

available for inspection and copying in the Commission's Public Reference Section, 450 Fifth Street, NW, Washington, DC 20549. Copies of such filing will also be available for inspection and copying at the principal office of the Exchange. All submissions should refer to File No. SR-Phlx-98-46 and should be submitted by January 28, 1999.

For the Commission, by the Division of Market Regulation, pursuant to delegated authority.<sup>6</sup>

**Margaret H. McFarland,**

*Deputy Secretary.*

[FR Doc. 99-300 Filed 1-6-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8010-01-M

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

#### Discretionary Incentive Grants To Support Increased Seat Belt Use Rates

**AGENCY:** National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, DOT.

**ACTION:** Announcement of discretionary grants to support innovative seat belt projects designed to increase seat belt use rates.

**SUMMARY:** The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) announces a discretionary grant program under Section 1403 of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century to provide funding to States for innovative projects to increase seat belt use rates. The goal of this program is to increase seat belt use to a high level in States across the nation in order to reduce the deaths, injuries, and societal costs that result from motor vehicle crashes. This notice solicits applications from the States, through their Governors' Representatives for Highway Safety, for funds to be made available in fiscal year 2000.

**DATES:** Applications must be submitted to the office designated below on or before April 7, 1999.

**ADDRESSES:** Applications must be submitted to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Office of Contracts and Procurement (NAD-30), ATTN: Amy Poling, 400 7th Street, SW, Room 5301, Washington, DC 20590. All applications submitted must include a reference to NHTSA Grant Program No. DTNH22-99-G-05050.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** General administrative questions may be directed to Amy Poling, Office of

Contracts and Procurement at (202) 366-9552. Programmatic questions relating to this grant program should be directed to Phil Gulak, Occupant Protection Division (NTS-12), NHTSA, 400 7th Street, SW, Room 5118, Washington, DC 20590, by e-mail at pgulak@nhtsa.dot.gov, or by phone at (202) 366-2725. Interested applicants are advised that no separate application package exists beyond the contents of this announcement.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### Background

On June 9, 1998, Congress enacted the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21). Section 1403 of TEA-21 contains a new safety incentive grant program for use of seat belts. Under this program, funds are allocated each fiscal year from 1999 until 2003 to States that exceed the national average seat belt use rate or that improve their State seat belt use rate, based on certain required determinations and findings. Beginning in fiscal year 2000, any funds remaining unallocated in a fiscal year after the determinations and findings related to seat belt use rates are to be used to "make allocations to States to carry out innovative projects to promote increased seat belt use rates." Today's notice solicits applications for funds that will become available in fiscal year 2000 under this latter provision.

TEA-21 imposes several requirements under the innovative projects funding provision. Specifically, in order to be eligible to receive an allocation, a State must develop a plan for innovative projects to promote increased seat belt use rates and submit the plan to the Secretary of Transportation (by delegation, to NHTSA) by March 1. (TEA-21 contemplated issuance of this guidance by December 1, 1998, which would have allowed the States 90 days for submission of plans by March 1, 1999. In order to afford the States the full 90-day period, NHTSA will accept applications until April 7, 1999. NHTSA is directed to establish criteria governing the selection of State plans that are to receive allocations and is further directed to "ensure, to the maximum extent practicable, demographic and geographic diversity and a diversity of seat belt use rates among the States selected for allocations." Finally, subject to the availability of funds, TEA-21 provides that the amount of each grant under a State plan is to be not less than \$100,000.

In the following sections, the agency describes the application and award procedures for receipt of funds under this provision, including requirements

related to the contents of a State's plan for innovative projects and the criteria the agency will use to evaluate State plans and make selections for award. In order to assist the States in formulating plans that meet these criteria, we have provided an extensive discussion of strategies for increasing seat belt use and of the ways in which States might demonstrate innovation.

#### Objective of This Grant Program

Seat belts, when properly used, are 45 percent effective in preventing deaths in potentially fatal crashes and 50 percent effective in preventing serious injuries. No other safety device has as much potential for immediately preventing deaths and injuries in motor vehicle crashes. The current level of seat belt use across the nation prevents more than 9,500 deaths and well over 200,000 injuries annually. Through 1997, more than 100,000 deaths and an estimated 2.5 million serious injuries have been prevented by seat belt use.

