



CHRISTOPHER J. BONANTI, M.ENG, MBA
CEO & PRINCIPAL
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Mr. Christopher J. Bonanti is the Chief Executive Officer and Principal for The Baluster Group. He has more than 25 years of experience leading and managing regulatory, legislative, and infrastructure projects for all modes of transportation, including rail, motor vehicle, and aviation.

As a former member of the U.S. Senior Executive Service, he served as the Associate Administrator for Rulemaking at the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). He was the senior executive responsible for developing, writing, and implementing rules, regulations, and standards for all ground transportation vehicles sold within the U.S., including the automotive, trucking, motor coach, and motorcycle industries. These regulations included all Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards (FMVSS), and the Corporate Average Fuel Efficiency (CAFE) standard regulations for automobiles and light trucks, as well as fuel efficiency standards for medium and heavy-duty trucks. He also served as Head of the U.S. Delegation to United Nations World Forum for the Harmonization of Vehicle Regulations.

In addition, Mr. Bonanti coauthored the agency's original autonomous vehicle policy and guidance for light-duty and commercial vehicles in the United States. He was also responsible for moving the Vehicle to Vehicle (V2V) and Vehicle to Infrastructure communication research and agency's regulations forward.

While at NHTSA, Mr. Bonanti worked closely with his colleagues from the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) to ensure the FMVSS and other crash-worthiness and avoidance research and regulations were coordinated between both agencies.

Prior to his position at NHTSA, Mr. Bonanti served as the Director for the Office of Hazardous Materials at the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and was responsible for developing and implementing regulations for the aviation industry. His oversight included all Part 121 and 135 air carriers that transported hazardous materials, as well as Part 145 repair stations. In addition, he served as the Agency's liaison to the United Nations forum for the transport of dangerous goods. He also served as the FAA's representative to the Dangerous Goods Working Group within the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).

As a staff member of both the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives, he developed legislative policies that directly impacted the aviation, railroad, automotive, trucking, pipeline, and hazardous materials industries. During his tenure as a Senate staffer, he authored the most recent U.S. Department of Transportation's Hazardous Materials reauthorization bill. In 2007, Secretary of Transportation Mary Peters appointed Mr. Bonanti as the Deputy Executive Director of the National Surface Transportation Policy and Revenue Commission, where he oversaw the development of the Commission's passenger and freight rail analyses, as well as policy implications to the Highway Trust Fund.

Mr. Bonanti also served as the Special Assistant to the Administrator of the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA). In this role, he served as the senior liaison for the Administrator to the

Offices of Railroad Safety and Railroad Development. Prior to becoming the Administrator's Special Assistant, he served as Environmental Program Manager and Transportation Specialist in the Office of Railroad Development, implementing the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for passenger and freight-related infrastructure projects and completing railroad tank car research regarding the transport of hazardous materials.

He also served as investigator-in-charge (IIC) for major transportation accidents involving hazardous materials at the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) and as a hazardous materials group Chairperson for major accidents involving hazardous materials in the aviation, railroad, highway, marine, and pipeline industries. As an Aviation Ordnance Specialist in the U.S. Marine Corps, he was responsible for building up, arming, and de-arming conventional ordnance and special weapons.

In addition, Mr. Bonanti has been retained to evaluate business valuations, novel technology evaluation for regulatory compliance, has completed due diligence for mergers and acquisitions of technology and conventional startups, small business and midsize corporations.

Mr. Bonanti has provided testimony in matters pending before both state and federal courts.

Areas of Specialization

- Active & Passive Safety
- Automotive Safety Regulations
- Commercial Vehicle Regulations
- Aviation Safety Regulations
- Building Alliances/ Partnerships
- Chemical Risk Assessment
- Environmental Regulations & Strategy
- Federal Regulations & Strategy
- Fire, Explosion & Ordnance
- Government Relations
- Hazardous Materials/ Waste Regs
- Occupational Safety & Health Regulations
- Railroad Safety Regulations
- Regulatory Compliance & Strategy
- Regulatory Risk Analysis Assessment Rulemaking Process
- System Safety & Engineering
- Transportation Accident Investigation
- Transportation Policy
- Mergers & Acquisitions
- Business Financial Valuations

Education

Doctorate of Engineering, Pennsylvania State University, expected (2027)

MBA, Master of Business Administration, Kellogg School of Management - Northwestern University (2017)

M. Eng., Environmental Pollution Control, Pennsylvania State University (1995)

B.S., Environmental Science, Rutgers University (1993)

Additional Training & Continuing Education

- Applied Vehicle Dynamics Course, Percision Auto Research and Powertrain Technology, October 2018
- Human Factors in Traffic Crash Reconstruction, Institute of Police Technology and Management, University of North Florida, October-November 2017
- Hazardous Materials Incident Commander (40 hour), TTCI Emergency Response

