End Human Trafficking Summit for two years. She has facilitated the partnership between Trinity Metro and the Fort Worth Unbound non-profit organization to help survivors and build a training for transit employees in Fort Worth. Under Jessica's leadership, Trinity Metro won second place in the 2022 Annual Combating Human Trafficking in Transportation Impact Award. Their areas of focus included transportation modes, law enforcement, and truck stops and travel centers. Subcommittee members focused on their mode of expertise, performed research and a literature review, evaluated sources, analyzed conclusions, and then collaborated on a draft.

Jessica Powers presented the Policies and Partnerships Subcommittee update.

The literature review looked at existing surveys, studies, and data resources from the National Human Trafficking Hotline, Truckers Against Trafficking, Polaris, the DOT, the FTA, the DOJ Office of Juvenile Justice and Bureau of Justice Statistics, the Department of Homeland Security, and the National Cooperative Highway Research program, among others. In addition, the subcommittee's methods included data analysis, stakeholder and survivor interviews, news and archives reviews, and agency collaboration assessments.

Their analysis found a need for environment-specific training for operators, security, and port authority officials, more trauma-informed training, better local resources, and better publicly available data. There is also a lack of communication with other industries that surround or connect to transportation, such as health care, hotels, or agriculture. Every sector has its own form(s) of human trafficking, so we should all recognize those intersections and work together. Training materials, case studies, policies, best practices, and lessons learned could all be compiled in a central place from. A cross-sector roundtable discussion would be beneficial.

The subcommittee also noted that while technology is advancing, there is limited data on new technology besides "see/say" reporting apps and e-alerts. Law enforcement has begun assessing the use of AI in their work and this is an avenue to explore. Another gap they identified is a lack of leadership buy-in, even for organizations that discuss training for human trafficking.

Jessica delivered the recommendations, which centered around a multi-faceted approach including various stakeholders. The subcommittee recommended implementing an HR hiring policy that discourages hiring people with human trafficking convictions, a procurement policy to prohibit purchases from businesses with a record of trafficking, and a push for all stakeholders to create and strengthen privacy policies for victims to prevent sharing of sensitive information

outside of need-to-know managers and law enforcement. They also recommended another push to have leadership of transportation organizations sign onto a pledge against human trafficking.

They recommended adopting the enhanced collaborative model mandate that all law enforcement officers get trauma-informed training for the transportation sector. Promote partnerships between transportation modes, law enforcement, and local task forces and encourage public-private partnerships, for example, TAT and Walmart. They also recommend increasing grant funding and establishing grants to fund job training and work programs for survivors.

Sam Cho opened the floor to questions from the committee.

- Esther Goetsch: For your policy recommendations, did you explore any demand reduction policies?
 - Jessica Powers: The subcommittee is still going back and forth on this, that is on the agenda for us to discuss.
- Esther Goetsch: And as far as legislative recommendations to Congress, I assume you haven't gotten into what exactly those would be?
 - Jessica Powers: We haven't pulled everything together, but we are looking at different actions we want to advise.
- Kezban Yagci Sokat: This is more about offering support, the National Outreach Survey for Transportation looks at some legislation, which might be a good thing to pull from in that section of the report.
- Chair Saperstein: Am I correct that there has been interaction with major NGOs working in a field, since they are usually driving a lot of legislative ideas as well here? I know many have been involved with our work, but if there are others, should we reach out?
 - Jessica Powers: We are in touch with Unbound, who work in Texas. I am meeting with them at the end of this week and hoping to get more clarification.
 - Sam Cho: Various members of our committee have reached out to organizations in this space. I have also worked with the nonprofits and NGOs that port has worked with.
- Esther Goetsch: I assume you're working with the Businesses Ending Slavery and Trafficking (BEST) out of Seattle? One major gap is those for-hire drivers working for rideshares. I know Washington is working on developing those trainings. I wonder if that is a good model or case study maybe for the report?
 - Sam Cho: BEST is one that I know. We will speak at conference next month. They will have an announcement from Uber about their efforts I believe, but we'll look into it deeper.
- Esther Goetsch: Texas is the only state with required training for rideshare drivers. King County was the first county with that policy, and now it's being adopted statewide, but what is being added into that bill as far as requirement is still pending.
 - Jessica Powers: I know we have that kind of training requirement for yellow cab drivers in Tarrant County, TX, but I didn't know about Uber/Lyft.

