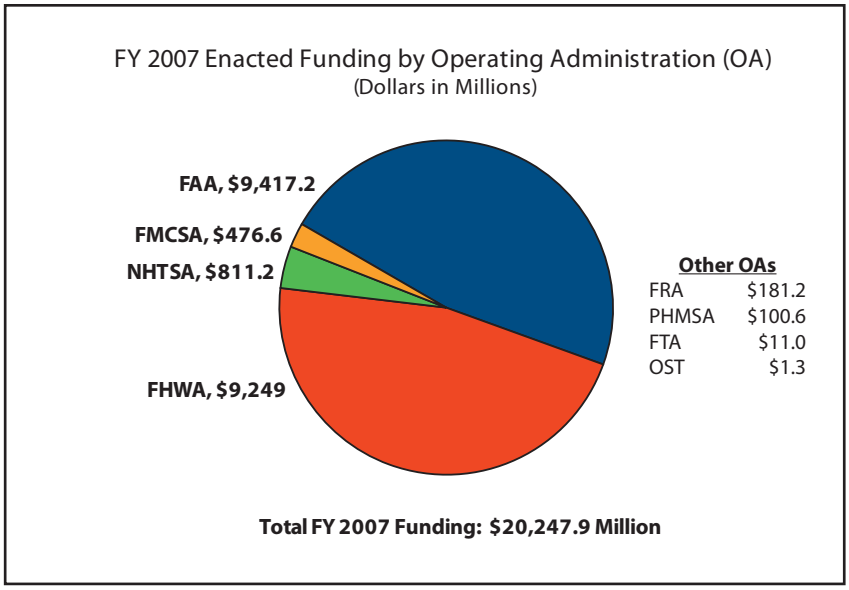
SAFETY STRATEGIC GOAL

ENHANCE THE PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY BY WORKING TOWARD THE ELIMINATION OF TRANSPORTATION-RELATED DEATHS AND INJURIES



STRATEGIC OUTCOMES

- ✧ Reduction in transportation-related deaths.
- ✧ Reduction in transportation-related injuries.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

- ✧ Highway fatalities per 100 million vehicle-miles traveled (VMT).
- ✧ Fatalities involving large trucks per 100 million truck VMT.
- ✧ U.S. commercial fatal aviation accidents per 100,000 departures (Last 3-years' average).
- ✧ Number of fatal general aviation accidents.
- ✧ Rail-related accidents and incidents per million train miles.
- ✧ Transit fatalities per 100 million passenger-miles traveled.
- ✧ Number of natural gas pipeline incidents and hazardous liquid pipeline accidents.
- ✧ Number of serious hazardous materials transportation incidents.

Highway Safety
FY 2007 Enacted Funds: $10.52 Billion

Highway crashes account for 99 percent of all transportation-related fatalities and injuries, and are the leading cause of death for Americans age 2 through 34. Alcohol is still the single biggest contributing factor in fatal crashes. Fatalities in alcohol-related crashes in 2006 (latest data available) remained essentially the same as in 2005. Eighteen percent of Americans (about 55 million people) still do not use seat belts all of the time when driving motor vehicles. Motor vehicle crashes have placed a considerable burden on the nation's health care system and have had significant economic effects. The cost to the economy of all motor vehicle crashes is approximately $230.6 billion (in 2000 dollars), or 2.3 percent of the U.S. gross domestic product. Three Operating Administrations - the Federal Highway Administration, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, and the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration - contribute to the accomplishment of the Department's highway safety goal by focusing on safer roads, safer vehicles, and safer driver behavior.

NHTSA — The 2006 annual assessment of motor vehicle traffic crash fatalities and injuries shows that the number of people killed in the United States in motor vehicle traffic crashes declined from 43,510 in 2005 to 42,642, the lowest level in five years. This decline is the largest in terms of both number and percentage since 1992. Alcohol-related fatalities in crashes where the highest blood alcohol concentration (BAC) was .08 grams per deciliter (g/dL) or greater (.08+) increased by only 0.1 percent, while the .08+ fatality rate decreased by .01 from the 2005 rate to .50 fatalities per 100 million vehicle-miles traveled (VMT) due to the increase in exposure. Fatalities declined for passenger car occupants, light-truck occupants, and non-occupants (pedestrians, cyclists, etc.). Passenger car occupant fatalities dropped for the fourth year in a row, while light-truck occupant fatalities dropped for the first time in 15 years. Motorcycle rider fatalities, however, continued their nine-year increase, reaching 4,810 in 2006. Motorcycle rider fatalities now account for 11 percent of total fatalities, exceeding the number of pedestrian fatalities for the first time since NHTSA began collecting fatal motor vehicle crash data in 1975. In addition to fatalities, NHTSA tracks injuries. The 2006 data show that the number of people injured in motor vehicle traffic crashes declined for the seventh year in a row. In 2006, fewer than 2.6 million people were injured compared to nearly 2.7 million in 2005, with the number of people injured declining in all categories except among motorcycle riders. The largest percentage decline was found among large-truck and pickup truck occupants.

FHWA — The FHWA safety-related programs yielded multiple benefits for communities in the U.S., including a reduction in the number of crashes and improvements in system conditions and operations. FHWA continued to concentrate efforts on reducing the number of fatalities in three types of crashes: roadway departures; crashes at or near intersections; and collisions involving pedestrians. According to preliminary Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) estimates, roadway departure fatalities declined in 2006 to 24,806 from 25,388 in 2005. Fatalities from intersection-

related and pedestrian-related crashes in 2006 were 8,797 and 4,784, respectively. Both figures represent a slight decrease from 2005 when there were 9,188 intersection-related and 4,892 for pedestrian-related fatalities.

FMCSA — Between 1997 and 2006, fatalities from large truck and bus crashes have declined seven percent from 5,709 in 1997 to 5,309 in 2006 (latest data available). The majority of fatal commercial motor vehicle crashes involve other vehicles. In 2006, 75 percent of fatalities involving large truck and bus crashes were occupants of other vehicles, primarily passenger vehicle occupants and motorcycle riders. Of the remaining fatalities, 16 percent were occupants of commercial motor vehicles and 10 percent were pedestrians and bicyclists.

Results from FMCSA's Large Truck Crash Causation Study have shown that the driver plays the greatest role in large truck crashes. In crashes between large trucks and passenger vehicles, the critical reason for the crash was assigned to the driver of the large truck 44 percent of the time. The most common reasons for crashes cited in the study are recognition errors (driver distraction or inadequate road surveillance) and poor driving decisions (driving too fast for conditions, following other vehicles too closely, etc).

