Southwestern Pennsylvania Road Safety Audits

Eight-Step RSA Process

1. **Identify the Project**
   Candidates for Road Safety Audits may be submitted to SPC by local municipalities, Counties, and PennDOT Districts. Candidates may include projects that are already in the design stage or may be in-service roads where safety is a concern. SPC staff reviews RSA candidate proposals and proceeds with setting up RSAs as manpower and budgetary constraints allow. Roadway owners must commit to documenting a formal response (see Step 7) prior to initiation of an RSA.

2. **Select the RSA Team**
   SPC works with the roadway owner(s) to identify potential members for the independent, multi-disciplinary team. RSA teams typically consist of 4-6 members, with outside specialists consulted as needed. Team make-up often includes 2-3 consultant members, 1 SPC staff person, and 1-2 PennDOT staff (from outside the District where the project is located).

3. **Conduct a Start-up Meeting**
   The RSA team conducts a start-up meeting with the roadway owner(s) in order to identify the steps to be taken, review the schedule, and discuss any opportunities and/or constraints identified by the project owner(s). This is also the time for the project owner(s) to share any background information with the RSA team. Desirable information to be provided to the RSA team includes: crash history, traffic volumes, first responder experiences, aerial photos, design drawings, design criteria, and any background reports that have been conducted previously.

4. **Perform Field Reviews**
   The RSA team reviews the data provided by the project owner(s) and conducts multiple field views of the site (typically during AM and PM peak hours, an off-peak hour, and at night in order to see the site under different conditions). The RSA team drives and walks the site in order to identify Geometric, Operational, Roadway User/Human Factors, and Environmental issues. The team will designate a secretary and a photographer in order to record information.

5. **Conduct RSA Analysis**
   Based on its field views, the information provided by the roadway owner(s), consultation with specialists (if needed), and research into applicable design guidelines, the RSA team identifies and prioritizes safety issues within the project area. The team also develops suggestions for enhancing safety.

6. **Present RSA Findings to Project Owner(s)**
   Once the RSA team has completed its analysis, it presents the findings to the roadway owner(s). This is done in two phases.

   a.) **Preliminary Presentation**
   The RSA team conducts a meeting with the roadway owner(s) and present its findings. This meeting provides an opportunity to constructively discuss the issues and suggestions identified and for the roadway owner(s) to provide feedback.

   b.) **Written Report**
   Following the preliminary presentation, the RSA team prepares a written report, incorporating roadway owner feedback as appropriate.

7. **Prepare Formal Response**
   Upon receipt and review of the written report, the roadway owner prepares a formal response (to the project file) documenting plans to address identified issues and reasons for not addressing other issues. RSA team members will be copied on this response.

8. **Incorporate Findings**
   The roadway owner(s) implement improvements as outlined in the formal response.

Typical RSA Schedule

Monday

- Final preparations (transportation, equipment, information compilation, reference materials lodging arrangements, etc.)

Tuesday

- AM – Start-up meeting
- PM – Site visits and data gathering

Wednesday

- AM – Site visit
- PM – Analysis and presentation prep

Thursday

- AM – Analysis and presentation prep
- PM – Presentation to roadway owner(s)

Within 1-2 Weeks of Presentation → Written Report
Within 4-6 Weeks of Written Report → Formal Response