But, seat belt use rates and the resulting savings could be much greater. As of 1998, the average use rate among States in the U.S. is still well below the goal of 85 percent announced by the President for the year 2000 and at least a dozen States have use rates below 60 percent. On the other hand, use rates of 85-95 percent are a reality in most developed nations with seat belt use laws, and at least six U.S. States and the District of Columbia achieved use rates greater than 80 percent in 1998. A national use rate of 90 percent (the President's goal for 2005), among front seat occupants of all passenger vehicles, would result in the prevention of an additional 5,500 deaths and 130,000 serious injuries annually. This would translate into a \$9 billion reduction in societal costs, including \$356 million for Medicare and Medicaid.

The objective of this grant program is to increase seat belt use rates, for both adults and children, by supporting the implementation of innovative projects that build upon strategies known to be effective in increasing seat belt use rates. Because one of the best ways to ensure that children develop a habit of buckling up is for parents to properly restrain them in child safety seats, efforts to increase the use of child safety seats may be included among the innovative efforts in a State's plan.

Recent seat belt use increases in California, North Carolina, Louisiana, Georgia, Maryland, and the District of Columbia (see discussion in next section), as well as increases following national mobilizations (Operation ABC, conducted in May and November of 1998), have demonstrated the

<sup>6</sup> 17 CFR 200.30(a)(12).

tremendous potential of highly visible enforcement of strong laws to increase seat belt and child seat use. Given the dramatic results of these programs, NHTSA believes that highly visible enforcement is an important foundation upon which any effective program should be based. An extensive review of the efforts in both the United States and Canada demonstrates that, without a core of highly visible enforcement efforts, high usage rates have not been achieved in any major jurisdiction. (Some of that literature is reviewed in the next section.)

In view of these findings, to be considered for award of funds under this program, the State's innovative project plan should be based on a core component of highly visible enforcement of its seat belt use law. Other components of the plan should support the core enforcement component. If a State is already pursuing a significant and visible enforcement effort, the innovative project plan should detail components that support, expand, or complement the existing enforcement effort. States submitting an innovative project plan with a core component (and supporting components) based on an approach other than enforcement should provide a strong rationale for the proposed approach, preferably accompanied by research evidence, demonstrating the significant potential for increasing seat belt use across the State. NHTSA will carefully consider this rationale in its evaluation of the proposal.

#### **Strategies That Have Proven To Be Effective in Increasing Seat Belt Use**

The history of efforts to increase seat belt use in the U.S. and in Canada suggests that highly visible enforcement of a strong seat belt law must be at the core of any effective program. No State has ever achieved a high seat belt use rate without such a component. Most States that have achieved rates greater than 70 percent have also had laws that allow for primary (standard) enforcement procedures.

Canada currently has a national seat belt use rate well above 90 percent. Nearly every province first attempted to increase seat belt use through voluntary approaches involving public information and education. These efforts were effective in achieving only very modest usage rates (no higher than 30 percent). Even the enactment of primary enforcement seat belt laws, without intense and highly visible enforcement, generally was not sufficient to achieve usage rates greater than 60–65 percent. By 1985, it became clear to Canadian and provincial

officials that additional efforts would be needed to achieve levels of 80 percent or greater. These efforts, mounted from 1985 through 1995, centered around highly publicized "waves" of enforcement, a technique that had already been shown to increase seat belt use in Elmira, New York. When these procedures were implemented in the Canadian provinces, seat belt use generally increased from about 60 percent to well over 80 percent, within a period of 3–5 years.

The U.S. experience has been similar. Prior to 1980, many attempts were made to increase seat belt use through voluntary, persuasive, or educational methods. Most of these efforts were initiated at local, county, or state levels. Nationally, seat belt use remained very low, reaching only about 11 percent. From 1980–1984, efforts to increase seat belt use emphasized networking with various public and private groups to implement public education programs, incentives, and seat belt use policies. While there were some small gains documented in individual organizations, these efforts did not result in any significant increases in seat belt use in any large city or in any State. By the end of 1984, the national usage rate, as measured by a 19-city observational survey, was only about 15 percent.