The study found several other factors that contribute to accidents, including brake problems, roadway conditions (weather or road design), drivers' use of over-the-counter medications, driver illness, and shifting cargo.

2007 Results — Although the fatality rate is at historic lows, preliminary data indicates that DOT will not meet the FY 2007 target. In recent years, the Department has focused on highway safety as a top Departmental priority. Working with key partners and stakeholders, this approach has been successful. However, highway fatalities and injuries for 2006 show that much more needs to be done to improve safety on our roads.

Performance Measure				
Highway fatalities per 100 million vehicle-miles traveled (VMT).				
	2004	**2005**	**2006**	**2007**
Target	1.38	1.38	1.38	1.38
Actual	1.44 (r)	1.46 (r)	1.42 (r)	1.40 #
(r) Revised; # Projection				
Associated FY 2007 Funding – $ 10.06 billion				

To continue making our roads safer, a working group was established to identify new strategies and technologies that will reduce highway fatalities. New performance targets have been established in key areas to focus the Department's efforts on the critical factors responsible for the overall highway fatality rate. These key focus areas include passenger vehicle occupants, non-occupants (pedestrians, cyclists, etc.), motorcycle riders, and large trucks and buses. They were chosen in part to cover the breadth of all road users. These measures will be reported on in the FY 2008 PAR.

FY 2008 Performance Forecast — It is unlikely that the target will be met in FY 2008. DOT has set an ambitious goal of reducing the rate of highway fatalities to no more than 1.37 per 100 million VMT by FY 2008.

2007 Results — DOT did not meet the target. Preliminary data for 2007 shows that the projected large truck fatality rate is 2.24 fatalities per 100 million truck-VMT, while the target was no more than 1.75 fatalities per 100 million-truck VMT. This constitutes an estimated shortfall of 0.49 fatalities per 100 million truck VMT, based on the projected mileage and fatalities for 2007.

Performance Measure				
Fatalities involving large trucks per 100 million truck VMT.				
	2004	**2005**	**2006**	**2007**
Target	2.07	1.96	1.85	1.75
Actual	2.29	2.35 (r)	2.24 (r)	2.24 #
(r) Revised; # Projection				
Associated FY 2007 Funding – $ 459 million				

While reaching the lowest incidence of truck crashes and fatalities in decades, FMCSA is committed towards achieving its established goals and further improving highway safety. FMCSA launched a major initiative in FY 2005 to reexamine and reengineer core safety activities called the Comprehensive Safety Analysis 2010 (CSA 2010). In FY 2007, FMCSA launched important research and development cycles for the CSA 2010 concepts, and in FY 2008 the Agency will begin initial testing and evaluation of the CSA 2010 projects through implementation tests of the operational model in multiple States. In FY 2007, FMCSA renewed its focus on the role of drivers in preventing crashes by increasing the number of driver inspections and focusing on programs such as PEDAL (Plain English Driver Assistance Literature), which communicates Federal motor carrier regulations to drivers in an easy-to-understand format. Research shows that influencing driver behavior is the biggest factor in crash prevention. For future gains in safety, this is an important area for the Agency to watch.

FY 2008 Performance Forecast — It is unlikely that the target will be met in FY 2008.

In-Depth Accomplishments Promoting Highway Safety

NHTSA IN-DEPTH

SEAT BELTS

In 2007, according to NHTSA's National Occupant Protection Use Survey, the national seat belt use rate was 82 percent, up from the 81 percent achieved in 2006, the highest nationwide rate ever recorded. Seat belt use is statistically lower in States with secondary belt enforcement laws than in States with primary laws, and lower in rural areas than in urban or suburban areas. States that have secondary enforcement laws require a law enforcement officer to pull someone over for a

different violation and only then are they able to write an additional citation for a seat belt violation. States that have primary seat belt laws don't have this restriction. In 2007, States that allowed more stringent enforcement of their belt use laws ("primary" States) reached 87 percent belt use, a two percent increase over 2006. On average, States that have primary seat belt laws experience usage rates that are 14 percentage points higher than States that do not have primary laws. States that implement primary laws together with statewide high-visibility law enforcement programs that combine enforcement activities with paid media and news coverage may achieve increases of 20 points or more.

In May 2007, NHTSA conducted the national "Click It or Ticket" (CIOT) campaign, releasing national advertisements focusing on the enforcement of seat belt laws and encouraging States to conduct high-visibility seat belt law enforcement operations along with State-level advertising. To extend the benefit of CIOT, the agency conducted demonstration projects to evaluate the effect of conducting multiple law enforcement mobilizations during the year. In addition, NHTSA conducted demonstrations of strategies for increasing seat belt use among high-risk populations such as night-

Bergen County police officer Jeff Roberts, center, tells an unidentified taxi driver to pull over because he is not wearing a seat belt during a "Click It or Ticket" checkpoint stop near the entrance to the George Washington Bridge in Fort Lee, N.J., Monday, May 21, 2007. The checkpoint was one of three set up in New Jersey Monday to handout seat belt safety pamphlets and give out $46 tickets to those motorists not wearing seat belts. (AP Photo/Mike Derer)

time drivers, drivers in rural areas, pick-up truck occupants, 8-15 year olds and teens. Likewise, NHTSA teamed up with new partners which have access to these populations, such as NASCAR Disney-Pixar, and rural media outlets to try to raise their lower-than-average seat belt use rates. This year's CIOT campaign was accompanied in nine States by an additional campaign, "Buckle Up in Your Truck," to encourage improved seat belt usage in pickup trucks.

The results from the National Survey of the Use of Booster Seats found that 41 percent of four through seven year olds were restrained in booster seats in 2006. NHTSA continued support for the national training and certification program that has prepared more than 30,000 local child passenger safety technicians to provide guidance to parents on the correct selection and use of child restraint systems.

In July 2007, to assess the feasibility, necessity and economic impact of seat belts on school buses, NHTSA conducted a day-long public meeting with State and local governments, education officials, school bus manufacturers, safety advocates and consumer organizations. School buses remain the safest means of transporting students to school and school-related activities by means of compartmentalization, a combination of flexible, energy-absorbent, high seat backs and narrow spacing between each row. The Department and NHTSA held the meeting to determine whether there are sensible and attainable ways to provide even greater protection for children in school buses.

IMPAIRED DRIVERS

In 2006, the number of alcohol-related fatalities remained essentially the same as in 2005, claiming 17,602 lives. Males comprised 81 percent of fatally injured drivers with blood alcohol content above the legal limit; 43 percent of fatally injured drivers (both men and women) were between the ages of 21 and 34. Based on the *Traffic Volume Trends* estimated increase in VMT for 2006, the .08+ BAC alcohol fatality rate decreased from 0.51 fatalities per 100 million VMT in 2005, to 0.50 per 100 million VMT in 2006, achieving the 2006 target for this supporting performance measure.

