

action in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

The proposed project is necessary to maintain US 101 as a functional state lifeline highway route. The proposed project will involve a replacement bridge crossing of Spencer Creek on US 101 and construction of stable approaches to the bridge. The original Spencer Creek bridge, built in 1947 and located about six miles north of Newport, Oregon has deteriorated to the point that it has been determined unsafe and closed to traffic. A temporary bridge was constructed in 1999 immediately shoreward of the old bridge and has a design service life of five to eight years. Consequently, the existing Spencer Creek Bridge across the stream must be replaced. The sea cliffs and embankments that support the US 101 approaches to the old and temporary bridges are adjacent to the beach and are unstable. They have been substantially damaged from erosion caused by waves attacking the sea cliff. Landslides have also damaged the existing highway, and may pose hazards further inland. Consequently, any long term solution to the bridge problem will also need to involve stabilization of roadway approaches to any bridge crossing Spencer Creek in order to maintain the state lifeline highway route.

Possible Build Alternatives that will be considered as the proposed project develops will involve two basic concepts. The first concept would generally follow the existing alignment of US 101. The second concept would realign the highway inland and away from the beach. Depending on the location of the highway under either concept, shoreline stabilization may be required. As required by NEPA, a No-Build Alternative will be considered to provide an understanding about what will happen if nothing is done to solve the problem. The DEIS will address the No-Build Alternative and one or more Build Alternatives.

While the FHWA will be the lead agency for preparing the EIS, the COE will be a cooperating agency. Under section 103 of the 1962 River and Harbor Act, the COE has approved funding for planning, engineering and environmental investigations for shoreline stabilization options that would protect US 101 highway facilities along the beach. The COE is expected to consider as part of the proposed action some or all of the following design options—off shore breakwater, terracing the sea cliff, sea cliff toe armoring, and beach nourishment. Pursuant to the NEPA, the COE's analysis of the proposed action will be incorporated into the EIS.

Public workshops, meetings, and a public open house will be held as needed to identify an adequate range of reasonable alternatives, review alternatives, and aid in selection of an alternative. Appropriate notice to interested parties will be provided for all public gatherings regarding the proposed.

The EIS process will combine COE, and FHWA/ODOT work into one series of environmental documents (*e.g.*, technical reports, DEIS, and Final EIS). In conjunction with the FHWA's Record of Decision for the Final EIS, the COE will make a determination regarding the proposed action impacts as required by NEPA for inclusion into their Record of Decision.

To ensure that the full range of issues related to the proposed action are addressed and potentially significant and insignificant issues identified, comments, and suggestions are invited from all interested parties. Comments or questions concerning this proposed action and the EIS should be directed to the FHWA at the address provided above.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Program Number 20.205, Highway Research, Planning and Construction. The regulations implementing Executive Order 12372 regarding intergovernmental consultation on Federal Programs and activities apply to this program.)

Issued on: August 28, 2002.

Elton Chang,

Environmental Engineer, Oregon Division.

[FR Doc. 02-22678 Filed 9-5-02; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-22-M

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Research and Special Programs Administration

Pipeline Safety: Required Notification of National Response Center

AGENCY: Research and Special Programs Administration (RSPA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice; issuance of advisory bulletin.

SUMMARY: The Office of Pipeline Safety (OPS) is issuing this advisory to owners and operators of gas distribution, gas transmission, and hazardous liquid pipeline systems, and liquefied natural gas (LNG) facilities. Owners and operators should ensure that telephonic reports of incidents to the National Response Center (NRC) are both prompt and accurate and fully communicate the estimated extent of the damages. Additional reports should be made if there is a significant change in an estimate of the size of the gas or liquid

release, the extent of the damage, or the number of deaths or injuries.

OPS is issuing this advisory bulletin to ensure that the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) and the OPS are notified (via the NRC) when the information provided in the initial telephonic report significantly changes due to new information available soon after the initial report.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Roger Little, (202) 366-4569; or by e-mail, roger.little@rspa.dot.gov. This document can be viewed at the OPS home page at <http://ops.dot.gov>.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background

The pipeline safety regulations require gas pipeline, hazardous liquid pipeline, and LNG facility operators to make a telephonic report of a pipeline incident to the NRC in Washington, DC at the earliest practicable opportunity. For the purposes of this document, the term incident will refer to either an incident, an accident, a leak or a spill (the term differs in the regulations depending on whether the release involves gas, hazardous liquid or LNG). The information required to be reported includes the name of the operator, the name and telephone number of the person making the report, the location of the incident, the number of fatalities and injuries, and all other relevant significant facts. (49 CFR 191.5, 193.2011, and 195.52.)

Because an operator is required to make a telephonic report at the earliest practicable moment following discovery, an operator normally provides the first telephonic notification one to two hours after it discovers an incident on its pipeline. Additional information on the nature, cause, and extent of the damage usually becomes available as emergency response proceeds. If this additional information leads to a significant change (greater or lesser) in the estimated amount of product released, the estimated number of fatalities and injuries, the extent of environmental damage, or the extent of property damage, the operator should make an additional telephonic report to the NRC. OPS considers a significant change to include any of the following:

1. An increase or decrease in the number of previously reported injuries or fatalities;

2. A revised estimate of the product release amount that is at least 10 times greater than the amount reported; for example, the initial reported amount of product released was 300 barrels and the revised estimated amount is 3,000 barrels;

3. A revised estimate of the property damage that is at least 10 times greater than the reported property damage estimate; for example, the initial reported amount of damage was 100,000 dollars and the revised estimate is 1,000,000 dollars.

