



Ryan D. Coholan

Chief Operating Officer,
Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority
(MBTA)

Ryan brings three decades of transportation experience to the role of Chief Operating Officer. In this position, which he has held since September 2023, he is responsible for the safe and efficient daily operation of all MBTA modes of transportation—subway, commuter rail, bus, ferry, and paratransit. Previously, Ryan served as the MBTA's Chief Railroad Officer, directing, planning, and supervising the 5th busiest commuter rail system in the U.S. for nearly ten years.

Like many industry veterans, Ryan's passion was born of curiosity and a love of trains. Early in his career, he began working in a locomotive shop as a laborer. Ryan progressed through the ranks and held numerous roles at the Bay Colony Railroad and Cape Cod Railroad, including trainmaster, rules examiner, dispatcher, track inspector, and eventually, General Manager of Cape Rail, Inc. Currently, he serves on the New England Railroad Club Executive Board and is the Chair of the APTA Commuter Rail Chief Operating Officer's Committee.

Ryan believes that expertise in practices with demonstrated success and an appetite for innovation are equally critical to providing MBTA riders with a safe, reliable—even joyful—experience. From maintaining his locomotive engineer's qualifications to applying the Internet of Things (IoT) to locomotive fleet maintenance at the commuter rail, Ryan has demonstrated his commitment to this philosophy throughout his career. As COO, he seeks to empower employees to influence positive change by providing them access to practical and safety-centered tools and equipment, modern technologies, and training.

A longtime public servant, Ryan is a graduate of the Public Sector Leadership program at Cornell University as well as the 49th Municipal Police Officer's Class at the Plymouth, MA Police Academy. Ryan often can be spotted taking subway and bus trips around Boston and on Old Colony Lines of the commuter rail heading toward Southeastern MA, where he resides with his family. Ryan is actively involved in youth sports programs, coaching youth hockey, and officiating for USA Swimming.