Administrator Nicole Nason with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration speaks during a news conference, Wednesday, Aug. 22, 2007, in Washington. Administrator Nason discussed the agency's efforts to combat impaired driving, providing statistics on fatality rates where drivers exceeded the legal blood alcohol content (BAC) limit. (AP Photo/Haraz N. Ghanbari)

In continuing to combat this problem, in FY 2007, NHTSA further enhanced its impaired driving program by placing greater emphasis on assisting high-risk populations, such as

underage drinkers, 21 to 34 year olds, individuals with high BAC levels and repeat offenders. Under the Impaired Driving Countermeasures Incentive Program, in FY 2007, NHTSA made available $125 million to the 50 States, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico if they have prescribed alcohol-impaired driving countermeasure laws or programs, such as administrative license revocation laws and underage drinking programs, or if they met certain performance criteria based on their alcohol-related fatality rates. The ten States with the highest impaired driving fatality rates received extra funding under this new SAFETEA-LU Section 410 funding program. NHTSA worked closely with these ten States to facilitate implementation of effective programs, such as periodic sustained high-visibility enforcement efforts, combined with media campaigns, DWI Courts, and judicial and prosecutorial education programs. NHTSA continued the new national advertising campaign delivering the message "Drunk Driving: Over the Limit; Under Arrest." As part of this campaign, States conduct impaired driving enforcement crackdowns during the Labor Day and December holiday seasons.

In August 2007, NHTSA held a public meeting with judges, court personnel, treatment professionals and others to examine the benefits of the expanded use of ignition interlocks as a means to further reduce deaths and injuries from impaired driving. Meeting participants recommended increased education concerning interlock programs directed at judges and court professionals, especially those from smaller courts that collectively handle large numbers of DWI cases across the Nation. Other recommendations addressed the need for guidance concerning key interlock program elements, and demonstrations of strategies for overcoming program challenges such as financial viability, coordination among affected State agencies, and linkages between the court and alcohol addiction treatment functions.

SAFER VEHICLES

On April 6, 2007, NHTSA issued a final rule to establish a new Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard 126 that will require Electronic Stability Control (ESC) systems by September 1, 2011, on passenger cars, multipurpose vehicles, trucks, and buses with a gross vehicle weight rating of 10,000 pounds or less. ESC is a technology that has the potential to save many lives by assisting the driver in maintaining control in critical driving situations. On July 30, 2007, the agency published a statistical analysis of the effectiveness of ESC systems in vehicles currently on the road (NHTSA Report Number DOT HS 810 794). These ESC systems have reduced fatal single vehicle crashes by 63 percent for light trucks and vans (LTVs) and 36 percent for passenger cars. Rollover involvements in fatal crashes were decreased by 70 percent in passenger cars and 88 percent in LTVs. This report may be accessed at: http://dmses.dot.gov/docimages/p102/479883.pdf.

In FY 2007, the agency began initial research to understand the performance capabilities and potential safety benefits of heavy vehicle ESC systems and completed brake research needed to support the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard (FMVSS) 121 (Air Brake Systems) rulemaking. Additionally, NHTSA initiated the development of requirements, assessment metrics and test procedures for heavy vehicle (tractor semi-trailer) ESC systems in support of future rulemaking proposals.

Mary Peters, Secretary of Transportation, sits in a 2007 Saturn Aura equipped with electronic stability control, at the New York International Auto Show on Thursday, April 5, 2007. During a news conference, Secretary Peters announced all new passenger cars sold in the United States will be required to have electronic stability control by 2012. (AP Photo/Mark Lennihan)

In accordance with Section 10307 of SAFETEA-LU, the agency implemented a new regulation, effective November 13, 2006, that requires the placement of New Car Assessment Program (NCAP) safety ratings on vehicles (Stars on Cars) manufactured on or after September 1, 2007, at the point of sale. The agency conducted crash testing on approximately 70 different vehicles to provide front, side and/or rollover safety ratings. These tests on new model year 2007 vehicles account for approximately 36 percent of the new model vehicles in the fleet.

In 2001, the agency introduced rollover resistance ratings to the NCAP program. That year, over half of the vehicles rated received one, two or three star ratings for rollover resistance. Seven years later, 79 percent of the vehicles received a four or five star rating and none of the vehicles rated received a one or two star rating. Including rollover resistance ratings for vehicles has greatly improved the safety of vehicles available today.

Information on NHTSA's NCAP ratings, defect investigations and safety recalls can be found on www.safercar.gov, the NHTSA Web-based portal dedicated to the promotion of NCAP safety ratings and other vehicle safety-related topics.

MOTORCYCLES

Motorcycle rider fatalities have increased each year since reaching a historic low of 2,116 fatalities in 1997. In 2006, motorcycle rider fatalities increased for the ninth year in a row to 4,810, up from 4,576 in 2005. This is a 5.1 percent increase in just one year. Motorcycle fatalities account for 11 percent of the 42,642 total fatalities in motor vehicle crashes in 2006.

Data from 2006 (latest data available) shows that motorcycle rider fatalities increased for most age groups, particularly among the 20-29 and 50-59 age groups. However, motorcycle fatalities for riders in the under-20 age group declined by 13 percent. Speed continued to be a major contributing factor in motorcycle crashes, especially among the younger riders. The number of motorcycle riders killed in alcohol-related crashes increased by 10 percent. This situation is further compounded by the continued climb in new unit motorcycle sales in 2005 (latest data available from Motorcycle Industry Council), rising above the one million mark and reaching levels not seen since the 1970s. On a positive note, in June 2007, 58 percent of motorcyclists used DOT-compliant helmets, a seven percentage point increase from the 2006 rate. During FY 2007, NHTSA and the States began implementing the 2006 Motorcycle Safety Plan which incorporates the 2005 SAFETEA-LU mandates and new initiatives, implementing additional safety programs to try to reduce the escalating motorcycle fatality and injury rates. The 2006 Motorcycle Safety Plan can be found at: http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/injury/pedbimot/motorcycle/MotorcycleSafety.pdf.

Gov. Mitch Daniels prepares to get on his motorcycle before leaving the Statehouse in Indianapolis, Friday, Aug. 17, 2007. Daniels was joined by leaders of motorcycling organizations from across the state for a ride to promote motorcycle safety and awareness. (AP Photo/Darron Cummings)

With motorcycle safety a significant concern, in FY 2007 NHTSA took several steps to address the issue. The agency distributed the *Implementation Guide for the National Agenda for Motorcycle Safety* to assist States and communities in creating programs to improve motorcycle safety; incorporated motorcycle operators in High Visibility Enforcement (HVE) impaired-driving crackdowns; completed the *Study to Determine Motorcyclist Impairment at Different BAC Levels*, and completed the *Riders Helping Riders* instructional program to encourage motorcyclists to intervene to prevent drinking and riding by their peers.