- Kezban Yagci Sokat: To best of my knowledge, Texas is the only state requiring. I do not remember the legislation, but there is a specific law about collecting data as well. They are also working on creating human trafficking task forces, with lots of collective effort on one piece of authorizing legislation. With regards to rideshare specifically, what age group is able to use rideshare by themselves and perhaps vulnerable is also under discussion.
- David Saperstein: We're fairly far along in the process of shaping what this report might be. I'm curious to know, as people reflect on where we are, and what the experience has been, what are the gaps in this undertaking, the way it is structured? What has fallen between the cracks, either at a micro- or macro-level? I want to give people a chance to lift up anything that may be missing.
- Michael Krumm: How should all of this content come together? Who will compile it? Are we expected to bring this into a single, unified document? What does DOT expect us to produce?
 - Maha Alkhateeb: It will depend a bit on the format – if it is in sections by mode or recommendations made to specific modes. There are great opportunities to make cross-modal recommendations; many recommendations isolated by a particular mode could be expanded to all modes of transport. The goal is combining the entire document to flow cohesively, and accounting for any mode-specific areas that need to be called out. The overall approach and overall narrative are cross-modal, and then the recommendations are broken down by category.
 - Michael Krumm: Thank you. Now that we have re-drafted based on recommendations, is our next step to get it back to you all for any further clarification based on that? We've tried to do that, but I'm more of a "step by step" thinker, so as a next step, should send it back and get more review to you?
 - David Saperstein: I think the question is asking "what is the process going forward?"
 - Maha Alkhateeb: I sent the committee a granular timeline by email. This was to help you all to guide the process since it is a significant undertaking. Each subcommittee drafter or co-drafter puts forward the latest version, then everyone puts forward edits. After that, there is a review period, drafters put it forth, people review, and then rinse and repeat so we can get to a final draft by May 3rd.
 - David Saperstein: And the weaving together will happen on your end, Maha?
 - Maha Alkhateeb: Yes, we will combine all three subcommittee reports into one draft that will be shared with everyone for input.

Public Comment

DFO Alkhateeb opened the public comment session. She explained that advisory committee members will comment first, then subcommittee members will comment or respond. Comments by members of the public who submitted them in advance were circulated on Friday before the meeting. Lori Cohen will share the work done by Protect All Children Against Trafficking (PACT) and Christi Wigle will share the work of United Against Slavery (UAS) and the NOST.

Lori Cohen informed the committee that PACT is undertaking a Federal Transit Authority (FTA)-funded initiative called Transit Against Child Trafficking (TACT). The goals of this initiative are to determine transit user awareness of human trafficking, perform data analysis and modeling, and develop awareness as well as training materials based upon data derived from awareness assessments. PACT plans to scale this assessment into a larger toolkit.

TACT launched in January of 2024, with Capital District Transit Authority (CDTA) in Albany, NY and Rio Metro Regional in Albuquerque, NM. The initiative has looked at use of transportation, media consumption, security awareness, and similar variables. PACT facilitated meetings with transit operators and mapped the data they received. The first group they worked with was CDTA in Albany, which was presumed to be a “trafficking hotspot” based on existing Polaris data. Transit users had a low awareness of trafficking and risk occurring, even though trafficking seemed common based on available data. PACT then looked at the Rio Metro, and, despite significant differences in geography and size, the lack of knowledge about trafficking was similar.

Awareness levels were surprisingly low in the 25-34 age group, which aligns with the people most likely to use transit for commuting and during commuting hours. PACT found that people got much of their news through online social feeds. Based on that info, they developed a social media campaign about signs of what to look for if you’re taking transit.

Maha thanked Lori for her presentation and highlighted how helpful it would be for the Research and Data Subcommittee to have initial data for these two areas. She also noted the benefits of a social media campaign with visual-heavy posters in raising awareness.

- Esther Goetsch: what is the age range for the riders you surveyed?
 - Lori Cohen: For ridership, we did not survey minors, so the age range was 18 to 75 and older. We have breakdowns based on different categories.
- Esther Goetsch: Will you make any of that publicly available?
 - Lori Cohen: Yes, when we complete it.
- Esther Goetsch: For free? Or at a cost?
 - Lori Cohen: The goal is to make the material free, but we don’t have funding to print the signs and ads. We will make the images available, and transit agencies can take on the costs.
- David Saperstein: Regarding low rates of awareness, what was the basic takeaway from this process, other than the need to facilitate knowledge of trafficking?
 - Lori Cohen: People don’t think trafficking is in “their” communities. They don’t think it’s happening where they live, only elsewhere. I think we see that broadly, so that’s a lesson people will hopefully learn.
- Maha Alkhateeb: Nikki McDavid, a colleague from FMCSA is joining now.
 - Chad Schmitt: With the commercial motor vehicles (CMVs) that are documented in numbers for human trafficking, are those only the trucks being used for actual transporting of victims? If somebody is caught engaging in human trafficking at a truck stop, is that considered and included as a CMV?