In 1984, New York enacted the first mandatory seat belt use law and, from 1985 to 1990, at least 37 other States enacted such laws. Most of these laws were secondary enforcement laws that required an officer to observe another traffic violation before stopping and citing a driver for failure to wear a seat belt. During this period of time, the 19-city index of seat belt use increased from about 15 percent to nearly 50 percent. However, as was the case in Canada, the enactment of laws, by itself, was not sufficient to achieve high usage rates.

The Canadian successes using periodic, highly visible "waves" of enforcement, as well as scores of such efforts implemented in local jurisdictions in the U.S., prompted NHTSA to implement *Operation Buckle Down* (also called the "70 by '92" Program) in 1991. This two-year program focused on Special Traffic Enforcement Programs (STEPs) to increase seat belt use. It was followed by a national usage rate increase from about 53 percent in 1990 to 62 percent by the end of 1992 (as measured by a weighted aggregate of State surveys). Neither the level of enforcement nor its public visibility was uniform in every State. Had these "waves" of enforcement been implemented in a

more uniform fashion in every state, the impact would likely have been much greater.

In order to demonstrate the potential of periodic, highly visible enforcement in a more controlled environment, the State of North Carolina implemented its *Click-It or Ticket* program in 1993. In this program, waves of coordinated and highly publicized enforcement efforts (i.e., checkpoints) were implemented in every county. As a result, seat belt use increased statewide, from 65 percent to over 80 percent, in just a few months. This program provided the clearest possible evidence to demonstrate the potential of highly visible enforcement to increase seat belt use in a large jurisdiction (i.e., an entire State).

On the west coast, the State of California expended much effort over the years to enforce its secondary enforcement law. These efforts were successful in increasing the statewide usage rate to about 70 percent, where it plateaued. In 1993, California became the first state to upgrade its seat belt law from secondary to primary enforcement. As a result, the rate of seat belt usage increased by 13 percentage points (from 70 percent to 83 percent) in the first year after the law was upgraded.

The California success was a major factor in rekindling interest among safety officials to upgrade their secondary enforcement laws as a way to increase seat belt use. In 1995, Louisiana became the second State to upgrade from secondary to primary enforcement. As a result, it experienced an 18 percentage point increase (from 50 percent to 68 percent) over the next two years. Next, Georgia upgraded its law and experienced a 15 percentage point increase (from 53 percent to 68 percent). After mounting a highly visible enforcement effort in 1998 (Operation Strap 'N Snap), Georgia's usage increased by another 10 percentage points. Similarly, Maryland upgraded its seat belt law in 1997, immediately mounted a two-month enforcement effort, and experienced a 13 percentage point increase in usage. Most recently, the District of Columbia reported a 24 percentage point gain in usage (from 58% to 82%) after enacting one of the strongest seat belt use laws in the nation and implementing several waves of highly visible enforcement. Taken together, the experiences of North Carolina, California, Louisiana, Georgia, Maryland and the District of Columbia have clearly demonstrated that highly visible enforcement of strong laws has tremendous potential for increasing seat belt use rates.

Visible enforcement of strong laws also appears to be an essential

component of any effective program to increase the use of child safety seats. This is important since, as previously discussed, early use of child safety seats contributes to the later use of seat belts by children and young adults. The relationship between child safety seat use and seat belt use works in the opposite direction as well. Studies conducted in several States have found that child safety seat use is nearly three times as high when a driver is buckled up as when a driver is not buckled up. Thus, efforts to persuade adults to buckle up may be the single most important way to get young children protected. However, with child safety seats, correct use is a major concern and the training of police officers, parents, and advocates is needed to minimize incorrect use and to ensure age-appropriate graduation to seat belts among young children who have outgrown safety seats. Clearly, efforts to increase the use of seat belts and child safety seats are interdependent and complementary.

