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SGR/TAM Working Group

Building Internal Stakeholder Support for an Asset Management Program

Abstract: This document provides guidance on building support for an agency's transit asset management (TAM) program with its internal stakeholders.

Keywords: accountable executive, asset management, assets, awareness, buy-in, communication, culture, educate, key performance indicators (KPIs), obstacles, performance targets, stakeholders, TAMbassadors, transit asset management plan (TAMP)

Summary: This recommended practice identifies methods and examples that a transit organization can use to build support and buy-in for its asset management program from internal stakeholders.

Scope and purpose: The guidance in this document is intended to support transit organizations wishing to promote their asset management program, improve its culture and gain stakeholder buy-in. The guidance is applicable for all transit agencies, from the largest tier 1 rail property to the smallest tier 2 agency with a small asset base. The purpose of this document is to assist personnel in charge of coordinating and/or executing TAM initiatives (TAMP, asset inventory updates, condition assessments, performance measures/management, establishment of life-cycle management plans, etc.) in their efforts to gain support from internal stakeholders at all levels of the organization, from the accountable executive to front-line personnel.

This recommended practice represents a common viewpoint of those parties concerned with its provisions, namely transit operating/planning agencies, manufacturers, consultants, engineers and general interest groups. The application of any recommended practices or guidelines contained herein is voluntary. In some cases, federal and/or state regulations govern portions of a transit system's operations. In those cases, the government regulations take precedence over this standard. APTA recognizes that for certain applications, the standards or practices as implemented by individual transit agencies may be either more or less restrictive than those given in this document, unless referenced in federal regulations.

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Introduction

This introduction is not part of APTA SUDS-TAM-RP-007-19, “Building Internal Stakeholder Support for an Asset Management Program.”

At a high level, this recommended practice highlights the wide-ranging nature of asset management and how it relates to the core functions of a transit organization. The document further explains the benefits of asset management to the entire agency and to individual departments.

Internal stakeholders consist of all personnel involved in the provision of transportation services and their supporting activities, including agency staff, operators and contractors. The level of involvement and participation might vary depending on the department.

The intended audience for this recommended practice is transit asset management managers. This document first shows how asset management activities typically support the agency, and it describes how most departments in a transit agency already conduct activities related to asset management. Next, it explains how asset management provides benefits to individual departments and the entire organization. In addition, it describes challenges commonly found by asset management personnel when asking for asset management support and participation. Finally, the document provides strategies on how to gain support for TAM-related activities from internal stakeholders.

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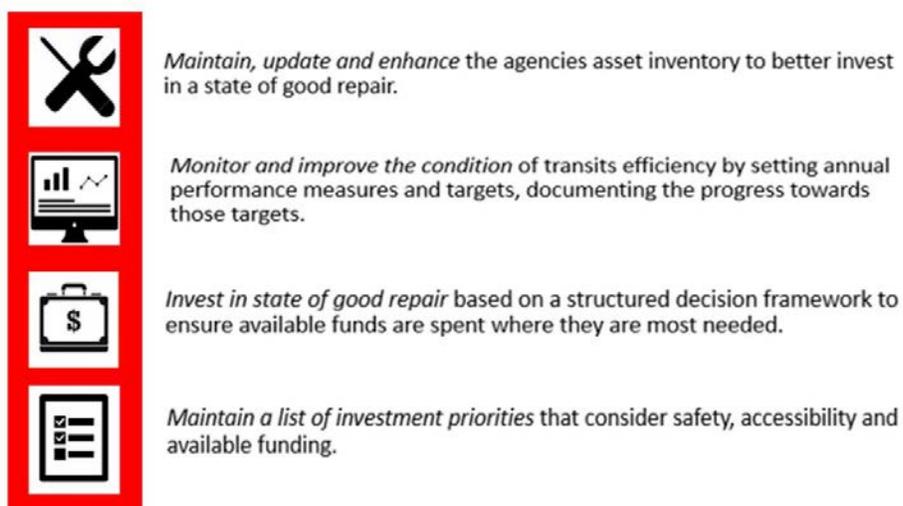
1. Transit agency asset management

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) “Transit Asset Management Guide” defines transit asset management (TAM) as a strategic and systematic process through which an organization procures, operates, maintains, rehabilitates and replaces transit assets to manage their performance, risks and costs over their life cycle to provide safe, cost-effective reliable service to customers.