- Nikki McDavid: I would say depends on the state law. I can see both situations, depending on the definition of “use” of a CMV involving a felony or severe form of trafficking in persons. It is likely that the state and FMCSA counts that vehicle if they are transporting trafficking victims or consuming, they could be classified as engaging in human trafficking. But ultimately it is based on the state laws.
- Chad Schmitt: Is there any data on truck stop solicitation?
- Maha Alkhateeb: There is some new data, the NOST found that 13% of respondents indicated that they had been trafficked at truck stops. Nikki, do you have anything to add from FMCSA?
- Nikki McDavid: No nothing to add. That is an interesting data point, and having information like that would be great for our purposes and improving our program.
- Donna Hubbard: I have a question on research and data collection on trafficking of women done by women, but I can ask it another time.

DFO Alkhateeb then turned to Christi Wigle for her prepared comments about the NOST.

Christi Wigle mentioned that there is NOST data on different trafficker types, male or female, as identified by survivors if that would help answer Donna Hubbard’s question.

Christi greeted the committee and shared updates from UAS and their transportation research study, which received the USDOT Impact Award. Her organization believed that large scale frontline data collection was a missing tool in anti-trafficking and transportation work. In 2021 the UAS conducted the NOST survey, collaborating with over 120 partners, including 54 transportation organizations that distributed the survey, and a survivor leaders advisory council. They gained valuable insights from this survey and received 3,896 responses from transportation workers, law enforcement officers, victim service providers and human trafficking survivors. In response to some of the items brought up at the meeting Christi noted that 48% of survey respondents were concerned about misidentifying signs of trafficking, varying across mode to 57% of aviation workers, 31% of roadway, 43% transit, 48% of railway, 30% state DOT, and 46% of law enforcement. UAS asked a follow up question to determine the specific nature of those concerns and if they would potentially prevent them from reporting trafficking. This speaks to a need to educate and train workers on human trafficking and create or strengthen internal policies, since hesitation to report trafficking could mean victims are not identified.

UAS also found that partial education, such as training on only one type of human trafficking, can be counterproductive as it teaches transportation workers that trafficking and trafficking victims only look a certain way. This could mean they overlook other instances of trafficking. The NOST also has a chapter that breaks down transportation workers’ preferences for training, including what topics to cover and how long to spend on it. Only 19% of respondents confirmed that they were tested on what they learned in training on human trafficking, which is another oversight.

Christi Wigle also noted that in the earlier presentation from BJS, the DOJ said that their data may not include instances of trafficking that are not tracked in NIBERS. In the NOST responses, 53% of the 72 law enforcement officer respondents agreed that the majority of cases they saw

with human trafficking were charged under another type or crime. Law enforcement respondents concurred that there should be a report code to indicate the presence of trafficking in a case, whether or not it was charged. The NOST also asked survivors about transportation, 26% said they were relocated once and 41% said they were relocated more than once. The most common type of transportation used, at 35%, was a private vehicle, and 65% of survivors reported never seeing a hotline poster during their exploitation.

She shared that all NOST data is available for download on their website. As other presenters said, there is a need for better data, and legislation to mandate and fund the data collection. UAS plans to refine its processes in preparation for a NOST 2.0. Christi Wigle emphasized that pursuing quality frontline data on human trafficking as it intersects with transportation can inform awareness and training programs, focus legislation, improve enforcement and preventative actions and improve survivor resource allocation to drive more effective outcomes.

Maha Alkhateeb thanked Christi for her commentary. With no other comments, she turned to Vice Chair Goetsch to close.

Vice Chair Goetsch thanked all those who attended for contributing insightful comments, questions, and feedback. She recognized that all members are working on condensed timeline and expressed her appreciation and excitement for the final subcommittee reports. She noted that the next report draft would be submitted by May 3rd and returned in a combined version in July. Vice Chair Goetsch thanked all attendees again for their time and commitment and wished everyone a happy spring.

We hereby certify, to the best of our knowledge, that the foregoing minutes are accurate and complete.

X
David Saperstein
Chair
ACHT

X
Maha Alkhateeb
Designated Federal Officer
ACHT