Prior to the 1977 passage of the Child Passenger Safety (CPS) law in Tennessee, very little progress was made to get young children buckled up. Nationally, child safety seat use was less than 15 percent at the time. However, the Tennessee law was followed by the enactment of primary enforcement CPS laws in all States by 1985. This wave of legislation resulted in a major increase in child restraint use. By 1990, usage was estimated to be above 80 percent for infants and about 60 percent for toddlers.

Unfortunately, problems such as child seat misuse, premature graduation to seat belt use, and variation in age coverage continue to exist. The most recent issue to emerge has been the potential danger posed by passenger side air bags to unrestrained and improperly restrained children. This has led to a new emphasis on programs to increase the proper use of child restraint seats and revitalized law enforcement efforts in this area.

#### **Obstacles to Increasing Seat Belt Use**

Over the years, all of the States and many public and private sector organizations have been active participants in efforts to increase seat belt use. Public information and education efforts have been the dominant programs funded over the past two decades. Many States have identified major obstacles to enacting primary seat belt laws or implementing highly visible enforcement programs, even though such programs have been shown to result in high usage rates. Most frequently, State (and local)

officials have identified a lack of resources for law enforcement as the single greatest barrier to implementing more intense, highly visible enforcement efforts. This lack of resources extends to funding, human resources, and public information support to conduct such campaigns. Over the past five years, many officials have indicated that, if they had the kind of resources provided to States like North Carolina for the *Click It or Ticket* program, they too would be able to mount similar programs and achieve similar results. The significant amount of funding likely to become available under this grant program, combined with the additional new resources available under other TEA-21 programs, should drastically reduce this obstacle.

The second most frequently mentioned obstacle to mounting highly visible enforcement programs is a lack of support from key State and local leaders. Experience with the national mobilizations (Operation ABC) and with jurisdictions such as North Carolina, Georgia, Maryland and the District of Columbia suggest that this obstacle can be overcome to a significant degree by proactive efforts to gain the understanding, support and endorsement of various public and private organizations. Including a broad spectrum of such organizations as coalition members in the State's occupant protection program can be very effective in obtaining the commitment of key persons (e.g., the governor) and in gaining the support that is essential for sustained, highly visible enforcement efforts. Much innovation can be demonstrated in the way of developing public and official support for strong enforcement efforts.

Another obstacle frequently voiced by State and local enforcement officials is a lack of judicial and prosecutorial support for the enforcement of seat belt and child passenger safety laws. It has frequently been pointed out that an enforcement program can be undermined quickly if prosecutors fail to prosecute seat belt and child safety seat citations and judges repeatedly dismiss such cases. This can be overcome to some extent by educating prosecutors and judges across the State and urging them to value occupant protection laws as highly as any other traffic safety law.

#### **Buckle Up America Campaign**

In October 1997, the *Buckle Up America* (BUA) Campaign established ambitious national goals: (a) To increase seat belt use to 85 percent and reduce child-related fatalities (0-4 years) by 15 percent by the year 2000; and (b) to

increase seat belt use to 90 percent and reduce child-related fatalities by 25 percent by the year 2005. This Campaign advocates a four part strategy: (1) Building public-private partnerships; (2) enacting strong legislation; (3) maintaining high visibility law enforcement; (4) and conducting effective public education. Central to this Campaign's success is the encouragement of primary seat belt use laws and the implementation of two major enforcement mobilizations each year (Memorial Day and Thanksgiving holidays). During the 1998 mobilizations conducted throughout the week surrounding Memorial Day and the week surrounding Thanksgiving, between 4,000 and 5,000 law enforcement agencies participated in Operation ABC. Their efforts were covered by several hundred national and local television organizations in all major media markets. More than 1,500 print articles were written in response to each mobilization. As a result of the May mobilization, seat belt use increased significantly nationwide as more than 6,000,000 motorists were convinced to buckle up. Since that time, seat belt use has continued to increase significantly. The BUA Campaign and the efforts of the Air Bag and Seat Belt Safety Campaign (including Operation ABC) provide a useful framework for the implementation of this grant program. They provide a blueprint for projects that States may wish to implement, using funds to be made available in accordance with this notice. Conversely, this grant program provides an unprecedented opportunity to achieve the ambitious goals established under the BUA Campaign.

