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DOT Announces Action Plan for Transportation Infrastructure Relying on GPS

U.S. Transportation Secretary Norman Y. Mineta today announced that the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) will implement an action plan to maintain the adequacy of backup systems for each area of operation in which the Global Positioning System (GPS) is being used for critical transportation applications.

Today's announcement follows the department's review of a study assessing the vulnerability of the national transportation infrastructure that relies on GPS. The study, prepared by DOT's Volpe National Transportation Systems Center and released in September 2001, noted that GPS is susceptible to unintentional disruption from such causes as atmospheric effects, signal blockage from buildings, and interference from communications equipment, as well as to potential deliberate disruption. It contained a number of recommendations to address the possibility of disruption and ensure the safety of the national transportation infrastructure.

DOT's operating administrations have completed their assessments and concur with all of the report recommendations. The Secretary has formally endorsed the report, noting that safety-critical transportation applications that use GPS currently have adequate backups in case of GPS disruptions. Secretary Mineta added that future actions will be necessary to build redundancy into critical transportation systems under development and ensure essential radionavigation services continue.

"Immediately following the report's release, I directed DOT's operating administrations to assess the adequacy of backup systems for each area of operation in which GPS is being used for vital transportation functions," Secretary Mineta said. "The action plan we are announcing today will ensure that the vulnerabilities identified in the report do not affect the safety and security of our transportation system as we work to ensure that GPS fulfills its potential as a key element of the nation's transportation infrastructure."

Based on the report recommendations, the department will implement an action plan to include the following initiatives for maintaining the viability of the transportation infrastructure:

- Ensure that adequate backup systems are maintained.
- Maintain the partnership with the Department of Defense to continue modernizing GPS with the implementation of new civil signals.
- Facilitate transfer of appropriate anti-jam technology from the military for civil use.
- Conduct industry outreach to develop receiver performance standards.
- Emphasize and promote education programs with state and local departments of transportation that advise users about GPS vulnerabilities.
- Complete an assessment of radionavigation capabilities across all the modes of transportation to identify the most appropriate mix of systems, from both a capabilities and cost perspective, for the next 10 years and beyond. This will include completing the evaluation of the long-term need for the continuation of the Loran-C.

The DOT Positioning/Navigation Executive Committee will oversee the implementation of the report recommendations and the associated work plan over the next year. Implementation of the report recommendations will be integrated into future editions of the Federal Radionavigation Plan.

The Volpe report, *Vulnerability Assessment of the Transportation Infrastructure Relying on the Global Positioning System*, is available through the Coast Guard Navigation Center website at <http://www.navcen.uscg.gov>. Comments may be submitted via e-mail to: GPSInfo@ost.dot.gov.

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