Memorandum

Subject: <u>INFORMATION</u>: Audit Announcement—
Highway Safety Grants to Mississippi Department of
Public Safety, Office of Highway Safety
Project No. 11M3004M000

Date: May 27, 2011

From: Joseph W. Comé
Assistant Inspector General
for Highway and Transit Audits

Reply to Attn. of: JA-40

To: National Highway Traffic Safety Administrator

Over the past 4 years, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) provided more than $57 million in highway safety grants to the State of Mississippi, Department of Public Safety, Office of Highway Safety (MOHS). In December 2009, after conducting a management review, NHTSA reported that MOHS had not complied with Federal grant requirements and required that MOHS take corrective actions to address compliance issues and improve management of Federal funds. In January 2011, NHTSA placed Mississippi's Highway Safety Program on its "high risk" list as provided in Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments. Mississippi is the only state NHTSA designated as high risk.

Following up on NHTSA's concerns, OIG is initiating an audit of MOHS's management of highway safety grants. Our audit objectives are to (1) determine whether MOHS has sufficient management controls to ensure its compliance with Federal grant requirements and proper expenditure of Federal grant funds and (2) assess NHTSA's actions designed to ensure MOHS's compliance with Federal grant requirements.

We plan to begin our audit immediately, and conduct it at NHTSA's regional office in Fort Worth, Texas; the MOHS office in Jackson, Mississippi; and other locations. We will contact your audit liaison to schedule an entrance conference. If I can answer any questions or be of further assistance, please contact me at (202) 366-5630 or Kerry R. Barras, Program Director, at (817) 978-3318.

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cc: Audit Liaison, NHTSA
Martin Gertel, OST