#### **Examples of Effective Innovative Strategies**

A State may demonstrate innovation in its enforcement efforts in a number of ways. If a State is not currently engaged in any form of highly visible enforcement of its occupant protection laws, implementation of such a program, in and of itself, would be innovative to that State. Additionally, innovation may be demonstrated in gaining essential support, implementing statewide training programs, and planning the logistics for wide scale enforcement and public information activities. For States that already are engaged in substantial enforcement efforts, innovation can be demonstrated by expanding these efforts. This might include finding more effective ways to reach rural, urban, or diverse groups with public information messages designed to address the problem of low seat belt use among those groups. States

that have upgraded their laws recently to allow for primary enforcement may wish to initiate innovative ways to implement, enforce, and publicize their newly enacted legislation. For States with secondary enforcement laws, where a motorist must be stopped for another offense before being cited for failure to buckle up, innovation may be demonstrated by integrating the enforcement of the seat belt law with enforcement of another traffic safety law (e.g., an alcohol impaired driving law). Many opportunities for innovation exist, regardless of the State's current seat belt use rate or its ongoing efforts to increase it.

Following are some examples of innovative activities in support of a core component of enforcement:

- Initiate, or expand in novel ways, the operation of existing State or local enforcement-related campaigns;
- Implement highly visible seat belt and child safety seat enforcement efforts in major urban areas, in rural areas, or throughout the State;
- Expand participation across the State in semi-annual national seat belt enforcement mobilizations (i.e., *Operation ABC* conducted in May and November);
- Plan and support statewide efforts to train and motivate law enforcement officers, prosecutors and judges to consistently enforce, prosecute and adjudicate occupant protection law violations;
- Mount a highly visible program to implement newly enacted legislation which upgrades the State's seat belt or child passenger safety law;
- Initiate or expand public information and education programs designed to complement newly upgraded legislation and/or enhanced statewide enforcement efforts;
- Establish new partnerships and coalitions to support ongoing implementation of legislation or enforcement efforts (e.g., health care and medical groups, partnerships with diverse groups, businesses and employers);
- Initiate or expand public awareness campaigns targeted to specific populations that have low seat belt use (e.g., part-time users; parents of children 0–15 years old; minority populations, including Native Americans; rural communities; males 15–24 years old; occupants of light trucks and sport utility vehicles);
- Implement a statewide program to train law enforcement personnel on the importance of seat belt use, the specifics of the State's seat belt use law, and the importance of enforcing such law to increase usage rates;

—Initiate or expand standardized child passenger safety training of police officers and/or child passenger safety checks and/or clinics across broad geographical areas (e.g., statewide, in major metropolitan areas, in rural areas of the State);

—Initiate, or expand in novel ways, campaigns which use enforcement of other traffic laws (e.g., driving while intoxicated laws) as a means for implementing highly visible enforcement of seat belt use laws.

If a State wishes to submit a plan proposing a core component other than enforcement, it should demonstrate innovation by proposing to perform similar supporting activities. The State should demonstrate that these activities have the potential to increase seat belt use across the State.

#### **NHTSA Involvement**

In support of the activities undertaken under this grant program, NHTSA will:

1. Provide a Contracting Officer's Technical Representative (COTR) to coordinate activities between the Grantee and NHTSA during grant performance.
2. Provide information and technical assistance from government sources within available resources and as determined appropriate by the COTR.
3. The COTR will serve as a liaison between NHTSA Headquarters, NHTSA Regional Offices and the grantee.

#### **Availability of Funds and Period of Support**

The efforts solicited in this announcement will be supported through the award of grants to a number of States, on the basis of the evaluation criteria identified below. The number of grants awarded will depend upon the merits of the applications received, the amount of funds available in fiscal year 2000, and the size of the grants awarded to individual States. The total amount of funds to be made available is not known at this time, as it is dependent upon appropriations by the Congress and the amount of allocations to States based on State seat belt use rates achieved (see discussion in Background section, above). However, the agency estimates that in excess of \$20 million might become available for this program in fiscal year 2000.