Training, August 2002

- Explosion Investigation and Analysis, National Association of Fire Investigators, Washington, DC, May 2002
- Confined Space Entry, University of Maryland Fire Academy, April 2001
- Safety, Health and Environmental Management Training for Field Activities 40-Hour Course, EPA, Washington, DC, November 2000
- Occupational Safety and Health Training for Managers, NTSB, Washington, DC, November 2000
- Advanced Interviewing and Interrogations Course, FLETC, Glynco, GA., November 2000
- 24 Hour HAZWOPER, University of Maryland Fire Academy, April 2000
- Analyzing Risk: Science, Assessment, and Management, Harvard University School of Public Health, October 1999
- Air Transportation of Hazardous Materials, Transportation Safety Institute, May 1999
- Tank Car Specialist, TCCI Emergency Response Training, May 1999
- Facilitator Workshop, USDA Graduate School, February 1999
- Hazardous Materials Transportation Accidents Seminar, Huntsville Training Institute, February 1998
- Radiological Training for First Responders, HTMA, October 1997
- MC 300/DOT 400 Cargo Tanks Seminar, HTMA, October 1997
- Principles of Accident Investigation, National Transportation Safety Board, September 1997
- Aircraft Accident Investigation School, National Transportation Safety Board, September 1997
- 40 Hour HAZWOPER, November 1996

Professional Affiliations

Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE),
Technical Chair of Washington, DC Section
Immediate Past Chair of Washington, DC Section
Chair of Washington, DC Section
Vice Chair of Washington, DC Section
Member

Operation Life Saver (OLI) Certified Volunteer that provides safety presentations

Positions Held

The Baluster Group, Inc., Nokesville, VA CEO and Principal, 2019 - Present

The University of Maryland, School of Public Policy, College Park, MD Adjunct Professor, 2023 - Present

Engineering Systems Inc., Washington, DC Senior Managing Consultant, 2015 – 2019

All Aboard Florida, Coral Gables, Florida Director for Environmental Planning, 2014 – 2015

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), Washington, DC Associate Administrator for Rulemaking, 2011 - 2014

U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC Congressional Fellow, 2010 – 2011

Federal Aviation Administration, Washington, DC Director, Office of Hazardous Materials,

2008 – 2011

National Surface Transportation Policy & Revenue Study Commission, Washington, DC
Deputy Executive Director, 2007 – 2008

Federal Railroad Administration, Washington, DC Special Assistant to the Administrator, 2005 – 2008

Federal Railroad Administration, Washington, DC Environmental Program Manager, 2003 – 2005

United States Senate, Washington, DC Congressional Fellow, 2003 – 2003

National Transportation Safety Board, Washington, DC General Engineer (Hazardous Materials)/Accident Investigator, 1997 – 2003

Engineering Consulting Firms, Multiple Locations Senior Environmental Engineer/Program Manager, 1993-1997

United States Marine Corps, Multiple Locations Aviation Ordnance Munitions, 1987 – 1991

Publications and Selected Presentations

- Use of Accident Data for Litigation Purposes – DRI's Product Liability Conference, Nashville, TN, August 2021 (presentation & Abstract)
- Autonomous Vehicles Overview – Insurance Value Proposition speech at Lloyds of London, London, UK, November 2019
- Bonanti, Christopher, "The NHTSA Decision Tree and Its Effects on Biomechanics Analysis in the NCAP Program," February 2017
- Chapman, David A., Bonanti, Christopher J. "After the Call: Post-Accident FMCSA and NTSB Inquiries," In Transit, The Newsletter of the Trucking Law Committee, Vol 20, Issue 1, March 2017.
- Bonanti, C.J., "FAA's Hazardous Materials Compliance & Enforcement Program," American Bar Association, Transportation Committee Quarterly, Winter 2009, Vol. 2, No. 1.
- Bonanti, C.J., "A Methodology for Predicting the Acute Toxicity Dosage of a Fatal Chemical Exposure, Utilizing Risk Assessment Algorithms," The Pennsylvania State University Library, December 1995.
- NHTSA's School Bus Standards and Safety Programs, presented at the AFL-CIO Transportation Trades Department, School Bus Summit, Washington, DC, December 2013
- Your Other Full Time Job: Keeping up with Changing Safety Regulations, presented at the American Trucking Association Annual Conference, October 2013
- Rulemaking in the United States, presented at the ESV conference, Soul Korea, May 2013
- Motor Carrier Regulatory Summary, presented at the Motor Carrier Safety Advisory Committee, April 2013
- Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards and How They Can be Benchmarked to Military Vehicles, presented at the Reliability, Maintainability and Supportability Partnership DOD/DOT workshop, Springfield, VA, September 2012
- World Forum for Harmonization of Vehicle Regulations (WP.29), representing the UNECE (United Nations Economic Commission of Europe) presented at the inaugural Global NCAP meeting, Malaysia, May 2012

- Current NHTSA Regulatory Issues with Tires, presented at the Clemson Tire Industry Conference, April 2012
- Briefing for the NAS Committee on the Assessment of Technologies for Improving Fuel Economy of Light-Duty Vehicles – Phase 2, presented at the National Academy of Science, Washington, DC, March 2012

Other Research Contributions & Seminars

- Hazardous Material/Waste Transportation Safety – Its Effect on the Environment, *Proceedings of the Air & Waste Management Association's Annual Conference, June 1998.*
- Selection of Emission Monitoring Systems for Open Burning/Open Detonation Facilities, *Proceedings of the American Defense Preparedness Association's 1997 Hazardous Materials and Waste Management Conference and Exhibition, Portland, OR, January 1997.*
- Predicting Acute Toxic Exposures from Accidental Releases, *Proceedings of the Air & Waste Management Association's Annual Conference, June 1996.*
- Bioremediation of Trinitrotoluene (TNT), presented at the 1995 Annual Meeting of A&WMA Conference, San Antonio, TX, June 1995.