Transit service providers continuously implement TAM-related activities, such as scheduled vehicle and infrastructure maintenance, operating and capital budgeting, capital project selection processes, mitigation of environmental risks and so on. An agency’s asset management team brings all asset management–related activities into a comprehensive and cohesive framework aligned with the agency’s strategic goals and objectives.

Asset management plays a major role in helping agencies to provide safe, reliable and cost-effective service to its customers while reducing risk. As **Figure 1** shows, the implementation of TAM principles ensures that agencies put forth their best efforts to maintain, monitor and invest in their assets to restore them or keep them in a state of good repair (SGR). It also contributes to improving their short- and long-term planning to optimize performance while minimizing risk and maximizing return on investment.

FIGURE 1
Asset Management Guiding Principles



1.1 Asset management maturity development

All transit agencies perform some form of asset management activities, such as asset maintenance and capital planning. Some agencies have improved their asset management activities, for example by increasing the sophistication of the activities, or by better integrating the activities with other areas of their organization. For this reason, asset management is often characterized as an ongoing maturity journey: A transit agency always has an opportunity to improve the maturity of its TAM practices over time.

While asset management maturity varies across transit agencies, it is beneficial to highlight what asset management is and where agencies can look to advance as their asset management practices mature. At a fundamental level, transit agencies manage their assets on a daily basis while performing the core mission of moving passengers. As a result, some internal stakeholders believe their organization “already does asset management,” without considering the maturity of their asset management practices and where opportunities for improvement may exist.

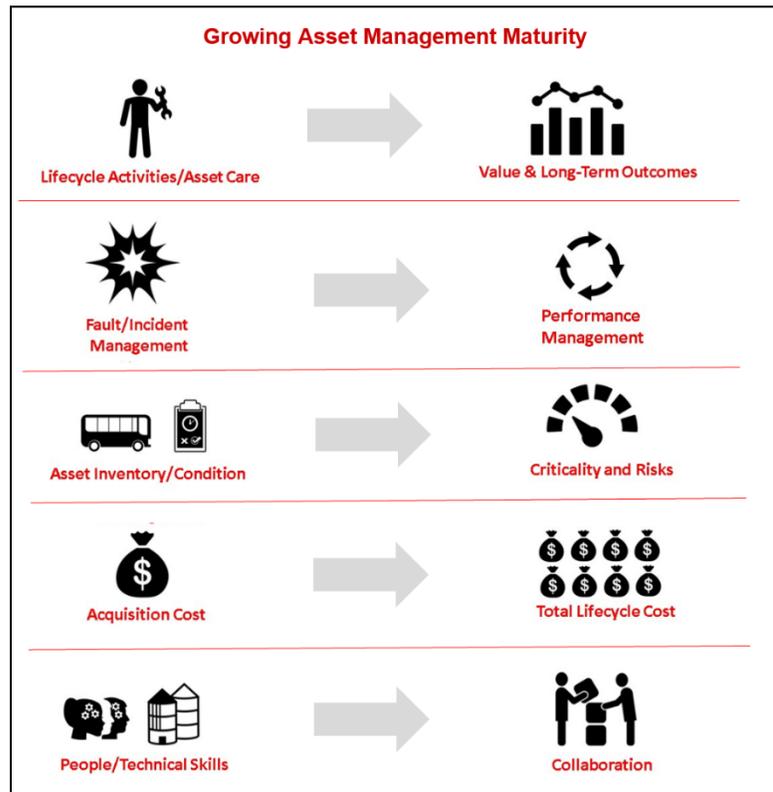
To overcome this mindset, the TAM program can help stakeholders understand what a more mature approach to asset management may look like in their agency, and how they might get there. To encourage buy-in, it is useful to identify the asset management activities stakeholders may already have in place, and to demonstrate the advantages of taking that next step to grow their asset management maturity.