During FY 2008, NHTSA will transmit a report to Congress on the findings of a study of educational and other activities targeted at reducing impaired riding as mandated by Section 2003 (g) of SAFETEA-LU. NHTSA will develop and distribute communication campaigns to increase the

awareness of motorcyclists and to reach older motorcyclists, begin the development of national standards for motorcycle rider training, and continue to incorporate motorcycle operators in HVE impaired-driving crackdowns, as well as complete and distribute updated motorcycle licensing guidance to State Motor Vehicle Administrators to reduce the number of improperly licensed drivers involved in fatal crashes. Additionally, NHTSA will initiate the development of national standards for novice motorcycle rider training, and evaluate general deterrence demonstrations for impaired motorcycle operation. During FY 2008, the Agency will develop a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) to improve motorcycle helmet requirements, as well as vehicle safety approaches to reduce the number of fatalities associated with motorcycle crashes.

A red light flashes on each corner of this stop sign at the intersections of Ohio 49 and Ohio 707 in rural Mercer County, Ohio, on Sept. 26, 2006. The flashing lights on the stop sign allow it to be seen from greater distances, even in daylight. The intersection had been the scene of numerous accidents. To improve traffic safety without busting their budgets, states are installing the cable barriers, painting distance dots on roads to discourage tailgating and placing stop signs that light up like Christmas trees at dangerous intersections. (AP Photo/Al Behrman)

FHWA IN-DEPTH

FHWA continued to promote highway safety through the implementation of comprehensive, integrated and data-driven safety programs at the Federal, State and local levels, including State and non-State owned roadway systems. FHWA worked with States to improve data coverage and data quality, develop and apply a Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP), and implement effective projects and programs to save lives and reduce injuries. As a result of FHWA efforts, all 50 States plus the District of Columbia developed an approved Plan during FY 2007. The development of an SHSP provides States the flexibility to use funds for newly eligible activities and enables them to use up to 10 percent of Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) funds for non-infrastructure safety efforts. Four states took advantage of the flexible HSIP funding. With the new HSIP and continued implementation of existing programs, the current downward trend in the fatality rate is expected to continue.

FHWA provides training to state and local governments that can be instrumental in meeting the local jurisdictions' highway safety needs. For example, Douglas County, Georgia, officials developed a *Safety Action Plan* to identify areas of concern and set priorities for using available funding to make safety improvements. The Plan has been particularly helpful as the County pursued funding opportunities through the Georgia DOT program for off-system safety projects. Douglas County officials credit the training they received from FHWA workshops on Low Cost Safety Improvements, Intersection Safety, and Road Safety Audits as providing them the information they needed to

advance safety by better identifying high crash locations and improving safety at those locations with low cost improvements. Among the improvements are enhanced signing and pavement markings such as dual Stop signs and Intersection Ahead warning signs, improved shoulders, roadside vegetation and tree removal, rumble strips, illuminated street name signs, and LED traffic signal displays for better visibility. Douglas County developed crash reduction factors based on techniques taught at FHWA workshops for specific treatments to help determine the potential benefits of countermeasures and establish priorities for their implementation. County officials stated that having crash reduction factors has made it easier to get funding resources for safety by enabling them to effectively communicate the benefits of the proposed treatments.

FMCSA IN-DEPTH

COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT

FMCSA continues to place a high priority on enforcement and operational compliance activities. FMCSA's field staff completed over 10,000 safety compliance reviews, over 2,300 conditional carrier reviews, over 4,600 new entrant safety audits, nearly 100,000 southern border vehicle/driver

The U.S. Secretary of Transportation Mary E. Peters, center, accompanied by Mexican Secretary of Communications and Transportation Luis Tellez, second from left, watches a truck inspection in the city of Apodaca, northern Mexico, Thursday, Feb. 22, 2007. U.S. safety inspectors will be allowed to examine trucks on Mexican soil before they cross the border into the United States under a program announced by Secretary Peters that could end a seven-year trade dispute in order to remove the last barrier to the long-delayed opening of U.S. highways to Mexican truckers. (AP Photo/Monica Rueda)

inspections (53,000 driver and 46,000 vehicle), and nearly 1,000 border safety audits. In addition, the Agency completed about 1,000 motorcoach compliance reviews, over 13,000 motorcoach-only inspections, and nearly 15,000 border motorcoach inspections (including both Federal and State). FMCSA also worked with State partners to ensure their completion of nearly 6,000 compliance reviews, over 24,000 new entrant audits, over 100 motorcoach compliance reviews, over 9,000 motorcoach inspections, 500 border motorcoach inspections, over half a million southern border vehicle/driver inspections, and over 3 million roadside inspections of large trucks and buses.

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

FMCSA, in partnership with NHTSA, extended a demonstration project known as TACT (Ticketing Aggressive Cars and Trucks) to four additional states for testing and evaluation. The project demonstrates the effectiveness of using high visibility enforcement, education, media and evaluation to raise public awareness to reduce fatalities resulting from other vehicles cutting off, tailgating and speeding near and around large trucks. The results of the initial project, completed in FY 2006, showed that drivers of passenger vehicles understood the message and learned how to drive more responsibly around trucks.

RESEARCH, TECHNOLOGY AND SAFETY INFORMATION

FMCSA's Research and Technology programs continue to provide advances and innovations to improve commercial motor vehicle safety. The Agency completed the first phase of a study on Onboard Monitoring Systems (OBMS) for commercial motor vehicle safety in May 2007. FMCSA worked on this study with the California Department of Transportation and the University of California Partners for Advanced Transit and Highways program. This study developed a prototype technology suite for installation in a truck tractor, which monitors a set of safe driver behaviors. The driver behaviors measured include hard breaking events, speed, hard steering events, following distance, lane keeping performance, roll over warning, safety belt use, and the use of turn signals. The suite provides feedback directly to the driver or in a "rolled-up" report for the carrier's management. The purpose is to provide feedback to improve driving performance. This project was nominated for the 2007 "Best of Intelligent Transportation System Awards." The next phase of the study is a field operational test which is scheduled to start before the end of 2007.

Aviation Safety
FY 2007 Enacted Funds: $9.42 Billion

This remains one of the safest periods in aviation history for both commercial and general aviation. Over the last five years, nearly three billion airline passengers reached their destination safely. As the stewards of aviation safety in the U.S., FAA and its industry partners have built a system that operates nearly 32,000 scheduled commercial flights daily and has reduced the risks of flying to all-time lows.