In accordance with TEA-21, the minimum amount of an individual grant award to a State will be \$100,000, subject to the availability of funds. However, NHTSA may make individual awards in amounts greater than \$100,000, subject to the availability of funds and consistent with the merits of a State's application. For example, a

State may choose to submit an innovative project plan detailing ambitious activities for the upcoming year that require a significant commitment of resources during that year. Alternatively, a State may describe a comprehensive effort that is resource-intensive because the activities will take place over the course of several years. (This latter multi-year approach is permissible because TEA-21 provides that funds awarded to a State under this program are available for obligation in the State for a period of three years beyond the fiscal year during which the funds are awarded.) In either case, NHTSA may decide, subject to the availability of funds and consistent with the merits of the State's application, to award an amount of funds greater than \$100,000 to a State. Consequently, States desiring to implement ambitious innovative project plans requiring a significant commitment of resources for a single year or a multi-year period of performance (up to four years, until the end of fiscal year 2003) are encouraged to do so, provided the necessary budget information is provided to support such a plan. In making award determinations, NHTSA may choose to fund portions of a plan (e.g., some but not all activities within a plan or some but not all years of a multi-year plan) or to reject a plan, after review in accordance with the evaluation criteria. There is no cost-sharing requirement under this program.

#### **Allowable Uses of Federal Funds**

Allowable uses of Federal funds shall be governed by the relevant allowable cost section and cost principles referenced in 49 CFR Part 18—Department of Transportation Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreement to State and Local Governments. Funds provided to a State under this grant program shall be used to carry out the activities described in the State's plan for which the grant is awarded.

#### **Eligibility Requirements**

Only the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico, through their Governors' Representatives for Highway Safety, will be considered eligible to receive a grant under this program.

#### **Application Procedures**

Each applicant must submit one original and two copies of the application package to: NHTSA, Office of Contracts and Procurement (NAD-30), ATTN: Amy Poling, 400 7th Street, SW, Room 5301, Washington, DC 20590. An additional three copies will facilitate the review process, but are not required.

Applications must be typed on one side of the page only. Applications must include a reference to NHTSA Grant Program No. DTNH22-99-G-05050. Only complete application packages submitted by a State's Governor's Representative for Highway Safety on or before April 7, 1999 will be considered.

### Application Contents

1. The application package must be submitted with OMB Standard Form 424, (Rev. 7-97 or 4-88, including 424A and 424B), Application for Federal Assistance, with the required information provided and the certified assurances included. While the Form 424-A deals with budget information, and section B identifies Budget Categories, the available space does not permit a level of detail which is sufficient to provide for a meaningful evaluation of the proposed costs. A supplemental sheet should be provided which presents a detailed breakdown of the proposed costs (direct labor, including labor category, level of effort, and rate; direct materials, including itemized equipment; travel and transportation, including projected trips and number of people traveling; subcontracts/subgrants, with similar detail, if known; and overhead), as well as any costs the applicant proposes to contribute or obtain from other sources in support of the projects in the innovative project plan. Where a multi-year effort is proposed, the estimated costs should be separated and proposed on the basis of individual Federal fiscal years, i.e., beginning October 1, 1999 through September 30, 2000; October 1, 2000 through September 30, 2001; etc.

2. Applications shall include a State plan detailing innovative projects to increase seat belt use rates. The State plan must provide the following information:

a. An *Introduction* section with a brief general description of the State's population density, any unique diversity characteristics, a short summary of the status of seat belt/child safety seat legislation in the State, and the pattern of estimated seat belt/child safety seat use rates for the State.

b. A *Discussion* section that presents the principal goals and objectives of the proposed plan and articulates the potential to increase seat belt use rates, with supporting rationale. This section should also identify any proposed partnerships, coalitions, or leveraging of resources that will be employed as a means to implement integrated key enforcement, public information, or educational activities. Any known barriers to implementation of the State's plan should be identified, with a

discussion of how such barriers will be overcome. Relevant data based on planning studies should be included or footnoted. Supporting documentation from concerned interests other than the applicant may be included.