At the most fundamental level, for example, agencies should have asset inventories and condition assessments, even if they are imperfect and in need of improvement. In developing a single source of truth for their inventory, they move data from discrete departments and asset owners across their agency and build one registry where all asset data is available. In addition, at this fundamental level, they may have cost data from procurements or capital replacements. Many agencies operate in a reactionary fashion to faults or incidents, where instead the goal should be to advance to a point where they can perform some planning with life-cycle data, value, long-term outcomes and performance monitoring, allowing the agency to advance to more proactive asset management.

Adopting an asset management culture shifts the focus to the value of assets to the organization over the long term. Having a TAM program in place allows agencies to move to a more proactive approach to maintaining and replacing assets. This framework allows for the collection of condition, performance and risk information that can be used to make more strategic decisions about the asset portfolio. Issues identified in the operating environment can be addressed and analyzed. A mature asset management culture fosters a more collaborative approach to risk mitigation and decision-making. Understanding these processes will allow the agency to hire and train the workforce to not only maintain the assets’ condition and performance, but also to collect and use the data generated.

Figure 2 shows some typical asset management activities and how they might change as the agency’s asset management maturity grows.

FIGURE 2
 Example Characteristics of Asset Management Maturity



1.2 How asset management can support an agency

Since transit operators vary in their organizational structure, this recommended practice identifies the key functions of typical transit agencies and describes how these functions relate to common asset management practices. This document further describes benefits of applying asset management principles to each of these functions. In the aggregate, by applying sound TAM principles tailored to address asset management areas in need of improvement, the agency can benefit as follows:

- optimized use of resources (human and financial) while being able to deliver the best value to the customer
- increased communication among departments with improved collaborative behavior within the agency
- improved public image through increased transparency and accountability
- enhanced opportunities for highlighting and replicating best practices

Table 1 highlights how key functions of a transit service provider relate to asset management activities that may currently be in place at the agency (second column), as well as the benefits once the asset management principles are fully implemented (third column).

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TABLE 1
 Agency Functions, Their Management Roles, and Benefits

| Agency Function | Common Asset Management Activities | Benefits Arising from Improving Asset Management Maturity |
|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| 1. Operations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operation of assets • Preventive and corrective maintenance of transit assets • Condition assessment and performance monitoring • Life-cycle management planning • Resource planning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved decision-making through access to better information (e.g., use of KPIs) • Better understanding of the balance between risk, costs and operational performance • Increased asset reliability • Reduced risk • Better understanding of asset obsolescence to properly time capital investment (rehab vs. replacement) |
| 2. Budget, finance, accounting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forecasting of future capital funding needs • Capital project prioritization (in coordination with other functional units such as Operations and Planning & Programming) • Development of relevant operating budget for assets • Financing capital investment above and beyond federal formula funding | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better understanding of total life-cycle costs • Helping to strike the right balance between investment in maintenance activities and capital investment to ensure safety and improved reliability while minimizing life-cycle costs • Improved accuracy in calculation of backlog • Better understanding of the balance between risk, costs and operational performance • Allowing development of a more evidence-based capital planning process • Improved understanding of implications of funding shortfalls |
| 3. Safety and security | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contingency planning and resiliency analysis • Security partnerships • Provision of security services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better understanding of the balance between risk, funding and operational performance • Improved levels of coordination among parallel systems to optimally deliver results • Establishment of policies and procedures to identify, quantify and mitigate risk, and exploit opportunities • Nexus of safety and asset management initiatives |
| 4. Human resources, labor relations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the hiring of personnel with technical training needed to support the agency's operation • Setup of outsourced contracts • Staff augmentation • Contracts for service delivery | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retain a technically capable, motivated and coordinated workforce • Training on asset management and related business processes to ensure continuous improvement • Improved collaborative behavior across the organization • Improved long-term visibility of hiring needs and fostering a proactive succession planning process |
| 5. Procurement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procure assets • Ensure regulatory compliance in procurement processes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased visibility of long-term procurement needs |