FAA's efforts during the past ten years have resulted in reduced general aviation (GA) fatal accidents and Alaska fatal accidents. Both measures are at their lowest recorded levels in history. When looking at the GA fatal accidents trend line of the last ten years, we have continued to trend in the right direction. However, since GA accidents tend to fluctuate from year to year, the downward trend is not smooth.

2007 Results — DOT did not meet the target for the commercial aviation fatal accident rate. By the end of FY 2007, we had achieved a rate of 0.022 fatal accidents per 100,000 departures – a 57 percent drop in fatal accidents from 1997.

Performance Measure U.S. commercial fatal aviation accidents per 100,000 departures (last 3-years' average).				
	2004	**2005**	**2006**	**2007**
Target	.028	.023	.018	.010
Actual	.021	.017	.020 *	.022 *
* Preliminary estimate				
Associated FY 2007 Funding – $ 7.84 billion				

While FAA continues to aggressively pursue increased aviation safety, our ability to take corrective action to achieve our target both this year and next is severely limited. Even if, for the first time, no commercial air carrier fatal accidents occurred during this fiscal year and the next, we would not achieve the target. This is because the current fatal accident measure is expressed in terms of fatal accidents per 100,000 departures. With this measure all fatal accidents, as defined by the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) criteria, are weighted equally. The result is that an accident with a single fatality is viewed in the same way as an accident involving hundreds of passengers.

For this reason, FAA is introducing a new performance metric for commercial air carrier safety — fatalities per 100 million persons on-board. This new metric is more relevant to the flying public, as it better measures the individual risk, as low as it is, to fly. All fatalities, including passengers, crewmembers, ramp workers, and ground fatalities, will be considered equally. And the proposed long-term target is no less challenging than the previous goal – the agency aims to cut this risk in half by 2025. To make this vision a reality, FAA will continue to work in partnership with industry.

FY 2008 Performance Forecast — DOT will not meet the FY 2008 commercial fatal accident performance target.

2007 Results — FAA met the target this year for reducing general aviation (GA) fatal accidents. Although most people are familiar with FAA's role in commercial aviation, they may not be aware that it also oversees the safety of almost 300,000 general aviation aircraft in the United States. These aircraft include single-seat home-built airplanes, rotorcraft (helicopters), balloons, and highly

Performance Measure Number of fatal general aviation accidents.				
	2004	**2005**	**2006**	**2007**
Target	349	343	337	331
Actual	340	354	299 (r)*	314 *
(r) Revised; * Preliminary estimate				
Associated FY 2007 Funding – $ 1.57 billion				

sophisticated extended-range turbojets. General aviation activities include student training, crop dusting, fire fighting, law enforcement, news coverage, sightseeing, industrial work, on-demand air taxi service, corporate transportation, as well as personal use and recreational flying.

Upland Police Department's Sgt. John Poole and the city's building inspector, Luis Teixeira, investigate the wreckage of a small plane that crashed atop a garage trying to land at Cable Airport, Monday, June 4, 2007, in Upland, California. The crash slightly injured the pilot and two passengers, authorities said. (AP Photo/Inland Valley Daily Bulletin, Mediha Fejzagic DiMartino) (LA Times, Ventura County Star & Riverside Press-Enterprise)

Since FAA began using GA fatal accidents as a performance target six years ago, the target has been exceeded just once. In FY 2007, GA fatal accidents once again decreased from the previous year. Rotorcraft, including Emergency Medical Service (EMS) flights, showed a sharp decrease from 2006.

FAA worked with various members of the GA community during FY 2007, including aeromedical evacuation, charter services, and others to promote education and training on instrument check guidance, and effective pilot/instructor mentoring programs. The sustained improvement in GA safety reflects the cooperative efforts undertaken with the GA and nonscheduled Part 135 community through the Joint Steering Committee, with several projects on training, information systems, and metrics.

Elsewhere, the FAA has undertaken targeted efforts to reduce accidents among air tour operators, EMS helicopter operators, and energy operators in the Gulf of Mexico. In addition, FAA has certificated new avionics packages, continued to implement the Wide Area Augmentation System to improve safety while landing during limited-visibility operations, and has implemented the FAA/Industry Training Standards program, which is a partnership with academia and the broader GA community to ensure pilots' ability to manage risk in technologically advanced aircraft.

FY 2008 Performance Forecast — DOT expects to meet the FY 2008 general aviation safety performance target.

In-Depth Accomplishments Promoting Aviation Safety

Creating safe flying conditions is a complex interplay of many activities but FAA has learned that by addressing the precursors to accidents – operational errors and runway incursions – safety is enhanced. Therefore, the agency spends considerable time and resources to reduce operational errors and runway incursions.

In addition, in recent years, FAA has focused on reducing aviation risks in Alaska, particularly those associated with GA. Aviation plays a vital role in Alaska, but the state's topography and weather present unique safety challenges to pilots.

RUNWAY ACCIDENTS

Reducing the risk of runway incursions is one of FAA's top priorities. A runway incursion is any occurrence at an airport involving an aircraft, vehicle, person, or object on the ground that creates a collision hazard or results in a loss of separation with an aircraft taking off, intending to take off, landing, or intending to land. Reducing runway incursions lessens the probability of accidents that potentially involve fatalities, injuries, and significant property damage.

An American Airlines jet, top, lands Monday, April 2, 2007 on a rebuilt runway at Los Angeles International Airport. This southernmost runway, one of a parallel pair of runways on the airport's south side, was closed in July and rebuilt 55 feet away to create room for a new center aisle between the two. It was part of a $333 million airport renovation project designed to reduce close calls involving planes landing, taking off and taxiing. The airport historically has had among the nation's highest rates of runway incursions, when a plane or vehicle on the ground gets too close to a plane that is landing or taking off. (AP Photo/Nick Ut)

The agency has been aggressively addressing the issue and has made progress reducing the most serious incidents, particularly those involving commercial aircraft. In FY 2007, FAA met the performance target of 0.530 per million operations by achieving an estimated rate of runway incursions of 0.429 per million operations. Runway incursions have dropped to one incursion for every 2.7 million operations, a 24 percent decrease from last year. Further, the number of serious runway incursions has been reduced by more than 50 percent from five years ago.

Further, in FY 2007, we continued the Runway Status Lights program which reduces the likelihood of runway incidents. Runway status lights act as stoplights on runways and taxiways, assigning priority to aircraft with the right of way. The lights are located along the centerline of a runway or taxiway and light up red when a runway is in use, notifying the pilot of a taxiing aircraft to either stop prior to crossing the runway, or yield to the aircraft landing or taking off.