Documentation of existing public and/or political support may be included (e.g. endorsement of the Governor, State Police or Patrol, State Association of Chiefs of Police, State Medical Society, etc).

c. A *Project Description* section, with a detailed description of the innovative projects to be undertaken by the State under the plan, including, for each activity:

(1) The key strategies to be employed to achieve a significant use rate increase across the State (e.g., enforcement, public information and education, training, incentive/reward efforts);

(2) The innovative features (e.g. new participants, expanded efforts, unique resources, design or technological innovations, reductions in cost or time, integration with existing State efforts, extraordinary community involvement); and

(3) A work plan listing milestones in chronological order to show the schedule of accomplishments and their target dates.

d. A *Personnel* section, which identifies the proposed program manager, key personnel and other proposed personnel considered critical to the successful accomplishment of the activities under the State's plan. A brief description of their qualifications and respective responsibilities shall be included. The proposed level of their effort and contributions to the various activities in the plan shall also be identified. Each organization, corporation, or consultant who will work on the innovative project plan shall be identified, along with a short description of the nature of the effort or contribution and relevant experience.

e. An *Evaluation* section, with a description of how the State will evaluate and measure the outcomes of the activities in its innovative project plan. This section should describe the methods for assessing actual results achieved under the plan. Outcomes can be documented in a number of ways. Increases in observed seat belt and child safety seat use provide the ultimate measure of success. However, intermediate measures also may be used to measure progress. These measures may include: (i) increases in the number of law enforcement personnel trained to enforce occupant protection laws; (ii) increased statewide participation in semi-annual enforcement mobilizations (Operation ABC); (iii) increased public

perception of ongoing enforcement and public education activities; (iv) increased numbers of public and private sector partners involved in implementing the statewide programs; (v) incentive programs to complement enforcement efforts; or (vi) extent of integration of occupant protection enforcement activities with other State enforcement activities. Data sources should be identified and collection and analysis approaches should be described.

### Application Review Procedures and Evaluation Criteria

Initially, all applications will be reviewed to confirm that the applicant is an eligible recipient and to assure that the application contains all of the information required by the Application Contents section of the notice. Each complete application from an eligible recipient then will be evaluated by an Evaluation Committee. The applications will be evaluated using the following criteria, which are listed in descending order of importance:

1. The goal(s) the State proposes to achieve, as described in its innovative project plan, the overall soundness and feasibility of the plan for achieving the goal(s), and the potential effectiveness of the proposed activities in the plan for increasing seat belt use. The extent to which the plan details a significant and comprehensive enforcement effort or, where another approach is selected, provides evidence supporting the effectiveness of the proposed approach will be considered.

2. The organizational resources the State will draw upon, and how the State will provide the program management capability and personnel expertise to successfully perform the activities in its innovative project plan. The adequacy of the proposed personnel (including subcontractor and subgrantee personnel) to successfully perform the proposed activities, including qualifications and experience, the various disciplines represented and the relative level of effort proposed for the professional, technical and support staff, will be considered.

Depending upon the results of the evaluation process, NHTSA may suggest revisions to applications as a condition of further consideration to ensure the most efficient and effective performance consistent with the objectives of achieving increased seat belt use.

### Special Award Selection Factors

After evaluating all applications received, in the event that insufficient funds are available to award all

requested amounts to all meritorious applicants, NHTSA may consider the following special award factors in the award decision:

1. Every effort will be made to provide grants to a diverse group of States representing a broad range of geographic, demographic, and use rate characteristics. Thus, preference may be given to an applicant which fits the need for such diversity.

2. Preference may be given to an applicant on the basis that its application is effectively integrated and coordinated with other ongoing efforts in the State, resulting in additional opportunity for immediately increasing usage rates. This could include proposed cost-sharing strategies, and/or the use of other federal, State, local and private funding sources to complement those available under this announcement.

#### Terms and Conditions of the Award

1. Prior to award, each grantee must comply with the certification requirements of 49 CFR Part 20, Department of Transportation New Restrictions on Lobbying, and 49 CFR Part 29, Department of Transportation Government-wide Debarment and Suspension (Non-procurement) and Government-wide Requirements for Drug Free Workplace (Grants).