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TABLE 1
 Agency Functions, Their Management Roles, and Benefits

| Agency Function | Common Asset Management Activities | Benefits Arising from Improving Asset Management Maturity |
|---|---|--|
| 6. Planning and programming | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forecast of future capital funding needs. • Long-range capital planning • Project prioritization (in coordination with other functional units such as operations, budget and finance) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of total life-cycle costs • Helping to strike the right balance between investment in maintenance activities and capital investment to ensure safety and improved reliability while minimizing life-cycle costs • Improved communication of long-range plans for future asset needs • Better understanding of the balance between risk, costs and operational performance |
| 7. Information technology | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide critical support to agency IT needs • Typical IT software support needed for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • managing capital and operating budgets, accounting, etc.; • enterprise asset management (EAM) system; • track, signal and power systems; • fare collection system; • communications equipment, etc. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved use of IT resources to avoid duplication of efforts and to foster the consolidation of similar functions • Ability to promote consistent structure and format for collecting and storing asset information and for reporting on the quality and accuracy of asset information |
| 8. Legal/government relations/real estate | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation of documentation to comply with federal, state and other regulatory agencies' requirements | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased cooperation among departments to align critical information for reporting purposes (e.g., NTD reporting requires information from operations, budgeting, finance, planning, etc.) • Reduced risk |
| 9. Engineering, environmental, accessibility | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engineering of assets • Compliance with environmental and accessibility (American with Disabilities Act) requirements and regulations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved understanding of end-user needs |
| 10. Communications, marketing, customer service | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Periodic internal communication sharing asset management goals, objectives and general activities • Inform outside stakeholders of outages, changes in service, fare increases, financial, budgeting and capital programming | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being able to provide stakeholders advance notice of upcoming TAM-related activities such as NTD reporting, Triennial Review, capital project selection process, etc. • Implementation of a comprehensive asset management communications program aimed at disseminating relevant information to internal and external stakeholders |

2. Building stakeholder support for asset management

2.1 Common challenges

When trying to engage individuals to participate in asset management–related initiatives, the asset manager may commonly encounter challenges such as the following:

Challenge 1:

Some employees do not understand the relevance or impact of asset management in their daily activities.

Strategy: Articulate/reiterate/model expectations.

This is due to asset management not being mentioned, taught or expected during the onboarding/hiring process and often not modeled. In order to move toward change, it is important to make people aware of the need for change, the processes that will need to be implemented or modified, and what has been done thus far.

Through articulating and reiterating the full picture of agency accomplishments in asset management and focusing on the goals for the future, a template is laid out where productive conversation can begin, because employees have the foundational knowledge needed to contribute. As a result, the company is recognizing the relevance and efforts of the current staff/internal stakeholders in place.

When approached in a manner that recognizes that each individual has a valid opinion through this conversation, people are more likely to embrace change, as they feel appreciated. Further, through this level of awareness, internal stakeholders understand the relevance and impact their role has across the agency and externally. In addition, modeling the expectations of an asset management–accountable employee can be a part of new-employee orientation or ongoing professional development workshops for staff. In order to address this for new hires, this discussion should be included as part of the onboarding process.

Challenge 2:

People are too busy to deal with additional work/initiatives. Staff feel that the responsibility lies elsewhere.

Strategy: Create and build team culture.

It is important to create an agency-wide team culture. The goal for the entire transit organization is to provide safe and reliable service. In order to achieve an agency-wide approach, it needs to be emphasized as a fully collaborative effort that requires all departments within the agency to work together to accomplish the goal. This will require raising awareness among internal stakeholders about their share of responsibility in achieving the goal, and how their contributions are instrumental to the success of the operation. Through a fully collaborative effort, all departments and staff members will not only be aware of their contributions, but also will be held accountable to play their role in the effort. Through effective communication and support from senior leadership, staff will be held accountable.

