

DOT Today

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U.S. Department of Transportation



Moving America Together

DOT GRADE CROSSING SAFETY TASK FORCE ANNOUNCED

Report to Examine Rail/Highway Safety Decision-Making Process

Secretary Peña recently announced that he has directed the formation of a Grade Crossing Safety Task Force within the DOT to conduct a comprehensive national review of highway-rail crossing design and construction safety measures.

"In the aftermath of the October 26 tragic accident in Illinois involving a commuter train and school bus at a railroad crossing, serious questions have arisen. I have thus ordered the department to build on our June 1994 Rail Crossing Safety Action Plan by forming a task force to conduct a comprehensive national review of the design and construction of highways and rail crossings," said Secretary Peña. "We owe it to the children injured and killed last week, to the 600 and more killed each year, and to every motorist and passenger in this country that these measures are taken to ensure safe grade crossings."

The Secretary has directed the task force to report back to him in 120 days by March 1, 1996, with its evaluation of the process related to the planning construction operation and maintenance of the nation's grade crossings, as well as recommendations for improvement. Both the Federal Railroad Administration and the Federal Highway Administration will cooperate with the States as they respond to the National Transportation Safety Board's recommendation that states conduct an assessment of signal linkages where highway and rail signals interconnect. The task force will work in conjunction with state transportation officials to review existing standards and to develop a summary of national needs focusing on crossings with gates and lights and adjacent traffic signals.

The task force will include representation from four agencies within the department: the Federal Railroad Administration, the Federal Highway Administration, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and the Federal Transit Administration. Consulting with local and state transportation authorities, as well as the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), the task force will be headed by Associate Deputy Transportation Secretary Michael Huerta.

In 1994, 615 individuals were killed and 1,961 were injured in 4,979 grade crossing accidents in the United States. In June 1994, Secretary Peña announced a six-part, 55 step Grade Crossing Safety Action Plan. In September 1994, Secretary Peña convened a National Rail Safety Summit in Washington. A country-wide public awareness campaign to reduce these accidents,

"Always Expect a Train," was announced at the summit. Secretary Peña has also set a goal of closing 25 percent of the country's grade crossings, including 50 percent of the almost 4,500 on the National Highway System.



The DOT Grade Crossing Safety Task Force will examine rail crossings similar to this one located in Southern California.

The Secretary's 28th Annual Award Program



(Above) Stephen Kaplan, winner of the Secretary's Award for Exceptional Service, seen here with Secretary Peña.

(Right) Family members of the 11 FHWA employees killed in Oklahoma City gather around Secretary Peña as he dedicates the DOT Headquarter's Multimedia Room to their memory.

"You are all exceptional, and I salute every one of you. I am honored to serve as your Secretary," said Secretary Peña to the employees gathered as this year's Annual Award Program in Washington, D.C. "During the last year since we last met for this annual awards program, we have brought about a dramatic change in the way we run the department and the way we serve our customers.

"I want all of you to know, the President and Vice President have noticed the hard and important work that is done on a daily basis here at the DOT. The Vice President presents Hammer Awards to people and programs that are making government work better. Although our department is far from the biggest, we've earned more awards than any domestic agency, with the exception of one. So I thank all of you for your hard work. You're the models and you're everything that's right about public service," said Secretary Peña.

Employees were honored at the ceremony for outstanding performance in their work, their communities, or through acts of heroism.

Secretary Peña in addition to honoring the many DOT employees who excel and deserve our recognition also invited, as guests, family members of those Federal Highway Administration employees who perished in the the April explosion of the Alfred P. Murrah building.

"There is no way that we can give back to you the dear ones, whom you have lost," he said to the family members. "All of them were loved and respected here, as much as they were in Oklahoma City. But I wanted to do something so that they will never be forgotten. The DOT headquarters' largest conference room will be dedicated to the memory of your loved ones. We can't bring them back, but it is a way all of us can remember and honor their commitment to America," the Secretary said.

Printed on pages 4 and 5 are this year's award winners. Congratulations to everyone!



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DOT Closing Investigation of Chrysler Minivans

The DOT's top safety official recently told minivan owners that they need to get their vehicles fixed. In what he characterized as a "common sense, smart government solution," Ricardo

Martinez, M.D., Administrator of the National Highway Traffic Safety

Administration (NHTSA) said the agency is closing its investigation of Chrysler minivans, and urged owners of the more than four-million 1984-1995 vehicles to have stronger, safer rear liftgate latches installed when notified that their dealer has the parts and is ready to make the free repairs.