The Airport Surface Detection Equipment Model X (ASDE-X), a new runway safety tool that combats the risk of runway incidents on runways and taxiways, was installed at Louisville International Airport and Charlotte Douglas Airport. ASDE-X enables air traffic controllers to detect potential runway conflicts by providing detailed coverage of movement on runways and taxiways. By collecting data from a variety of sources, ASDE-X is able to track vehicles and aircraft on the airport movement area and obtain identification information from aircraft transponders. Controllers in the tower see this information presented as a color display of aircraft and vehicle positions overlaid on a map of the airport's runways/taxiways and approach corridors. The system essentially creates a continuously updated map of the airport movement area that controllers can use to monitor surface traffic. It is especially helpful to controllers at night or in bad weather when visibility is poor.

In addition, while pilots have traditionally acquired information about what runway or taxiway they are on by looking out their windshield, FAA is making it easier for pilots to have an invaluable electronic tool in the cockpit. It provides a moving map display with "own ship position" — changing and improving runway safety the way GPS has changed the way we safely navigate our cars. After thoroughly reviewing safety data, including human factors research on the safety benefits of "own ship position" versus the potential safety risks, we are changing our certification process to enable this technology to be available later this year while maintaining all appropriate safety standards.

OPERATIONAL ERRORS

One of the fundamental principles of aviation safety is separation—the need to maintain a safe distance from other aircraft, terrain, obstructions, and restricted airspace. Air traffic controllers employ rules and procedures that define separation standards for this environment. An operational error occurs when controllers fail to apply or follow these procedures that enforce separation and allow aircraft to end up too close to each other or to an obstruction.

The performance limit for FY 2007 was set not to exceed a rate of 4.27 operational errors per million activities. The FY 2007 preliminary estimates indicate 4.11 operational errors per million activities, tracking slightly below the year-to-date projected performance limit.

During FY 2007, FAA improved how the severity of operational errors is calculated. The agency began implementation of a new system to classify operational errors and instituted a 10 percent performance tolerance on separation minima to better understand and measure its safety performance. These changes allow FAA to take full advantage of advances in technology that now permit for separation measurements to a hundredth of a mile (60 feet) and allow the agency to capture more events that approach the edges of the separation standards.

The new measurement process, referred to as the separation conformance, measures the severity of the outcome of the operational error as a result of the percent of required separation that was maintained. When the separation conformance is measured in combination with the number of operations, it creates a reliable rate-based measure of safety.

Further, the new measurement system minimizes the number of criteria used to determine operational error severity, minimizes subjectivity, and allows for better analysis of same category events—all of which enhance safety conclusions. With these changes FAA now measures the proximity between two aircraft which best characterizes the actual risk of collision.

ALASKA ACCIDENTS

There were 94 accidents in Alaska in FY 2007. Alaska experienced a total of 11 fatal accidents this year – four in Part 135 (unscheduled air carrier) and seven in general aviation.

Alaska's skyways are equivalent to the highway and road infrastructure found throughout the continental U.S., making the use of general aviation aircraft essential to everyday life. This includes but is not limited to enabling children to attend school, traveling to medical appointments, and supplying communities with groceries, fuel, and mail.

Therefore, there is urgency to modernize flight service in Alaska and FAA's *Flight Plan* focuses specifically on reducing GA accidents in Alaska. The agency's goal is to reduce Alaska accidents from the 2000 – 2002 average of 130 accidents per year to no more than 99 accidents per year by FY 2009. The FY 2007 target is 110.

Flight Service facilities in Alaska provide fundamental flight safety and operational support to Alaskan aviators. The Alaska Flight Service Modernization (AFSM) program is working to ensure Alaska's unique aviation needs are met with a level of service that is on par or superior to the level of service available in the continental U.S., Hawaii, and Puerto Rico. The goal of AFSM is to provide improved level of service and reduce operating costs by at least 25 percent over projected costs associated with current infrastructure. FAA's efforts include expanded and enhanced flight services throughout Alaska through innovative use of remote airport advisory cameras, and the delivery of information via Internet Web site hosted on kiosks located at rural airports. Continued emphasis on training through Medallion and Circle of Safety programs, as well as the introduction of new technology, has significantly improved the GA operating environment in Alaska. Pilots in Alaska can conduct required navigation performance approaches using sophisticated on-board equipment at runways that are normally not accessible in low visibility and bad weather conditions.

The Alaska Capstone Program evaluated technologies and procedures that are now incorporated into the Automatic Dependent Surveillance Broadcast (ADS-B) program. The primary benefit of ADS-B in Alaska is the delivery of GA air traffic control service at lower altitudes in areas where radar is not currently available or would be too costly to deploy. ADS-B provides the specialist with a situational awareness tool for providing pilots with real time information on aircraft, snow removal equipment and airport vehicles operating on runways, taxiways, and ramps and for aircraft operating in the vicinity of traffic patterns at selected airports. ADS-B technology can also be used to improve accuracy and timeliness of search and rescue activity when pilots encounter problems or experience an accident in remote parts of Alaska.

Rail Safety
FY 2007 Enacted Funds: $145 Million

In May 2005, the Secretary announced the Department's National Rail Safety Action Plan to improve the safety of the Nation's freight railroad operations by:

- ✧ Targeting the most frequent, highest risk causes of train accidents;
- ✧ Focusing FRA oversight and inspection resources more precisely; and,
- ✧ Accelerating research efforts that have the potential to mitigate the largest risks.

The action plan reflects a partnership between FRA, the railroads, and communities focused on improving rail safety.

Performance Measure: Rail-related accidents and incidents per million train-miles.	2004	2005	2006	2007
Target	17.49	17.14	16.80	16.70
Actual	19.02 (r)	17.90 (r)	16.94 (r)	15.02 *

(r) Revised; * Preliminary estimate

Associated FY 2007 Funding – $ 145 million

2007 Results — FRA estimates that it will meet the FY 2007 performance target. Much of its success is attributable to better utilization of data to direct FRA safety inspectors and other resources where problems are likely to arise. Additionally, FRA has built substantial partnerships with State and local agencies through the State Rail Participation Program to address accidents and casualties at highway-rail grade crossings and from trespassing. The public benefits in several ways. First, fewer accidents mean fewer deaths and injuries. These statistics also translate into fewer health-care expenses and loss of personal property.

FY 2008 Performance Forecast — The FY 2008 target will be met.

