



November 28, 2025

Via email: occ.inquests.registraroffice@ontario.ca

Office of the Chief Coroner – Inquest Unit
Forensic Services and Coroners Complex
25 Morton Shulman Avenue
Toronto, ON M3M 0B1

**Re: Inquest into the deaths of Judy Booth, Bruce Thomlinson, and
Anthonia Van Beek**

OCC Inquest File No. Q2025-14

To the Office of the Chief Coroner,

The Ontario Public Transit Association (OPTA) appreciates the opportunity to respond to the recommendations directed to our organization arising from the inquest into the tragic deaths of Ms. Booth, Mr. Thomlinson, and Ms. Van Beek. We extend our condolences to the families and acknowledge the seriousness of the issues examined by the jury.

Safety has always been fundamental to OPTA's mission and to the work of every transit system across Ontario. Our members are committed to protecting riders, operators, and the public, and we welcome recommendations that strengthen that shared responsibility. The inquest's findings align with OPTA's longstanding focus on continuous improvement in safety practices, system design, and operational readiness.

We also recognize the growing public scrutiny associated with inquest responses and have approached these recommendations with care and diligence.

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Recommendation 58

OPTA will establish a new Safety and Training Committee, where recent serious transit bus collisions will be included as a standing item. This committee will provide a structured forum for members to share lessons learned, discuss contributing factors, and advance best practices using a safe systems approach. This work aligns with OPTA's ongoing efforts to support safety improvements across Ontario's transit systems.

Recommendation 59

OPTA supports the intent of improving transit safety through the wider use of driver assistance technologies.

It is important to note that OPTA does not have a mandate or authority to develop technical or operational best practices guidelines for transit systems or manufacturers. While OPTA cannot lead the development of best practices guidelines, we will support the Canadian Urban Transit Association (CUTA) on this recommendation by:

- Sharing information on emerging safety technologies with our members
- Participating in relevant consultations or working groups convened by CUTA
- Facilitating discussions among Ontario transit systems that help inform best practices
- Providing a channel for Ontario agencies to contribute operational insights as part of the broader effort

Through these contributions, OPTA will help ensure that Ontario's transit systems are active participants in national conversations regarding safety technology and best practice development.

Recommendation 60

OPTA concurs with this recommendation. Sustainable and coordinated funding from all orders of government will be critical to support the implementation of any new safety best practice guidelines, including the adoption of advanced driver assist technologies. Transit systems across the province are managing significant operational shortfalls and substantial state of good repair backlogs.

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Without dedicated resources, it will be challenging for agencies to modernize fleets, apply new standards, or integrate the technologies identified through this inquest.

OPTA encourages continued collaboration among municipal, provincial, and federal partners to ensure transit systems have the financial capacity to act on these recommendations and advance long term safety improvements for riders, operators, and communities.

Please consider this letter as OPTA's formal response. We remain available should further clarification or information be required.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Karen Cameron".

Karen Cameron
Chief Executive Officer
Ontario Public Transit Association

c.c. Kelly Paleczny, Chair, Ontario Public Transit Association