

Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration  
Office of Hazardous Materials Safety (OHMS)

# **STRATEGIC PLAN 2013-2016**

T h e R o a d A h e a d



U.S. Department  
of Transportation

Pipeline and  
Hazardous Materials  
Safety Administration



## Vision and Mission

### Office of Hazardous Materials Safety's Vision:

That no harm results from hazardous materials transportation.

### Office of Hazardous Materials Safety's Mission:

To safeguard people, property, and the environment from hazardous materials transportation risks.

## Outcome Goals

We measure our success not in terms of activities but in terms of **outcomes**. The public expects and deserves a transportation system that supports the *safe, reliable, efficient, and timely* transportation of hazardous materials (hazmat) by all modes—motor vehicle, rail, aircraft, and vessel. The Office of Hazardous Materials Safety (OHMS) implements strategies to achieve a variety of outcome goals. These strategies guide actions that will reduce the likelihood and consequences of incidents, enhance the capability of first responders, harness new and innovative technology, and promote economic growth.



## Strategies to Achieve Outcome Goals

Many internal and external factors influence our outcome goals. While we cannot control all of these factors, we can anticipate, adapt, and change when conditions dictate. Robust strategies and *agility*—the ability to change direction quickly—are critical to responding effectively to these influences.

However, none of the strategies have a chance of success without our most important asset—*our people*. We will strive to create an organizational culture in which all employees can thrive both personally and professionally. We believe in helping all employees achieve work-life balance, and we recognize the critical importance of diversity in the work place. We will continue to invest in the training, mentoring, and well-being of our employees. In OHMS, we will continue to build an environment that inspires, encourages, and rewards the free flow of ideas and insights in order to unleash the greatest creative force to implement our strategies and achieve our safety mission.

Working through its people, OHMS utilizes five strategies to achieve its outcome goals.

### Streamline our Regulatory System

***Regulations and policies need to be simplified and harmonized.*** This is a call to action for every OHMS employee. OHMS has implemented several tools that provide opportunities for both employees and stakeholders to make our regulations better. Under this strategy we can leverage the policy analysis, petition for rulemaking, regulatory change support paper, special permits, and retrospective regulatory review processes to develop straightforward regulations that directly address risks and promote safety and compliance. Specifically, we ask that OHMS employees: embrace these opportunities; identify those areas where regulations should be changed to eliminate redundancies, ambiguity, and unnecessary burdens; and find those areas where we can harmonize, both domestically and internationally, to limit the regulatory burden while maintaining or enhancing the level of safety.

### Enhance Risk Management

***Sound risk management enables safety prioritization in a resource-constrained environment.*** We must employ a risk management framework that will enable us to identify, assess, manage, and monitor hazmat transportation risks. We will improve our data collection and analysis capabilities and provide data-driven processes within this framework to drive agency decisions to address the highest transportation risks and maximize our limited resources towards ensuring the safe and efficient transportation of hazmat.

### Increase Compliance, Training, and Outreach

***Compliance is more than just enforcing regulations.*** We strive to maintain industry compliance with regulations through effective education, oversight, and enforcement activities including outreach, training, inspections, and investigations. Ensuring compliance is a role shared by each and every



Division within OHMS. Every contact with the public provides an opportunity to help improve safety. The Hazardous Materials Information Center is a perfect example of a source for regulatory compliance information for our stakeholders. We urge all OHMS employees to take the time to better understand and embrace our compliance roles.

### **Improve Preparedness and Response**

***When incidents occur, people must be prepared to respond quickly and safely.*** To be fully prepared to respond, it is vital that communities understand and account for the hazmat that routinely moves through their jurisdictions, and first responders have the information needed to react quickly and safely in the event of an incident. As we harness the various sources of data at our disposal, we will evaluate hazmat movements and incidents to better allocate grant resources based on hazmat transportation risks. We will continue to conduct outreach with grantees and promote program efficiencies and accountability. We must also develop a reauthorization proposal that redesigns and maximizes the use, efficiency, and management of grant dollars for preparedness safety.

### **Foster Robust Research, Development, and Innovation**

***A robust research and development program works to implement change.*** To evaluate the current risks and plan for the future of hazmat transportation, we must be engaged in a robust research and development program. This includes, where appropriate, development of new public/private partnerships to explore and develop the use of new technologies; however, research is useless if it sits on the shelf. Under this strategy, reliance on a robust research and development program will help us to identify opportunities to enhance transportation safety. Fast-moving special permits will serve as the host for these safety enhancements. Reliance on research and development and a clear implementation strategy will foster technological advancement, mitigate emerging risks, and maintain the stellar safety record of OHMS.



## **Appendix A – 2013-2014 OHMS Priorities**

In fiscal years 2013 and 2014, we have identified specific activities under each of the five strategies. Many of these strategies, while already in progress, are directly related to recently enacted mandates from the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Act (MAP-21).

### **Streamline and Improve our Regulatory System**

#### ***Comprehensive Regulatory Review, including:***

- ***Reverse Logistics***
- ***Fireworks***
- ***Airbags***
- ***International Harmonization***

#### ***MAP-21 Implementation, including:***

- ***Conversion of Special Permits and Approvals***
- ***Special Permit SOP and Evaluation Criteria***

#### ***NTSB Recommendations, including:***

- ***Lithium Battery Safety***
- ***Rail Tank Car Safety***
- ***Bulk Loading/Unloading Safety***
- ***Providing regulatory solutions, when appropriate***

### **Enhance Risk Management**

#### ***Risk Management Framework, including:***

- ***Accident Investigation Program***
- ***Predictive Analytics***

#### ***MAP-21 Implementation, including:***

- ***Data Collection and Analysis Improvement***



## **Increase Compliance, Training, and Outreach**

### ***Risk-Based Enforcement, including:***

- ***Cross-Modal Coordination***
- ***Improvements to Enforcement (Penalty) Process***
- ***Cylinder Program Improvements***

### ***MAP-21 Implementation, including:***

- ***Performance Standards for Inspectors/Investigators***

### ***Responding to NTSB Recommendations, including:***

- ***Non-Regulatory responses such as targeted enforcement, training, and outreach***

## **Improve Preparedness and Response**

### ***MAP-21 Implementation, including:***

- ***HMEP Grant Improvement Program***

## **Foster Robust Research and Development and Innovation**

### ***Cargo Tank Rollover Prevention***

### ***Lithium Battery Risk Mitigation***

### ***Incident Review / Human Error Study***

### ***MAP-21 Implementation, including:***

- ***Paperless Hazard Communication Pilot Projects***
- ***Hazardous Materials Technical Assessment Research and Development, and Analysis Program***

For more information about

# OHMS

Visit our web site:

[www.phmsa.dot.gov](http://www.phmsa.dot.gov)

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