2. Reporting Requirements and Deliverables:

a. Quarterly Progress Reports should include a summary of the previous quarter's activities and accomplishments, as well as the proposed activities for the upcoming quarter. Any decisions and actions required in the upcoming quarter should be included in the report.

b. Draft Final Report: The grantee shall prepare a Draft Final Report that includes a description of the innovative projects conducted, including partners, overall program implementation, evaluation methodology and findings from the program evaluation. In terms of information transfer, it is important to know what worked and what did not work, under what circumstances, and what can be done to avoid potential problems in future projects. The grantee shall submit the Draft Final Report to the COTR 60 days prior to the end of the performance period. The COTR will review the draft report and provide comments to the grantee within 30 days of receipt of the document.

c. Final Report: The grantee shall revise the Draft Final Report to reflect the COTR's comments. The revised final report shall be delivered to the COTR 15 days before the end of the performance

period. The grantee shall supply the COTR:

—A camera ready version of the document as printed.

—A copy, on appropriate media (diskette, Syquest disk, etc.), of the document in the original program format that was used for the printing process.

**Note:** Some documents require several different original program languages (e.g., PageMaker was the program format for the general layout and design and Power point was used for charts and yet another was used for photographs, etc.). Each of these component parts should be available on disk, properly labeled with the program format and the file names. For example, Power point files should be clearly identified by both a descriptive name and file name (e.g., 1994 Fatalities—chart1.ppt).

—A complete version of the assembled document in portable document format (PDF) for placement of the report on the world wide web (WWW). This will be a file usually created with the Adobe Exchange program of the complete assembled document in the PDF format that will actually be placed on the WWW. The document would be completely assembled with all colors, charts, side bars, photographs, and graphics. This can be delivered to NHTSA on a standard 1.44 diskette (for small documents) or on any appropriate archival media (for large documents) such as a CD ROM, TR-1 Mini cartridge, Syquest disk, etc.

—Four additional hard copies of the final document.

3. During the effective performance period of grants awarded as a result of this announcement, the grant shall be subject to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's General Provisions for Assistance Agreements, dated July 1995.

Issued on: December 31, 1998.

**Susan G. McLaughlin,**

*Acting Associate Administrator for Traffic Safety Programs.*

[FR Doc. 99-268 Filed 1-6-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-59-P

## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Research and Special Programs Administration

[Docket No. RSPA-98-4034; Notice 15]

#### Pipeline Safety: Natural Gas Pipeline Company of America; Approved for Pipeline Risk Management Demonstration Program

**AGENCY:** Research and Special Programs Administration, Office of Pipeline Safety, DOT.

**ACTION:** Notice of risk demonstration project approval and finding of no significant impact.

**SUMMARY:** The Research and Special Programs Administration's (RSPA) Office of Pipeline Safety (OPS) has issued a Risk Management Demonstration Project Order authorizing Natural Gas Pipeline Company of America (NGPL) to participate in the Pipeline Risk Management Demonstration Program. OPS has also made a finding that NGPL's demonstration project will have no significant impacts on the environment.

**ADDRESSES:** Comments on this or any other demonstration project will be accepted in the Docket throughout the 4-year demonstration period. Comments should be sent to the Dockets Facility, U.S. Department of Transportation, Plaza 401, 400 Seventh Street, SW, Washington, DC 20590-0001, or you can E-Mail your comments to ops.comments@rspa.dot.gov. Comments should identify the docket number, RSPA-98-4034. Persons should submit the original comment document and one (1) copy. Persons wishing to receive confirmation of receipt of their comments must include a self-addressed stamped postcard. The Dockets Facility is located on the plaza level of the Nassif Building in Room 401, 400 Seventh Street, SW, Washington, DC. The Dockets Facility is open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on Federal holidays.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Elizabeth Callsen, OPS, (202) 366-4572, regarding the subject matter of this notice and environmental assessment. Contact the Dockets Unit, (202) 366-9322, for docket material. Comments may also be reviewed on line at the DOT Docket Management System website at <http://dms.dot.gov/>.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### Project Authorization

On December 31, 1998, OPS, pursuant to 49 U.S.C. 60126, issued NGPL a Risk