Challenge 3:

Staff show a lack of interest: “It’s not in my job description.”

Strategy: Develop personal buy-in.

People who feel valued tend to go the extra mile. There will always be those who are resistant to additional responsibilities, but those people do not have to be the model or voice of the agency. Generally, this resistance is due to a lack of understanding of where their role fits within the bigger picture and how the work

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being done across the agency can positively impact the work for which they are responsible. Companies that have figured out how to tap into workers' "self-motivation" thrive. They realize that self-motivation is key to performance, and employees are more likely to be motivated when there is a reward—in this case a benefit from the work they are doing. Through getting staff excited about change, they can in turn work to excite their department.

Additionally, HR can add asset management competency requirements to job descriptions for new hires and model asset management accountability through special workforce development efforts. Further, the agency might want to consider adding to the onboarding process having new hires sign that they have read the agency's asset management policy.

Challenge 4:

Contractors or employees may hold key TAM-related information hostage (e.g., asset inventory information).

Strategy: Foster inclusion.

Superior information management processes are key to successfully applying asset management across an agency. If employees (or contractors) do not trust their boss, their co-workers or the agency, and keep critical asset information and know-how unavailable for use in the implementation of asset management processes, it will negatively impact efforts toward the advancement of asset management practice.

Additionally, not having this information available within the context of a larger operation will affect the ability of individual business units to perform their work in alignment with the overall vision and mission of the agency. When key information and know-how is held back as means of protection and (low-level) control, workers or contractors will be prevented from reaching their fullest potential, as they will operate only within the confinements of their individual silos. On the other hand, high-performing organizations benefit from superb levels of cooperation and coordination across business units, resulting in an environment where information and knowledge transfer contribute to continuously improve their performance. Therefore, it is critical that the agency engage all business units in highlighting the mission and vision of the organization and the benefits of joining and supporting all agency-wide TAM efforts. If not, these units will focus on implementing their own (limited) mission and vision.

It is important to include in all contracts that asset management information and ancillary property belongs to the purchasing agency.

Challenge 5:

Asset Management information not readily available to internal stakeholders.

Strategy: Make information easily available and understandable.

The asset management staff must work diligently to make relevant asset management information available to all levels of the organization. This effort should be part of an agency-wide communication strategy that disseminates asset management information especially tailored for various types of audiences within the organization. The asset management staff might want to carefully time the release of information and ensure the availability of relevant information only. This should be a sustained effort that is used not only to inform of ongoing asset management efforts/initiatives, but that shares successes praising asset management champions within the organization. The information to be disseminated can be used to further prepare stakeholders to understand and seek support for upcoming asset management initiatives.

2.2 Achieving and sustaining asset management buy-in

This section presents some strategies for achieving and sustaining asset management buy-in from internal stakeholders.

2.2.1 Communications and awareness-building

Explaining the big picture for the agency and its collective role. It is important to convey to all staff what asset management does for the organization, their departments and in their individual roles. The message should clearly state why asset management is important to the organization. It should be noted that asset management is not confined to a single area, but it reaches almost all functions of the agency. The message should further elaborate on the path the agency is expected to take and the implications for departments and stakeholders. The message should highlight the contributions of departments and the roles and responsibilities of individual stakeholders to asset management while emphasizing the benefits to the departments and the agency as a whole.

Whether an employee has been working in transit for 30 years or is early in his or her career, there are different definitions of what asset management means. To bring everyone to the same page, it is crucial that everyone understand the definition of asset management for the agency and is aware of what guiding documents have been created to achieve the agency's objectives, in addition to any tools available that may improve how they currently do their job. Examples of these documents are the asset management policy; the TAMP; modal life-cycle management plans, showing how the modes will achieve the objectives outlined in the TAMP; SOPs or guidebooks that have been or are being developed to aid in meeting asset management requirements; and agency-wide inventory with accompanying analysis. Additionally, making internal stakeholders aware of the SGR projects that are currently underway or planned for the near future is a first step in introducing the internal stakeholders to projects where they may be called to review.

