



**Alphabet Soup: A Living Guide to  
Acronyms, Abbreviations, Common Terms & Definitions  
Used By Regulatory Agencies  
Interacting with the Private Motorcoach Industry**

### **Access Board**

An independent federal agency devoted to accessibility for people with disabilities. The Access Board developed the accessibility guidelines for the ADA and provides technical assistance and training on these guidelines. The agency also is referred to as the Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board.

### **ADA**

Americans with Disabilities Act. A comprehensive, federal civil rights law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of disabilities in employment, state and local government programs and activities, public accommodations, transportation, and telecommunications.

### **APA**

Administrative Procedures Act. The rules and procedures by which all aspects of rulemaking must proceed as well as how federal agencies interact with the public. The APA is codified at 5 U.S.C. §§ 551-559, and encompasses the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) (5 U.S.C. § 552) and the Privacy Act (5 U.S.C. § 552a).

### **CMV**

Commercial Motor Vehicle

### **DOJ**

Department of Justice. This is the department within the executive branch of government that interests the motorcoach industry due to its enforcement of the ADA.

### **ECM**

Engine Control Module. This is the brain of the vehicle and is responsible for monitoring and recording things such as speed, braking, engine performance, etc.

### **EEOC**

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. The federal agency charged with enforcing title I of the ADA and preventing discrimination in the workplace.

### **EO**

Executive Order. Issued by the president, these orders have the power to implement actions without going through a rulemaking process or standing for Congressional review.

### **FHWA**

Federal Highway Administration. Is the U.S. Department of Transportation agency responsible for administering the federal highway aid program to individual states, and helping to plan, develop and coordinate construction of federally funded highway projects. For the motorcoach

### **Financial Constraint**

A federal requirement that long-range transportation plans include only projects that have a reasonable expectation of being funded based upon anticipated revenues. In other words, long-range transportation plans should not be pie-in-the-sky wish lists of projects. They should reflect

realistic assumptions about revenues that will likely be available during the time period covered in the plan.

**Fixed Route Service**

Services provided on a repetitive, fixed schedule basis along a specific route with vehicles stopping to pick up and deliver passengers to specific locations; each fixed route trip serves the same origins and destinations, such as rail and bus; unlike demand responsive (charter) and vanpool services.

**Flexible Funding**

Unlike funding that flows only to highways or only to transit by a rigid formula, this is money that can be invested in a range of transportation projects. Examples of flexible funding categories include the Surface Transportation Program (STP) and the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) program

**FTA**

Federal Transit Administration. The FTA is the U.S. Department of Transportation agency that provides financial and planning assistance to help plan, build and operate rail, bus and paratransit systems. All FTA grants have reporting requirements for the life of the grant or equipment purchased, whichever is longer. FTA holds the grantees responsible for managing the funds in compliance with 23 separate areas of grant management requirements. Grantees receive an evaluation on their adherence to the regulations every three years. This is commonly referred to as the triennial evaluation.

**FY**

Fiscal Year. This is the annual schedule for keeping financial records and for budgeting transportation funds. The federal fiscal year runs from Oct. 1 through Sept. 30.

**HM**

Hazardous Materials.

**HOS**

Hours of Service. Reflects the amount of driving time and on-duty time a driver can work. Must be recorded in intervals throughout the day and the last 7 days must be ready for display at all times.

**HOV Lane**

High-Occupancy-Vehicle Lane. The technical term for a carpool lane, commuter lane or diamond marked lane on the highway.

**Highway Trust Fund**

The federal trust fund established by the Highway Revenue Act of 1956; this fund has two accounts -- the Highway Account and the Mass Transit Account. Trust fund revenues are derived from federal highway-user taxes and fees such as motor fuel taxes; trust fund uses and

expenditures are determined by law.

**Kiss & Ride**

Riding to a park and ride or other transit station (airport, train station, bus stop) with a spouse/parent/friend/etc. that then drive themselves elsewhere. The location itself is also often referred to as a Kiss & Ride.

**Intermodal**

The term “mode” is used to refer to a means of transportation, such as automobile, bus, train, ship, bicycle and walking. Intermodal refers specifically to the connections between modes.

**ITS**

Intelligent Transportation Systems. Refers to a broad range of wireless and wire line communications-based information and electronic technologies. When integrated into the transportation system’s infrastructure and into vehicles themselves, these technologies relieve congestion, improve safety and enhance productivity.

**Mode Share**

Percentage of travelers using a particular form or transportation, (e.g. public transportation, personal cars, train, walking).

**MOU**

Memorandum of Understanding. An agreement between two parties in the form of a legal document, (though not fully binding); somewhat synonymous with a letter of intent.

**MPO**

Metropolitan Planning Organization. A federally required and locally convened planning body responsible for the transportation planning and project selection in its region; the governor designates an MPO in every urbanized area with a population of over 50,000.

**MTP**

Metropolitan Transportation Plan. A master plan to guide the region’s transportation investments for at least a 25-year period. Updated every five years, it is based on projections of growth in population and jobs and the ensuing travel demand. Required by state and federal law, it includes programs to better maintain, operate and expand transportation.