"This is a safety issue that demands attention by Chrysler minivan owners. We all live busy lives and taking a vehicle in for service may be inconvenient. But in this case, take the time because the addition of a stronger, safer latch can ultimately mean saving lives."

Martinez explained that the agency's investigation has uncovered 134 reports of ejections by means of the rear liftgate, resulting in 98 injuries and 37 deaths to occupants of Chrysler minivans.

NHTSA's investigation of the Chrysler minivan latches revealed that the latches can fail in 30 mph side crashes because of a weak latch that deforms and releases or because of inertial forces associated with the remote release. Competitive minivans have stronger latches and experience fewer liftgate openings in moderate-speed crashes.

Martinez said that NHTSA was closing its formal investigation of Chrysler minivan rear latches because the latch replacement campaign is proceeding satisfactorily and on schedule. The agency will, however, continue to monitor

progress to ensure a high completion rate, and Chrysler will submit quarterly reports.

"We negotiated an agreement with Chrysler, instead of pressing on with our investigation that may have led to a forced safety recall, because Chrysler's latch replacement campaign includes the key components of a formal safety recall," said Dr. Martinez. The company has agreed to go even further, taking extensive steps to ensure a high completion rate.

"As I travel the country, it has become very clear to me that Americans are not concerned about the process and who did what to whom in Washington, D.C. When there is a safety problem, they just want their vehicles fixed. The agreement that we have reached with Chrysler meets that expectation. It is consistent with Clinton Administration policy of encouraging compliance in the least costly and most effective way."

Actions Chrysler will take to encourage a high completion rate:

- National advertising to promote awareness.
- Repeat written notification if the owner does not respond to the first notice.
- Follow-up telephone calls if necessary to owners who still do not respond.
- Special efforts to inform dealers and motivate them to encourage customers to have their minivan latches replaced.
- Customer Satisfaction Coordinators at each dealership to facilitate the latch replacement campaign within the dealership and be a single point of contact for customers.

Included in the campaign are 1984-1995 Dodge Caravan, Plymouth Voyager and Chrysler Town & Country minivans.

Chrysler minivan owners who have any questions about this campaign, or encounter any difficulties getting the necessary repairs performed, are urged to call NHTSA's toll-free Auto Safety Hotline, (800)-424-9393.

DOT Pushing For Electric Vehicles In Communities

Dr. D.K. Sharma, Research and Special Programs Administrator joined with the Department of Energy, the Electric Transportation Coalition and the Electric Vehicle Association of the Americas to sponsor a series of workshops to educate cities on the infrastructure needed to support electric vehicles (EVs).

Secretary Peña said, "This project is an example of President Clinton's drive to develop stronger partnerships with private sector industries and communities to improve transportation. I am fully committed to working with other federal agencies and our private sector partners to ensure the deployment of technology that will provide future generations with a transportation system that is safe, environmentally sound and more efficient."

Administrator Sharma announced that a series of ten seminars will be conducted in the Energy Department's "Clean Cities," as well as in other urban jurisdictions that have demonstrated strong support for EV commercialization. A Clean Cities community brings fleet owners, fuel suppliers, local utilities, auto manufacturers and government together to make commitments to the creation of a viable alternative fuels market. A preliminary determination of sites for the seminars include: Atlanta, Ga.; Detroit, Mich.; Miami, Fla.; Phoenix, Ariz.; Sacramento, Calif.; Boston, Mass.; Los Angeles, Calif.; New York, N.Y.; Richmond, Va.; and Washington. Final site selection and the seminar schedule will be announced in November.

Through the seminars, communities will obtain information regarding infrastructure investments, emergency response procedures for EV's and other requirements to support electric vehicles. The electric utility and automotive industries, in cooperation with government, have committed to place up to 5,000 EV's into the selected communities by the end of 1997.

RSPA Administrator Dr. D.K. Sharma stated, "The widespread use of alternative fuel vehicles will help reduce the environmental costs related to conventional means of transportation. Electric vehicles, which are an important type of alternative fuel vehicle, emit no exhaust gases to pollute our atmosphere and are much quieter than conventional gasoline vehicles."