In-Depth Accomplishments Promoting Rail Safety

In late April 2007, FRA began operating its two newest automated track inspection vehicles equipped with state-of-the-art technology to prevent train derailments by detecting subtle track flaws that are difficult to identify by regular means. The addition of the new equipment increases the FRA fleet of automated inspection vehicles to five, which when fully integrated into the federal inspection program will allow this agency to inspect nearly 100,000 track-miles each year, tripling the current capacity. In particular, the addition of these vehicles to FRA's fleet gives the Agency a greater ability to inspect a larger percentage of the Nation's rail lines, which are used to transport dangerous, hazardous materials as well as those used by passenger trains. This enhanced capability gives FRA the flexibility to conduct follow-up inspections on a timelier basis and also provides the Agency the capacity to conduct unscheduled inspections of rail lines that have been identified as presenting safety concerns.

Federal Railroad Administrator (FRA), Joseph H. Boardman, second from left, and Chief of the Track Research Division, Gary A. Carr, left, show a bank of monitors inside a state of the art rail inspection vehicle in Rensselaer, N.Y., Monday, March 19, 2007. The FRA on Monday started a two-day inspection of the tracks by a special computer equipped rail car one week after an 80-car freight train partly derailed in Oneida. (AP Photo/Stewart Cairns)

The new vehicles, known as the T19 and T20, use a variety of technologies to measure track geometry flaws such as whether two rails are level, if the width between the rails is acceptable, and if the shape of each rail meets federal standards so as to avoid derailments. The measurements are recorded in real time and at operating speed. Problem areas are identified by global positioning system location and shared immediately with the railroad so appropriate corrective actions can be taken in a timely manner. These vehicles will contribute significantly to increasing rail safety, specifically in reducing track caused accidents and incidents.

Transit Safety
FY 2007 Enacted Funds: $11 Million

Public transportation provides a flexible safer alternative to traveling by automobile. Currently, transit is one of the safest modes of travel per passenger-mile traveled. According to the National Safety Council, passengers on the Nation's bus, rail, or commuter rail systems are 40 times less likely to be involved in a fatal accident, and 10 times less likely to be involved in an accident resulting in injury. The challenge is to further reduce the rate of fatalities and injuries even as the total number of people using transit increases.

2007 Results — DOT met the target for FY 2007. Strong growth in transit ridership and the continued expansion of transit service significantly increased the number of transit passenger miles traveled in FY 2007 over FY 2006. At the same time, using nine months of data from FTA's National Transit Database and six months of Commuter Rail (CR) data from the FRA Rail Accident Incident Reporting System (RAIRS), FY 2007 safety figures come in well under the target rates for fatalities and injuries.

Performance Measure				
Transit fatalities per 100 million passenger-miles traveled.				
	2004	**2005**	**2006**	**2007**
Target	.487	.482	.477	.473
Actual	.467	.428	.344	.286 *
* Preliminary estimate				
Associated FY 2007 Funding – $ 5 million				

To sustain and improve gains made in safety performance, FTA continues to work collaboratively with the public, the transportation industry, State departments of transportation, and the research and engineering communities to develop new programs to target and address safety and security concerns. FTA's strategy to keep fatality and injury rates low, in spite of significant increases in passenger miles traveled, is to implement policies and activities (such as research, training, technical assistance, information dissemination, and oversight) that encourage transit decisions, practices, programs, and operations to reduce these statistics. FTA's policies address improving and maintaining the condition of the transit infrastructure (vehicles, track and facilities), which has an impact on overall system safety and performance, and to promote system safety in the planning and design of a transit system from its inception. This approach also includes promoting emergency preparedness procedures that enhance the speed and effectiveness of responses to accidents and incidents.

The impact on the riding public is a reduction in transit related fatalities, injuries and incidents, and a reduction in the cost and damage to the transit infrastructure due to transit accidents. There is greater public awareness of the safety of traveling by transit, which is one of the factors that may increase the attractiveness of transit as a mode of choice compared to other modes of transportation with higher accident and fatality rates.

FY 2008 Performance Forecast — DOT will meet the FY 2008 target.

In-Depth Accomplishments Promoting Transit Safety

AUDITING OF ALCOHOL AND DRUG TESTING PROGRAMS

FTA audits the drug and alcohol programs of its grantees and their contractors in order to detect and deter illicit drug use and alcohol misuse. Over 60 urban and non-urban transit agencies' drug and alcohol testing programs were extensively reviewed with on-site audits in 2007. It is estimated that the drug and alcohol testing program audits have led to the avoidance of 817 accidents, saved six lives and avoided 718 injuries during the period 1992 through 2002. Fatalities resulting from accidents in which transit employees have positive drug test results, dropped from three in 1995 (first year of mandatory testing) to one over the period of 1999 through 2004.

Pipeline Safety
FY 2007 Enacted Funds: $51 Million

While pipelines are by many measures the safest mode for transporting hazardous liquid and natural gas, their cargo is inherently dangerous. To address these hazards, the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) has designed and implemented a strong, risk-based, program for oversight of our Nation's pipeline infrastructure. This risk-based systems approach also helps provide secure and reliable transportation of our Nation's energy resources.

To reduce the risk to the public, PHMSA identifies and evaluates risks, develops and enforces standards, provides grants to assist States in support of their pipeline safety programs, educates operators and the public, sponsors research on promising technologies, and responds to accidents/incidents. States play a critical role in the national pipeline safety program, overseeing most intrastate pipeline infrastructure, including most of the Nation's natural gas distribution pipeline mileage. States face increasing resource and technical challenges as we expand the State role in assisting with new Integrity Management (IM) and other evolving requirements. The Pipeline, Inspection, Protection, Enforcement and Safety Act of 2006 (PIPES Act) recognized the challenge and calls for increased funding to help states meet new mandatory initiatives. We recognize the importance of a strong continued focus on targeting excavation or construction-related damage—the leading cause of pipeline incidents involving death or injury, especially in natural gas distribution systems where people work and live in closest proximity to pipelines.

The pipeline safety record is good and improving. The long-term trend shows a general decline in the number of total pipeline incidents. But beginning in 2003, PHMSA saw three successive years of increasing incidents. Ten percent of the incidents in 2005 were attributable to hurricanes Rita and Katrina. The number of serious incidents has declined by half over the past 20 years, with a record low of 34 in 2006. We believe this indicator provides a better overall measure of program performance and public impacts than total reported incidents.

2007 Results — Based on preliminary data, PHMSA projects 388 total pipeline incidents in 2007, which would miss the performance target for our goal by about seven percent. However, this estimate is still 20 percent below the high in 2005 (which was affected heavily by hurricanes) and within the range of normal annual variation in the measure. Data for 2004, 2005, and 2006 are revised slightly from earlier reports because operators have submitted new reports or amended old reports.