**NEPA**

National Environmental Policy Act. The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires federal agencies to integrate environmental values into their decision making processes by considering the environmental impacts of their proposed actions and reasonable alternatives to those actions. To meet NEPA requirements federal agencies prepare a detailed statement known as an EIS (Environmental Impact Statement).

**NLRB**

National Labor Relations Board. Assists with the organization/registration, mediation and adjudication of disputes between employee union organizations and company management.

**NOFA**

Notice of Funding Availability. An announcement that is published seeking the submission of applications for grant funds.

**NTD**

National Transit Database. The NTD was established by Congress to be the nation's primary source for information and statistics on the transit systems of the United States. Recipients or beneficiaries of grants from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) are required by statute to submit data to the NTD. Over 660 transit providers in urbanized areas currently report to the NTD through the Internet-based reporting system.

**NTSB**

National Transportation Safety Board. Responsible for investigating major accidents involving commercial transportation entities and issuing recommendations for new best practices, education or regulations to help mitigate conditions leading to future accidents.

**Non-Attainment Area**

Areas of the country where air pollution levels persistently exceed the National Ambient Air Quality standards may be designated "nonattainment."  
Attainment/nonattainment are important factors in determining CMAQ grant funding.

**OSHA**

Occupational Safety and Health Administration. A division within the Department of Labor, OSHA is responsible for setting standards and enforcing the right to workplace safety for employees.

**OST**

Office of the Secretary of Transportation.

**POTUS**

President of the United States

**RIN**

Regulation Identifier Number. An identifier used before a regulation is published in the Federal Register.

**RODS**

Record of Duty Status. Used to record a drivers hours of service (e.g. log book)

**RTAP**

Rural Transportation Assistance Program. An FTA program designed to provide training, technical assistance, and other support services tailored to meet the specific needs of transit operators in non-urbanized areas. RTAP is a state managed program.

**SCOTUS**

Supreme Court of the United States

**SIP**

State Implementation Plan. A plan mandated by the Clean Air Act that contains procedures to monitor, control, maintain, and enforce compliance with the National Ambient Air Quality Standards. Must be taken into account in the transportation planning process.

**SEPP**

Security and Emergency Preparedness Plan. The SEPP establishes responsibilities for security and emergency preparedness, identifies our methodology used for documenting and analyzing potential security and emergency preparedness issues and develops the management system through which can track and monitor progress in resolving these issues. This is a requirement for recipients of DHS Intercity Bus Security Grant funding.

**STIP**

State Transportation Improvement Program. Covering a four-year span and updated every year, the STIP determines when and if transportation projects will be funded by the state. Projects included in the STIP must be consistent with the long-range transportation plan.

**TCM**

Transportation Control Measure. A strategy to reduce driving or smooth traffic flows in order to cut auto emissions and resulting air pollution. Required by the Clean Air Act, TCMs include carpool lanes, roving tow truck patrols to clear stalls and accidents from congested roadways, new or increased transit service, and ridesharing services to get people into carpools and vanpools.

**TDM**

Travel Demand Management. Travel Demand Management attempts to modify existing travel demand patterns through a variety of strategies promoting increased use of high occupancy vehicles and public transit.

**TDP**

Transit Development Plan. A TDP is a planning document typically created or updated by a transit agency every 5-10 years. These plans serve as both short-term and long-term guiding documents for transit agencies to consult when making service, capital, and organizational decisions.

**TEA-21**

Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century. Passed by Congress in May 1998, this federal transportation legislation retains and expands many of the programs created in 1991 under the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA). Reauthorized federal surface transportation programs for six years (1998–2003) and significantly increases overall funding for transportation.

**TIP**

Transportation Improvement Program. A listing of highway, local road, transit and bicycle projects that the region hopes to fund;

**TMA**

Transportation Management Area. MPO's in urban areas with population greater than 200,000 are designated as transportation management areas.

**Travel Demand Model**

Used by transportation planners for simulating current travel conditions and for forecasting future travel patterns and conditions. Models help planners and policy-makers analyze the effectiveness and efficiency of alternative transportation investments in terms of mobility, accessibility, and environmental and equity impacts.

**UPWP**

Unified Planning Work Plan. An annual document produced by MPOs to showing how they spend federal planning funds.

**Urbanized Area**

An "Urbanized Area" is the fully developed area of a central city and its suburbs. A rather complicated but consistent formula measures for contiguous urban development. Census 2010 included census block groups or blocks that have a population density of at least 1,000 people per square mile and surrounding census blocks that have an overall density of at least 500 people per square mile.

**Value Pricing**

The concept of assessing higher prices for using certain transportation facilities during the most congested times of the day, in the same way that airlines offer off-peak discounts and hotel rooms cost more during prime tourist seasons. Also known as congestion pricing and peak-period pricing, examples of this concept include higher bridge tolls during peak periods or charging single-occupant vehicles that want to use carpool lanes.

**VIN**

Vehicle Identification Number, issued at the point of manufacturer. Includes such information as: World manufacturer identifier| Vehicle attributes| Check digit| Model year| Plant code| Sequential number.

**VMT**

Vehicle Miles Traveled. One vehicle (whether a car carrying one passenger or a bus carrying 30 people) traveling one mile constitutes a vehicle mile. VMT is one measure of the use of state highways and roads and is often referenced in discussions for future highway financing models.