Often when the telephonic report is made, early information on an incident is incomplete. Sometimes, new information changes the understanding of the severity or nature of the incident. Although the telephonic reporting regulations do not state that multiple reports are required, the nature and timing of emergency response are dependent on the information reported to the NRC. It is critical that an operator provide accurate information on the extent of the incident. Therefore, OPS expects an operator to provide significant update information during the emergency response phase. For natural gas or LNG events, the initial emergency response phase usually ends between 24 and 48 hours following an incident. For hazardous liquid events, the initial emergency response phase may last several days as spill clean-up continues. Once the emergency response phase is complete, OPS does not expect an operator to continue to update the NRC throughout long-term recovery or remedial action activities.

Some hazardous liquid operators do not provide an estimated product release amount when reporting an incident to the NRC. OPS recognizes the difficulty in estimating spill amounts, especially if the release is underground or into water. However, OPS's and NTSB's response to the incident may depend on the reported spill size. OPS and NTSB may not investigate a ten barrel spill and may perform an onsite investigation of a 20,000 barrel spill. To get this critical information, OPS is asking the NRC to request operators to provide an estimate of the spill amount. If an estimated amount is not provided, NRC assumes, for emergency notification and response purposes, that a major spill has occurred. Therefore, if the operator does not provide a spill estimate, NRC will enter a default spill estimate of 1,000 barrels. OPS will be notified of all spills over 500 barrels and any spill over 100 barrels that impacts water.

In providing information on significant changes from the original telephonic report, operators need to be aware that the NRC does not update a prior report, but, instead, accepts additional reports. An operator should tell the NRC representative if a previous report was filed for the incident and provide the NRC Report Number of the original telephonic.

II. Advisory Bulletin (ADB-02-04)

To: Owners and Operators of Gas Distribution, Gas Transmission, and Hazardous Liquid Pipelines, and LNG Facilities

Subject: Telephonic Notification to NRC

Purpose: To advise owners and operators of gas distribution, gas transmission, and hazardous liquid pipeline systems and LNG facilities of the need to promptly contact the NRC after a pipeline incident is discovered and to file additional telephonic reports if there are significant changes in the number of fatalities or injuries, product release estimates or the extent of damages.

Advisory: Owners and operators of gas and hazardous liquid pipelines and LNG facilities are reminded that the pipeline safety regulations require operators to make a telephonic report of an incident to the NRC in Washington, DC at the earliest practicable opportunity, usually one to two hours after discovering the incident. The information required to be reported includes the name of the operator, the name and telephone number of the person making the report, the location of the incident, the number of fatalities and injuries, and all other significant facts that are relevant to the cause of the incident or extent of the damages. (49 CFR 191.5, 193.2011, and 195.52.)

If, during the emergency response period, additional information about the incident becomes available that shows a significant change in the number of fatalities and injuries, product release estimate, or the extent of property damage, an additional report to the NRC will be necessary. Although the regulation does not state that additional revised reports are required, it is important for emergency response purposes that the NRC be given accurate information on the extent of the incident.

The NRC will accept additional reports, but will not update a previous report. Therefore, operators should file an additional report(s) when circumstances and estimates change significantly. An operator should provide an estimate of the damage in the initial report and in any subsequent report. The operator should include the NRC Report Number of the initial report when making a subsequent report. If an operator reports that a damage estimate is unknown or unavailable, the NRC will assume that a major spill has taken place for emergency notification and response purposes.

Issued in Washington, DC, on August 30, 2002.

James K. O'Steen,

Deputy Associate Administrator for Pipeline Safety.

[FR Doc. 02-22734 Filed 9-5-02; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-60-P

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

President's Task Force To Improve Health Care Delivery for Our Nation's Veterans, Notice of Meeting

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) gives notice under Public Law 92-463 (Federal Advisory Committee Act) that a meeting of the President's Task Force to Improve Health Care delivery for Our Nation's Veterans is scheduled for Wednesday, September 11, 2002, beginning at 9 a.m. and adjourning at 4:45 p.m. and Thursday, September 12, 2002, beginning at 9 a.m. and adjourning at 1 p.m. The September 11 session will be held in the Horizon Ballroom of the Ronald Reagan Building International Trade Center, 1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW., Washington DC. The September 12 session will be held in the Washington Ballroom of the Radisson Hotel Old Town, 901 North Fairfax Street, Alexandria, VA. Both sessions are open to the public.

The purpose of the President's Task Force to Improve Health Care Delivery for Our Nation's Veterans is to:

(a) Identify ways to improve benefits and services for Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) beneficiaries and Department of Defense (DoD) military retirees who are also eligible for benefits from VA, through better coordination of the activities of the two departments;

(b) Identify opportunities to remove barriers that impede VA and DoD coordination, including budgeting processes, timely billing, cost accounting, information technology, and reimbursement; and

(c) Identify opportunities through partnership between VA and DoD, to maximize the use of resources and infrastructure, including buildings, information technology and data sharing systems, procurement of supplies, equipment and services.

On the morning of September 11, the President's Task Force will receive presentations by and have discussions with Dr. Robert H. Roswell, Under Secretary for Health, Department of Veterans Affairs. For the remainder of the day, staff consultants will lead a discussion of major themes and issues to be addressed in the Final Report of the President's Task Force.