Dr. Sharma seen here in Washington, D.C. next to a Potomac Electric Power Company electric vehicle.



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Please Recycle

Accessible Transportation Services

Accessible transportation services are available for DOT employees, official visitors and guests between DOT Headquarters' buildings and to other locations within the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan area for official business. Please call Bill Thrift, Chief of the Motor Vehicle Section, Cleveland Montgomery or Franklin Weaver at 202-366-1364, between the hours of 7 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. Arrangements should be made at least 24-hours in advance.

This is the current procedure with modifications being planned for the future.

Correction

In last months DOT Today "Calendar" section, December 15 - "Lights On For Life" was incorrectly described as symbolic observance for all vehicles to be manufactured with day time running headlights. "Lights On For Life" is a one day nationwide headlight observance in remembrance of persons killed and injured in alcohol-related crashes and a reminder of law enforcement's watchful eye on impaired drivers. DOT Today apologizes for any confusion this error may have caused.

Team Coast Guard . . .

The Best Kept Secret

By David L. Sargent,
U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary,
Flotilla Commander

Did you know that there is an organization within DOT that has almost as many non-paid volunteers as it does paid employees?

No?... Well, don't feel alone. Very few people in the country realize that the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary exists. This nearly 37,000 member volunteer arm of the regular Coast Guard serves side-by-side with the regular Coast Guard, helping to educate and protect the recreational boater. These unpaid civilians wear a uniform similar to that of the Coast Guard and assist in all Coast Guard activities except law enforcement.

In 1939 Congress established a Coast Guard Reserve to assist the regular Coast Guard in its ever-growing mission as more and more Americans became pleasure boaters. The Coast Guard Reserve was composed of unpaid volunteer U.S. citizens who were boat owners. Then, in 1941, in response to the need for protecting our shores during World War II, Congress created a paid military Coast Guard Reserve and the original volunteer reserve was renamed the Coast Guard Auxiliary. The Auxiliary has consistently served the American pleasure boater for over 50 years.

Today, Auxiliarists from all parts of the country, from all walks of life, use their boats and airplanes to help in search and rescue missions. Ranging in age from 17 to 95, CG Reserves volunteer their time and talents to help the Coast Guard fulfill their daily missions. In fact, in some remote areas of the country, Auxiliarists are the only Coast Guard presence. They operate Auxiliary Radio Stations, Search and Rescue Detachments, operate and support lighthouses, and man small stations just as the regular Coast Guard would.

In this age of down-sizing and shrinking operating budgets, the Coast Guard Auxiliary takes on an

even more crucial role. The most cost-effective means of accomplishing the complex Coast Guard mission of safety, search and rescue and education is using the auxiliary. Active duty USCG personnel strengths are cut each year and only the dedication of unpaid Auxiliarists enables the completion of many Coast Guard programs. For example, in a typical year the work provided by the Auxiliary to the Coast Guard would cost more than \$40 million if done by Coast Guard personnel.

Auxiliary duties are many - providing public safe boating courses, performing free courtesy marine examinations on recreational boats, assisting in search and rescue missions, manning Coast Guard radio stations, assisting in marine pollution and port safety operations, and patrolling the waters during regattas, boat shows and other boating events. Annually, Auxiliary efforts result in almost 500 lives saved, 25,000 other people assisted and saving close to \$225 million worth of marine property.

Believe it or not the Auxiliary actively recruits for the Coast Guard through the Academy Introductory Mission (AIM) and the Recruiting Assistance Program.



Above: Auxiliary Vessel preparing for an onshore tow
Left: Auxiliary Vessels at training exercise



Hard work isn't all there is to the Auxiliary. Making new friends and having fun is equally or even more important. Parties, picnics, boating activities and conferences around the country add to the total picture of life as an Auxiliarist. Close friendships are often formed as members share experiences with people who, like themselves, have an avid interest in boating and a desire to making the waters of our country safer and cleaner.

The Coast Guard Auxiliary has proven to be a worthwhile experience that adds a vital dimension to members boating experiences as well as their personal lives. An Auxiliarist is being part of the diverse Coast Guard family - receiving special training and helping to save lives by educating and assisting the boating public.

The United States Coast Guard Auxiliary - a proud tradition, a worthy mission.

