

Hazardous Materials Transportation Safety and Security Field Operational Test

The tragic events of September 11, 2001, and the more recent events of war with Iraq during the early spring of 2003, have resulted in a significant heightened level of concern by federal government officials and the transportation industry regarding the secure transportation of hazardous materials (HAZMAT). As a result, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration recently awarded a contract jointly funded by the U.S Department of Transportation's Intelligent Transportation Systems Joint Program Office to Battelle to test major technologies that that now exist that can offer solutions to minimize the security risks of hazardous materials (HAZMAT) transportation.

The field operational test will independently evaluate technologies to improve HAZMAT transportation security, safety and operational efficiency. The test will look at off-the-shelf technologies that enhance HAZMAT transport safety and security. These technologies will be tested across four distinct HAZMAT operational scenarios (Bulk Petroleum Transport, Less-than truckload transportation, Bulk petroleum transportation and Truckload explosives transportation). A cost-benefit analysis will be performed that considers the security, safety and operational efficiencies of the tested technologies. Consideration in the analysis will be given to both the benefits and costs to the private sector, but also to society as a whole resulting from increased safety and security. The information resulting from the test should assist motor carriers in their decisions to deploy technology applications that are most appropriate for their businesses.

For detail on the technologies being tested and other project details see <http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/safetyprogs/fot/index.htm>. For more detail see the executive summary of the technical evaluation plan posted at http://www.itsdocs.fhwa.dot.gov//JPODOCS/REPTS_TE//13844.html