Making the entire agency aware is a huge task and is not a one-time event. In order to ensure that this is a continual process, it is recommended to establish asset management liaisons, or TAMbassadors, in each office division that serve as their department's asset management point of contact and as a member of the TAM team for the agency, coordinating all related projects or questions. This is a key first step in helping to ensure that the asset management message is spread across the agency.

As the TAMbassadors become more aware of the asset management documents, requirements and projects, they in turn can become the educators for their own departments. This effort will take time, and to "train the trainer," establishing regular monthly meetings with the TAMbassador team will help keep them aware of current projects and allow them the opportunity to offer their expertise on all projects, reviewing deliverables with their office/division as appropriate. TAMbassadors are responsible for ensuring that asset management is a regular point of discussion at their monthly staff meetings and that they are offering what they are learning to the rest of their office. This effort is in addition to agency-wide annual asset management workshops, as discussed below.

Education. To educate and keep staff, operators and contractors informed of critical asset management activities, the asset management manager can use several avenues such as printed and electronic media, briefings, and the deployment of special asset management workshops.

- **Printed and electronic media.** To keep the organization informed of TAM-related actions and to share asset management general knowledge, the asset management manager might want to consider using newsletters, briefings, journals, web pages, etc. The asset management manager will benefit from having a long-term communications strategy that progressively disseminates information with

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the goal to educate, engage and ultimately encourage stakeholders to actively support and participate in asset management–related actions.

- **Regular briefings.** The asset management manager might want to use staff and management team meetings as an opportunity to disseminate asset management information and to lay the groundwork for seeking support for upcoming asset management activities. This can be used as an opportunity to raise awareness about ongoing activities that relate to asset management (capital project selection process, special preventive maintenance projects, asset inventory updates, etc.). These meetings will serve not only as a means for discussing asset management activities and information, but also to raise awareness about how the improvements being made through these activities will help the agency do better asset management, with specific focus on the benefits to the various departments across the agency.

The asset management manager should prepare special briefings for the top management to keep them up to date on high-level asset management–related issues, such as the submission of the NTD Asset Inventory Module, Performance Measures, Triennial Reviews, special SGR reports, etc.

To engage contractors, suppliers and distributors, the asset manager might want to give them general asset management information, which should highlight how asset management aligns the agency’s strategic goals and objectives. This group might benefit from learning about the FTA TAM requirements, such as asset inventory updates, performance measures and condition assessment initiatives.

- **Targeted workshops.** Offering a high-level overview of asset management to senior executives is a great idea to begin gaining their buy-in, but in order to reach people across the agency, one needs to focus on making the subject material relevant to each office, division and operating mode. As such, developing a series of workshops that builds on each series year after year, cataloguing prior-year workshops, is key to educating the agency on asset management and increasing their knowledge over time, while also offering new-hire training material.

These initial workshops can consist of the following:

- A video or section of the presentation highlighting the administrator/CEO’s vision for asset management and what it means for the agency.
- A section offering a high-level overview or Asset Management 101.
- A customized section that caters to the office, division or mode that is interactive, and where participants are encouraged to ask questions, offer opinions and provide their expertise.
- Discussing a major project currently underway or defining what an asset management system is from a process perspective, where the agency is in its development, and how the outcomes of current projects will benefit the department being addressed.
- Next steps, describing goals and projects for the coming year. Each year the workshops can become more advanced, with the second year involving an overview of the TAMP or modal life-cycle management plan, building on the workshops each year with more advanced discussion.

Establish a common language. This includes document management and improving business processes. This can be covered as part of the workshops described above, and additional “cheat sheets” or an Asset Management 101 handout can be created to help with terminology, document location and key points that are relevant agency-wide. Additionally, agencies that have SharePoint or similar “universal” software can develop an asset management SharePoint site—and advertise it.