HAZMAT Training Modules on CD-ROM



The Research and Special Programs Administration (RSPA) recently announced the availability of new Hazardous Materials Transportation Training modules on CD-ROM. RSPA Administrator Dr. D.K. Sharma said, "RSPA is committed to

achieving its safety goals by making technical information readily available to emergency responders and workers in the business of transporting hazardous materials utilizing new technologies that are cost effective and up-to-date. We intend to provide services that are responsive to the needs of our customers."

The PC compatible CD-ROM includes a self-paced tutorial visual presentation which provides the individual user with a basic understanding of the hazardous materials regulations. In addition, the CD-ROMS include files for color prints, transparencies and slides which may be used for group training presentations. Instructor and student manuals, including tests and answer keys, may be easily printed from files available for use with IBM-PC compatibles and Apple Macintosh.

CD-ROMS are available for purchase at cost from RSPA by check or major credit cards. To order contact DOT at (800) 467-4922 or by E-Mail: TRAINING@rspa.dot.gov.

SECRETARY PEÑA HONORS CREW FOR NATO SERVICE

Secretary Peña recently honored a government ship and its civilian crew for their support of NATO peace-keeping efforts in Bosnia.

The Secretary spoke during ceremonies on board the Ready Reserve Force (RRF) vessel *Cape Race* in Portsmouth, Va. He cited the ship and crew for "exemplary and professional performance in support of NATO peacekeeping efforts in Bosnia, bringing honor and pride to all American Merchant Mariners."

The *Cape Race* was activated to support NATO activities in Bosnia on June 23, 1995, in a record time of 23 hours. For two months it carried cargo between Germany, the United Kingdom and Croatia in support of Britain's 24th Air Mobile Brigade.

The *Cape Race* and a second RRF ship, the *Cape Diamond*, carried more than 92 percent of the cargo transferred from the U.K. to Croatia.

The DOT's Maritime Administration owns and maintains ships in the RRF to provide prompt sealift support in the event they are needed for the rapid deployment of military forces.

"From World War II to the Persian Gulf, from Vietnam to Haiti, and in Somalia and Bosnia,

America's merchant seafarers have supported America's armed forces and humanitarian efforts," said the Secretary. "We must ensure they will continue to be available to serve our nation's sealift needs."

During his remarks, Secretary Peña called on Congress to complete action on the Administration's proposed Maritime Security Program which has been approved by key committees in the House and the Senate.

The new program would cost much less than an existing program, deregulate the foreign commercial activities of U.S.-flag merchant ships and encourage the use of modern vessels by U.S.-flag ship operators.

RRF *Cape Race* being piloted into port



The Secretary's 28th Annual Awards Program

Secretary's Award for Meritorious Achievement

SILVER MEDAL

This Award is given by the Secretary in recognition of exceptionally meritorious service to the Department or Federal Government, or for exceptional achievement which substantially contributed to the accomplishment of the Department's mission or major programs.



Doshanta E. Rhea seen here with Secretary Peña after receiving the Secretary's Award for Excellence.

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Highway Safety Specialist
(detail from NHTSA)
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and Strategic Business Planning
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Architect
Washington, D.C.

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Massena, New York

Maritime Administration
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Director, Office of Contracts and
Procurement
Washington, D.C.

Bureau of Transportation Statistics
ROBERT ZARNETSKE
Acting Assistant Director, Information
Technology Center
Washington, D.C.

Secretary's Award for Outstanding Achievement

GOLD MEDAL

This Award is granted by the Secretary in recognition of exceptionally outstanding leadership or service that is distinguished by achievements of marked national or international significance which reflect great credit on the Department and the Federal Government.

THE OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL AVIATION
THE OFFICE OF AVIATION AND INTERNA-
TIONAL ECONOMICS
THE OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL LAW
Washington, D.C.

Outstanding Achievement in Diversity

This Award is granted by the Secretary to honor and recognize an employee, supervisor, or manager who has excelled in efforts to promote diversity through unusually effective leadership, skill, imagination, and perseverance.

Federal Aviation Administration
LE ANNE M. ROBBINS
Manager, Airway Facilities Division
Atlanta, Georgia

Federal Highway Administration
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION
Unit Managers
FHWA-Wide

Secretary's Award for Valor

This is the highest Departmental award for acts of heroism or courage involving great risk by civilian employees under unusual circumstances. To be eligible for this award, an employee must have demonstrated heroism or courage in an emergency on or off duty.

