

**U.S. Department of Transportation
Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration
Office of Hazardous Materials Enforcement**



**Lithium Batteries Program
April 2008**

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Lithium Batteries Program is established as set forth by the Director of Office of Hazardous Materials Enforcement (OHME) in order to strengthen the focus, enhance the expertise, and ensure the uniform application of inspection and oversight pertaining to the manufacture, testing and shipment of lithium batteries.

2.0 PURPOSE

This program is established in order to develop and implement standardized protocols and procedures and maximize outcomes of OHME's inspections and investigations conducted by the PHMSA OHME **Lithium Batteries Team (LBT)**.

3.0 MISSION STATEMENT

The team's mission is to protect the people, property, and environment from the risk inherent in transportation of lithium batteries by all modes of transportation. The LBT will accomplish this by inter-agency cooperation in the use of risk based approaches to identify high risk and high consequence battery shipments and by leveraging the available resources to ensure that noncompliant and/or unsafe industry practices are identified and rectified. The team will also develop coordination mechanisms to share the field observations and lessons learned among team members and enforcement staff. This includes methods to ensure PHH program offices are informed of adverse industry trends and practices, including OHME recommendations for regulatory or outreach changes as warranted.

4.0 SCOPE

In the past several years, the number of incidents involving lithium batteries has increased. Based on an analysis of the data patterns and trends and the increased awareness of the high consequence potential of such incidents, OHME implemented a team effort approach to assess and address the growing issues pertaining to transport of lithium batteries. The team consists of OHME's "resident experts" for the safe shipment of lithium batteries. Their developed expertise will be used to identify unsafe trends and practices. The goal of the team will be to recommend courses of actions, so that the risks stemming from these trends and practices will be reduced or eliminated.

5.0 OBJECTIVES

Carry out the functions of the PHMSA OHME National Business Strategy as it relates to the focus and prioritization on high risk/high consequence activities, particularly those pertaining to manufacture, testing and transportation of lithium batteries.

6.0 ROLES

a. Leadership

Director, OHME

- Will assign a Lithium Batteries Team lead from investigative staff.

Region Chiefs

- Supervision of the LBT leader will be the responsibility of the Region Chief for which the team leader reports in the duty station assigned.
- Each Region Chief will assign at least one Investigator to become a team member of the LBT.
- Provides direction, guidance, and enables implementation of LBT activities.
- Communicates and coordinates activities with other Region Chiefs.

b. Lithium Batteries Team Lead

- The duties of the team lead are to identify, coordinate, prioritize and communicate inspection and investigation activities with team members (direct such activities, when required), maintain and verify the Activity Log of all inspection activities (located on PHMSA's "SharePoint"), set national goals and priorities of the team, ensure that all team members are trained regarding the domestic and international regulations and ensure that team members provide briefs of activities as needed.
- The team lead will be responsible for directing the development of partnerships and be the primary point of contact with the modal agencies, other PHMSA offices and industry associations.
- Team lead will be responsible for collecting, consolidating, reviewing and submitting recommendations to all proposed rulemaking pertaining to transport of lithium batteries.
- Team lead will direct the team in coordinating with PHH-50 regarding outreach activities and materials needed to address trends and unsafe practices noted by the team members in the course of their activities.
- The team lead must also be capable of performing all duties required of team members.

c. Lithium Batteries Team Members

- The duties of the team members are to develop regional partnerships with Federal, State, and local enforcement agencies, and industry stakeholders.
- Each team member will ensure that the Regional Priority Lists identify the entities involved in manufacturing, shipping and importing of lithium batteries.
- Each team member must be thoroughly familiar with the current domestic and international regulatory requirements and be capable to lead and conduct inspections of lithium batteries manufacturers/assemblers, shippers and importers.
- Team members will respond to requests for investigative assistance from other agencies and will follow up on all lithium batteries complaints filed with OHME.
- Team members may be directed to represent OHME in meetings, conferences and work group activities.
- Team members will conduct timely reviews of all proposed rule makings pertaining to transport of lithium batteries and provide comments/recommendations to the team leader for consolidation.
- Team members are required by the 5th day of each month to update the Activity Log (located on PHMSA's "SharePoint"), to show all activities pertinent to the team's objectives (inspections/investigations conducted, meetings attended, reports submitted, non-compliance and/or issues discovered, recommendations, leads, etc.).
- Timely Situation Reports (SITREP) will be submitted, when appropriate, in accordance with **OHME Operation Guidance – Accident & Emergency Response & Investigation Policy - dated November 2007.**