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Use key performance indicators (KPIs). KPIs can be used to promote the benefits of asset management, increase transparency and demonstrate measurable progress over time. They should reflect the agency’s purpose and provide alignment of the executive vision to workers’ efforts. Their use can help motivate internal stakeholders to get involved.

2.2.2 Top-down leadership and commitment—and bottom-up buy-in

All internal stakeholders (staff, operators and contractors alike) play an important asset management role within the organization. Does the organization need a culture change? Do the agency’s departments work in silos not really knowing how every other department impacts asset management? Engage with existing staff and listen to what they have to say. Their knowledge, competence, motivation and teamwork influence the success of asset management.

Consider the energy for change as a “top-down and bottom-up” approach. Each department makes good decisions to get the job completed, but they often do not speak the same language. In addition, competing agendas may clash with limited funding, since each department sees TAM needs and wants through varying viewpoints. Executives may see expansion as a needed priority, while the maintenance department may see replacement of existing vehicles as more pressing. The Institute of Asset Management (IAM) describes the top-down and bottom-up approach as departments working together and leading to collective decision-making. Transforming silos into a group speaking the same language helps to create a roadmap for prioritizing goals for the short term and eventually the blueprint for establishing long-term, sustainable goals.

The top-down approach can include leadership and commitment to asset management demonstrated by:

- **Accountable executive:** Starting at the top, the accountable executive (i.e., top executive officer) should lead the organization by clearly delineating and stating the important role each department plays in the delivery of a successful asset management plan. For some organizations, this may be a cultural shift and will take time to achieve. There is no one correct structure that would be applicable for every type of organization. However, where asset management roles and responsibilities lie in an organizational chart gives a clear indication of how seriously it is taken with the organization and will have a big influence on how people perceive it.
- **Asset management executive team:** The agency might benefit greatly from the creation of an asset management executive team. This group might be comprised of the agency’s top executives, which should include the top executive officer (accountable executive) and might include the head of operations, the head of budget/finance, the head of planning and programming, the head of engineering, the head of human resources, the head of safety, the head of IT, the head of the legal department, the head of procurement, etc. This group might choose to meet at least twice a year to be updated on the latest TAM-related actions. The creation of this group can be instrumental in moving the organization’s asset management agenda forward. The asset management executive team can take the following roles and responsibilities:
 - Establish the policies, strategies and level-of-service requirements for the organization.
 - Dedicate appropriate resources to ensure that asset management improvement programs can be successful.
 - Provide the leadership necessary to drive organizational change and to communicate the benefits of asset management.
 - Enforce strong accountability measures to encourage follow-through of the asset management strategy.
- **Department heads:** KPIs can be used to evaluate department heads’ success at reaching asset management–related targets and key business objectives. These KPIs may also show where shortcomings are, and where more departmental training may be needed. Failures and incidents can have a wide range of consequences for an organization and its stakeholders.

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Strong asset management endorsement from the top should place special efforts to gain buy-in from front line employees. The promotion efforts might want to highlight the benefits to the organization as a whole, but also the benefits to individual departments and individuals (where applicable). Then, asset management can also take root organically, from the bottom up, as follows:

- **Maintenance:** Maintenance personnel should prioritize scheduled maintenance activities (including planned preventive maintenance activities and inspections) to ensure that the assets meet their expected useful life, and work toward improving the timely replacement of assets (particularly as it relates to the provision of revenue service). This will improve the physical condition and performance of the transit system and minimize service disruptions. The organization would benefit from having a risk management program that can help identify, assess and monitor potential risks and ultimately allocate resources and reduce and/or mitigate those risks in a cost-efficient manner.
- **Operators:** Understand the value of operators' role as first-line asset observers responsible and accountable for the health of assets. The entire agency depends upon their reporting of any problems encountered or the anticipation of potential future issues, which will greatly contribute to reducing risks.
- **Administration:** Administrators are responsible for reporting administrative procedures deficiencies that affect the management and operation of the agency's physical assets (e.g., identification of longer-than-expected lead times for the procurement of assets that have already reached the end of their useful life). Even administrators who do not directly interact with the assets play an important role.
- **IT:** The IT department should establish the best way to collect and report data for asset management KPIs. Programs to support these efforts may be created in-house or purchased specifically for the agency.
- **HR:** HR staff should emphasize, through workforce development efforts for existing staff and hiring practices for new staff, the importance and benefits of asset management and their role in achieving the agency's TAM mission from the first day on the job.
- **Finance:** Working with cross-departmental asset owners in the development of life-cycle management plans will help the agency anticipate funding needs for capital renewals and prioritize based on asset needs.