Federal Aviation Administration
J. ANTONIO LIZARDI
Contract Price/Cost Analyst Specialist
Washington, D.C.

WILLIAM MICHAEL TUCKER
Air Traffic Control Specialist
Houston, Texas

Federal Highway Administration
JERRY MAC KIRK
Motor Carrier Safety Specialist
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

Lawrence R. Schneider Award

This Award was established to honor the memory of Lawrence R. Schneider, Chief Counsel of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration from August 8, 1971, until his death on July 12, 1974. Presentation is made annually to an especially competent and productive practicing Department of Transportation attorney who has been admitted to the bar within the last ten years.

Maritime Administration
REBECCA BYERS MACPHERSON
Trial Attorney
Washington, D.C.

Secretary's Award for Volunteer Service

This Award is granted by the Secretary to honor an employee who has made significant contributions to improving a community organization or program for which the Department provides support or sponsorship, by unselfishly donating personal time and effort.

Maritime Administration
GERALD L. BROWN
Naval Architect Technician
Washington, D.C.

**Research and Special Programs
Administration**
OLIVE A. LESUEUR
Operations Research Analyst
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Secretary's Award for Exceptional Service

This award for Exceptional Service is presented to an employee or group of employees who demonstrate exceptional leadership, extraordinary dedication, and superb professionalism.

STEPHEN KAPLAN
Former General Counsel
Washington, D.C.

Secretary's Award for Excellence

This Award is granted to employees in grades GS-1 through GS-9 and WG-1 through WG-8 who have achieved outstanding performance in all aspects of their work and deserve special commendation.

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Administrative Officer
Durham, North Carolina

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ANNETTA L. TOWNES
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Office Automation Assistant
Washington, D.C.

Maritime Administration
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Support Services Specialist
Kings Point, New York

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Washington, D.C.

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Cambridge, Massachusetts

Bureau of Transportation Statistics
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Environmental Specialist
Washington, D.C.

Secretary's Award for Distinguished Military Service

Coast Guard Medal w/Extraordinary Heroism
Awarded for heroism or extraordinary achievement.

SN JAMES R. DUFFY
United States Coast Guard
Islamorada, Florida

BM3 LAWRENCE R. BEATTY
United States Coast Guard
Avon by the Sea, New Jersey

Coast Guard Medal
BM3 MICHAEL L. DUNNING
United States Coast Guard
Montauk Point, Long Island, New York

Distinguished Flying Cross w/Extraordinary Heroism
Awarded for heroism or extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight.

ASM3 MARIO M. VITTONO
United States Coast Guard
Elizabeth City, North Carolina

Distinguished Flying Cross
Awarded for heroism or extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight.

ASM2 ROBERT E. WATSON
United States Coast Guard
Houston, Texas

Meritorious Service Medal
Awarded for outstanding noncombat, meritorious achievement or service to the United States.

CAPT RAY W. CLARK, JR.
United States Coast Guard
Houston, Texas

Air Medal
Awarded for heroism or meritorious achievement while participating in aerial flight.

LT JOHN T. HARDIN
United States Coast Guard
San Diego, California

Secretary's Award for Community Service

This Award is granted by the Secretary to honor an employee who has excelled in voluntarily improving conditions of a community or organization by unselfishly donating personal time and effort.

Federal Transit Administration
PAUL L. VERCHINSKI
Senior Community Planner
Washington, D.C.

United States Coast Guard
CWO RICHARD L. TOCHTROP
TEMPEST Program Manager
Washington, D.C.

Secretary's Team Award

The Award is presented by the Secretary in recognition of groups and teams for exceptional performance to support the reinvention, or reengineering of practice, operations and customers services.

Federal Aviation Administration
VOICE SWITCHING AND CONTROL SYSTEM TEAM
Washington, D.C.

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
OFFICE OF PLANS AND POLICY TEAM
Washington, D.C.

Research and Special Programs Administration
EXTERNAL CUSTOMER SATISFACTION QUALITY ACTION TEAM
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Secretary's Award for Quality

This Award is given by the Secretary in recognition of an outstanding Departmental organization which is customer-focused and committed to achieving excellence through continuous quality improvement.