Performance Measure				
Number of incidents for natural gas and hazardous liquid pipelines.				
	2004	**2005**	**2006**	**2007**
Target	310	295	365	362
Actual	443 (r)	490	386 (r)	388 *
(r) Revised; * Preliminary estimate				
Associated FY 2007 Funding – $ 51 million				

FY 2008 Performance Forecast — PHMSA has revised its performance measure beginning in FY 2008 to track the number of serious incidents for natural gas and hazardous liquid pipelines. Serious incidents are defined as those incidents involving death or injury. We expect to meet our targets for serious incidents in 2007 and 2008.

In-Depth Accomplishments Promoting Pipeline Safety

With enactment of the PIPES Act, the Administration and Congress agreed on an ambitious agenda for PHMSA's Pipeline Safety Program, emphasizing improved safety and reliability, sharpening our focus and mitigating the risk to people. The PIPES Act reflects a strong endorsement of the agency's risk–based integrity management approach. Integrity management has been the core of the agency's approach over the past several years. PHMSA is near the end of the first cycle of integrity management implementation in the hazardous liquid and natural gas transmission pipeline systems. We attribute significant reductions we see in serious incidents to the early identification and repair of 55,000 defects that, without early detection, could have grown to failure and harmed the public.

The PIPES Act directed PHMSA to extend similar protections to people living in urban and suburban areas along the Nation's 1.7 million miles of distribution pipelines, where up to 80 percent of the human consequences from all pipeline failures occur. PHMSA is issuing a notice of proposed rulemaking that will require operators of natural gas distribution systems to implement integrity management programs. In addition to safety benefits, improving the performance of distribution pipelines will also reduce the likelihood of failures that often result in congestion-causing road closures and evacuations.

PHMSA works to target excavation-related damage and other pipeline risks through effective, non-regulatory approaches. In FY 2007, we partnered with stakeholders to launch "811" as the national number to call before digging. This program will help reduce excavation damage to pipelines, increase regional partnerships, and support enforcement of call-before-you-dig requirements. We also are targeting high-risk or poor-performing operators, working closely with senior management to assist these companies in addressing safety concerns.

Hazardous Materials Safety
FY 2007 Enacted Funds: $103 Million

The Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) leads the national program to identify and evaluate safety risks, develop and enforce standards for transporting hazardous materials, educate shippers and carriers, investigate hazardous materials incidents, conduct research, and provide grants to improve emergency response to incidents. To accomplish its safety goals, PHMSA works with other DOT Operating Administrations to help them administer their hazmat safety programs effectively.

PHMSA employs an enterprise approach to leverage its limited resources with others in the hazmat community, including industry, first responders, other modal hazmat enforcement programs, and state and local emergency preparedness agencies. We build on existing local and state programs by providing funding for emergency preparedness planning and training in order to identify threats specific to a locality and to train first responders to handle incidents resulting from those threats. In addition to enhancing safety, effective response also reduces congestion by enabling highways, railroads and airports to resume normal operation in a minimum amount of time.

PHMSA focuses its safety program on those materials that present the most significant risks to public safety. Our efforts are geared toward preventing high consequence events from occurring, and mitigating those consequences when they do occur.

2007 Results — The Department expects to achieve its serious incident target this year. During 2007, PHMSA invested heavily in information systems that will allow modes to share company specific compliance information, to better identify high-risk hazmat carriers and shippers and plan interventions to limit those risks. PHMSA shares authority to enforce the hazardous materials regulations with other DOT modes—the Federal Aviation Administration, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration and the Federal Railroad Administration—as well as the US Coast Guard.

Performance Measure				
Number of serious hazardous materials transportation incidents.				
	2004	**2005**	**2006**	**2007**
Target	509	503	460	466
Actual	492 (r)	530 (r)	494 (r)	455 *
(r) Revised; * Preliminary estimate				
Associated FY 2007 Funding – $ 103 million				

FY 2008 Performance Forecast — Based on previous years' performance, DOT expects to achieve its target for serious hazardous materials incidents in 2008. During FY 2008, PHMSA will fine-tune its risk-based decision support model. We will also accelerate our collaboration with Federal, State and local government entities, as well as non-profit emergency response organizations, to enhance safety and reduce non-recurrent congestion.

In-Depth Accomplishments Promoting Hazmat Safety

In response to a series of incidents involving over-heated batteries carried by airline passengers, we have pursued a comprehensive, multi-layered strategy to address the transportation risks presented by lithium batteries, working with representatives of the NTSB, the Consumer Product Safety Commission, manufacturers of lithium batteries and battery-powered products, airlines, airline employee organizations, testing laboratories, and the emergency response and law enforcement communities to share and disseminate information about battery-related risks and developments and to promote improvements in industry standards and best practices. We developed an aggressive campaign to educate the public about ways to safely travel with batteries and battery-powered equipment. We are leading the development of international transportation standards for lithium batteries.

To enhance the security of rail shipments of Toxic by Inhalation (TIH) materials, PHMSA and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) are working closely with the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) through cooperative efforts with rail shippers and carriers. DOT participates on TSA-led teams conducting rail corridor studies, which address vulnerabilities and mitigation strategies at specific locations. Based on data and information surfaced during the corridor studies, TSA, FRA, and PHMSA developed a series of voluntary security action items for implementation by rail carriers transporting TIH materials. As a part of these voluntary measures, the industry has agreed to: (1) reduce the number of hours TIH cars and trains are held in high threat urban areas; (2) enhance chain-of-custody requirements for TIH rail cars; (3) identify secure storage areas for TIH cars; and (4) limit the movement of TIH cars near public venues.

Hazmat personnel and Union Pacific Railroad workers inspect several tanker cars that derailed and overturned Sunday, Oct. 22, 2006 in downtown Gurdon, Arkansas. The derailment caused the evacuation of at least 50 residents. No injuries have been reported. (AP Photo/Steve Fellers)

On December 21, 2006, in collaboration with FRA and TSA, PHMSA published a rulemaking proposal to enhance the safety and security of rail shipments of certain high-risk hazardous materials. The proposal incorporates a risk-based, data-driven approach, requiring rail carriers to conduct and base routing decisions on individualized, route-specific assessments.

To mitigate the consequence of hazmat incidents, PHMSA developed and has maintained the Emergency Response Guidebook (ERG) for use by "first responders" – those public safety personnel first dispatched to the scene of a hazardous materials transportation incident, such as fire fighters, police, and emergency services personnel. The ERG provides first responders with a guide for initial actions to be taken in those critical first minutes after an incident to protect the public and to mitigate potential consequences. This year, PHMSA partnered with the National Library of Medicine to produce a pocket PC software version of the ERG that is available for download at no cost and which should greatly improve access to important safety information by those who need it most.