The TAMP is a foundation for achieving both top-down support and bottom-up buy-in; it further provides agencies with the strategies and tools to support improved decision-making and better planning for current and future needs.

2.2.3 Leveraging improved asset information

The asset management manager should ensure that all relevant information regarding asset management is appropriately recorded, secured and managed (i.e., standards in place). The manager should further take the necessary steps to ensure that asset information is always kept current.

Asset management processes should be ongoing and involve evaluating and managing the relationships among costs, risks and performance over the asset's life cycle. The TAM framework has three categories of business processes that need to be constantly assessed and evaluated against one another to ensure continuous alignment:

- **Asset management vision and direction:** Agency-wide processes that establish the organization-wide asset management policy and strategy and drive resource allocation.
- **Life-cycle management:** The processes involved in the life-cycle management of individual asset classes; these include managing the data (inventory), monitoring the assets' condition and performance, and developing life-cycle management plans.

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- **Cross-asset planning and management:** Organization-wide processes that consider information from all asset classes to support the capital programming and operations and maintenance budgeting process.

The fundamental concepts of asset management are straightforward; however, implementing the changes required to become a mature asset management organization requires careful planning and execution at all levels. The TAMP is not a static element but something that will change and adjust to reflect changing needs and funding availability. It is through everyone's efforts that an organization's targets can be more realistic and its planning better structured.

2.2.4 Workforce development

To ensure the viability of asset management in the long term, the agency might consider workforce development strategies, which can include the following:

- recruitment of qualified personnel (ensure the hiring of personnel with the technical capabilities and commitment to support the agency's asset management efforts)
- asset management training: initial and periodic refresher
- succession planning (ensure that the asset management knowledge base is preserved)

A good reference regarding workforce development is the IAM Competencies Framework, which describes what people involved in the management of physical assets should be able to do and the knowledge and understanding needed to master these tasks.

3. Conclusion

Building internal stakeholder support for asset management is an effort that cannot be confined to certain units or layers of the organization. To be successful, these efforts must fully engage all levels of the organization: from the top executive to front line employees. Likewise, all stakeholders must understand the overall benefits of the program, as well as their individual roles and responsibilities. In similar fashion, the successes of the program must be shared and celebrated by the entire organization.

To realize true value and to have a long-term and sustainable positive impact on the agency's asset management efforts, the support gained from internal stakeholders cannot be temporary. On the contrary, efforts to gain support from internal stakeholders need to be continuous and sustained over time. To achieve sustained support over time requires not only continued efforts to maintain the existing workforce engaged, but also special efforts to engage new hires from the moment they start their onboarding process.

APTA SUDS-TAM-RP-007-19
Building Internal Stakeholder Support for an Asset Management Program

Related APTA standards

APTA SUDS-TAM-RP-004-19 Communicating Your Transit Asset Management Plan
APTA SUDS-TAM-RP-005-19 Improving Asset Management Through Better Asset Information
APTA SUDS-TAM-RP-006-19 Communication and Coordination with External Stakeholders for Transit Asset Management

Abbreviations and acronyms

EAM enterprise asset management
FTA Federal Transit Administration
IAM Institute of Asset Management
KPI key performance indicator
NATSA North American Transportation Services Association
NTD National Transit Database
SGR state of good repair
TAM transit asset management
TAMP transit asset management plan

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