United States Coast Guard
COAST GUARD SUPPLY CENTER CURTIS BAY
Baltimore, Maryland

Federal Aviation Administration
FEDERAL AVIATION TECHNICAL CENTER
Atlantic City International Airport, New Jersey

Secretary's Award for Excellence in Customer Service

This Award was established to recognize organizations which provide exceptional service to customers.

Federal Aviation Administration
HOUSTON INTERCONTINENTAL AIR TRAFFIC CONTROL TOWER TEAM
Fort Worth, Texas

United States Coast Guard
U.S. COAST GUARD TRAINING CENTER, PETALUMA, CA,
CUSTOMER SUPPORT SERVICES TEAM
Petaluma, California



SN James Duffy, seen here with Secretary Peña, received the Secretary's Award for Extraordinary Heroism.

Secretary's Humanitarian Award

The Secretary's Humanitarian Award is presented to an employee or a group of employees who unselfishly give of their time to assist others in need.

Federal Aviation Administration
KEVIN SCHEHR, STEVE SCHROEDER, MIKE BACHMANN, PAUL WIATER, MYLES BALLESTRACCI, TOM DOLEZAL, DENNIS OUIMETTE, MILES BALLESTRACCI, DENNIS WALLINGSFORD, DAVE CLEMMER, DON FUNAI, AND JAY BEISSER
Hanger 6 Team
Washington, D.C.

For humanitarian support of FAA's post-Hurricane Marilyn rebuilding efforts in the St. Thomas and St. Croix, Virgin Islands area.

Secretary Peña Opens Energy Showcase

by George Kuehn



Secretary Peña accepts the \$586,741 rebate check from Robert C. Grantley, Vice President for Customer Services, Potomac Electric Power Co. The check represents rebates for energy efficiency improvements at the DOT Headquarters building.

In celebration of October's Energy Awareness Month, Secretary Peña cut the ribbon opening the department's energy showcase exhibit at the DOT Headquarters Nassif Building. The exhibit, entitled "Meeting the Energy Challenge," highlights the energy conservation activities at the headquarters building. In his comments, Secretary Peña expressed his support for continuing efforts to reduce energy consumption and cost within the department. He stressed the need to continue making similar investments to conserve energy in the future, not only at headquarters, but in every DOT field office around the country.

On behalf of the department and the General Services Administration, Secretary Peña accepted a rebate check for \$586,741 from Robert C. Grantley, Vice President for Customer Services, of the Potomac Electric Power Company. Other key participants were Melissa Spillenkothen, the Assistant Secretary for Administration, Thurman M. Davis, Sr., the General Services Administration's Deputy Administrator, Mark Ginsberg, the Department of Energy's Director of the Federal Energy Management Program, and Don Jenkins, with Nassif Associates.

The rebate is for energy efficiency improvements in the Nassif Building. These improvements will save the Government over \$1 million and reduce electrical consumption by over 12 million kilowatt hours annually. Other benefits include avoiding the production of over 10,000 tons of carbon monoxide and other harmful pollutants to help improve the environment for future generations.

The projects included a general lighting upgrade, replacement of incandescent lights with compact fluorescent lamps, installation of occupant sensors, light emitting diode EXIT lights, more efficient air-conditioning units, and an energy management control system.

One of the more successful projects was the replacement of standard fluorescent lights with an energy efficient T-8 lighting system. This system uses state of the art lamps, electronic ballasts, and optical reflectors. This system uses 50 percent less energy compared to the old lights and pays for itself in about three years. With the utility company rebate, the payback is reduced to 2 years or the equivalent of a 50 percent return on investment.

DOT will continue to implement additional energy efficiency technology at headquarters and expects to receive over \$400,000 in additional rebates. These new technologies can be adopted in most departmental facilities with similar savings. A pamphlet outlining the energy improvement projects in headquarters and some field locations is available at the energy showcase display or through your energy coordinator. Everyone is invited to stop by the exhibit in the southwest lobby of the Nassif Building.

Transportation Documents and Multimedia Presentations Now Available on "Smart" CD-ROM

The department's Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS) has released the State and Metropolitan Analysis for Regional Transportation (SMART) CD-ROM containing more than 200 documents and multimedia presentations.

"The Bureau of Transportation Statistics has performed a valuable service for transportation data users around the country," said Secretary Peña. "By providing it on CD-ROM and the Internet, material that was previously widely scattered is now readily available from one convenient source."

Dr. T.R. Lakshmanan, director of BTS, noted that, "Planners from nearly every state have identified and contributed a wide range of materials such as reference documents, video clips, software packages, travel models, surveys and data sets. The project offers transportation planners the opportunity to present their best work to others in the field."

In addition the BTS, the department's Federal Highway and Federal Transit Administrations and metropolitan and state transportation planners around the country made this project a reality.

The SIGCAT (Special Interest Group for CD-ROM Applications Technology) Foundation awarded DOT a Significant Achievement Recognition Award of Excellence in May 1995 for the development of the SMART CD.

"If the prototype proves useful, BTS will continue to produce and maintain a more extensive CD and Internet library for transportation planners," said Dr. Lakshmanan.

To ask questions or order a copy of the SMART CD-ROM, please contact:

Scott Hoefft at 202-776-1235, or e-mail: scott.hoefft@bts.gov; Robert Zarnetske, Project Director, at 202-366-5081, or e-mail at: robert.zarnetske@bts.gov

The SMART Internet Library can be accessed using the following addresses

World Wide Web: <http://www.bts.gov>;

Gopher: <gopher://gopher.bts.gov>;

FTP: <ftp://ftp.bts.gov>

All users of this product are encouraged to submit comments.

Deputy Secretary
Downey Designates
DOT As A

Procurement Reinvention Laboratory

by Annette Jameson

New and exciting things are taking place in DOT's procurement world. DOT has joined a growing number of federal agencies experimenting with streamlined and "reinvented" procurement practices to simplify the job of procurement personnel and to provide better service to their customers. Accordingly, on June 8, 1995, Deputy Secretary Downey designated DOT as a "Procurement Reinvention Laboratory" (LAB).

"DOT has embarked on a challenging journey to reinvent itself to achieve the goals of the National Performance Review," said Deputy Secretary Mort Downey at the designation ceremony. The LAB concept is a direct outgrowth of Vice-President Gore's theme for reinventing government and the recommendations of the DOT Acquisition Re-Engineering and Realignment Task Force (ARRT) led by Joseph Kerner of the Federal Railroad Administration. The ARRT was chartered by the Secretary's Management Council (SMC) with the specific purpose of re-engineering the Department's acquisition process. Under the auspices of the Department's Procurement Management Council (PMC), together with the full endorsement of the Deputy Secretary and the SMC, the DOT reinvention LAB concept was developed.

To assist in the development of the LAB, the PMC directed the formation of an intermodal LAB Core Team which includes representatives from several operating administra-

tions. This core team helped formulate the "DOT Procurement Reinvention Laboratory Partnering Agreement" which was disseminated to all DOT procurement personnel. This agreement establishes the framework for examining the way the process works and the need to become innovators of change by asking, "Is there a better way?" It also delineates how the LAB operates and includes a "Declaration" signed by the SMC and PMC which reflects their support for the LAB as well as their acceptance and endorsement of the risk taking actions necessary to effect meaningful change in the procurement process.

DOT is the first Department to have such a "Declaration" signed by its senior management. According to Melissa Spillenkothen, Assistant Secretary for Administration, "the purpose of this "Declaration" is to show procurement officials that they are not alone when trying new and innovative ideas and that prudent, common sense approaches are accepted, encouraged, and rewarded. It is through this type of support that true breakthrough acquisition reform will occur."

Empowerment, innovation and change are key principles to the LAB's success. The goals of the LAB are to create an acquisition system that works better, costs less, and results in the timely receipt of satisfactory goods and services. All DOT procurement offices may participate in the LAB. The results of the LAB will be shared with other governmen-

tal offices in order to foster federal-wide acquisition process improvements.

The LAB will utilize different approaches, broken into phases, to promote innovation. Phase I activities use the concept of waiving procurement procedural requirements as its catalyst for change. Excitement over the LAB from within the DOT procurement community was indicated by the initial batch of over 60 suggested waivers to departmental procurement procedures contained in the Transportation Acquisition Manual (TAM). Of these suggested waivers, over two dozen were either granted and will be used in Phase I, or resulted in permanent changes to the TAM.

If you would like to learn more about the LAB or to discuss reinvention ideas, Jim Hawkins, Chief of the Acquisition Systems and Resources Division (M-61) and his staff are available on (202) 366-6688. Mr. Hawkins, as well as the LAB Core Team, are available to provide briefings on the LAB upon request. Contact Elaine Wheeler (M-61) at (202) 366-4272 for further information.

Don't let this opportuni-

ty pass you by - the procurement reinvention lab is for YOU. NOW is the time for each individual to get involved. Let us all become innovators of change by sending in your ideas for utilizing or expanding the LAB to Ms. Wheeler by fax at 202-366-7510, or mail 400 7th Street, S.W., Washington, DC 20590.

We welcome your ideas and look forward to hearing from you.

DOT PROCUREMENT
RE-INVENTION
LABORATORY

Declaration

We, the members of the Secretary's Management Council and the Procurement Management Council, recognize the need to improve the acquisition process within the Federal Government. We, therefore, establish the Department of Transportation Procurement Reinvention Laboratory to experiment with new, innovative ideas that may be on the cutting edge and may require taking risks.

ACCORDINGLY, WE AGREE AND COMMIT TO:

- Accepting that risk with responsibility and accountability is an inherent part of re-invention.
- Acknowledging and rewarding individual and/or group achievements.
- Creating a climate which diminishes the fear of failure that accompanies risk and sees mistakes as opportunities for learning.
- Facilitating and encouraging changes in the acquisition process.

The above Declaration is hereby made this 8th day of June 1995.

SMC
PMC
 [Signatures]

We Remember Our Oklahoma Friends

A Memorial Grove At Turner-Fairbank

by Bonny Falk

The Federal Highway Administration's Turner-Fairbank office building recently erected a memorial dedicated to the 11 FHWA employees who perished in the April 19 explosion of the Alfred P. Murrah building. Eleven Oklahoma State redbud trees have been planted in a grove to honor the FHWA public servants who were innocent victims of a heinous explosion.

A group of nearly 200 FHWA and DOT employees attended the ceremony. Solemnly, the audience listened as the U.S. Coast Guard Band Brass Quintet played the National Anthem. Holding the American Flag, the Virginia Flag, and the Oklahoma Flag, the U.S. Coast Guard Presidential Honor Guard presented the colors, marching alongside the 11 memorial trees.

Administrator Rodney E. Slater gave the keynote speech and dedicated the plaque that was dominated by an etching of a tree representing not only the grove, but also the nature and spirit of the living memorial. Across the top of the plaque in the branches of the etched tree, the following words are written:

In the autumn of 1995, the Federal Highway Administration planted 11 redbud trees on this site to commemorate lives of 11 FHWA family members. Our colleagues and 157 others died when a terrorist's bomb destroyed the Alfred P. Murrah building in Oklahoma City on April 19, 1995. These trees are a living tribute to these dedicated public servants.

On the right side of the plaque, the names of our colleagues and friends are engraved:

Lucio Aleman, Jr., Mark A. Bolte, Michael J. Carrillo, Larry J. Jones, James K. Martin, Jerry L. Parker, Michelle A. Reeder, Rick L. Tomlin, Johnny A. Wade, Ronota A. Woodbridge, John A. Youngblood

Administrator Slater continued, stating that these trees are living reminders of our friends. Many of us have sacrificed for our jobs or our careers, but no one in the 102-year history of FHWA has sacrificed as these 11 did. Although the grove will be a place of peace, beauty, and reflection, it will also be a powerful reminder to the DOT, and especially, the FHWA family, of the need to persevere and be faithful in our pursuit of excellence. As Lincoln said at Gettysburg, "It is for the living rather to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they . . . so nobly advanced."

Administrator Slater said, "we are grateful for having known these 11 FHWA heroes who gave their lives in our country's service." He encouraged us to give 100 percent today and make the best of our privilege to serve others. "There, but for the grace of God, go you - go me." They live on in our hearts and our memories, and are an inspiration to continue their commitment to excellence in serving our Nation in the unfinished work of the FHWA.

Chaplain Skip Blancett, USCG, who gave the invocation, said it is difficult to explain a senseless act like the bombing in Oklahoma, and even more



difficult to explain the loss of lives. "In the years to come, as we look at the trees planted, may there be a sense of peace that they did not die in vain, that somewhere in this chaos there will be a purpose, and may there be a sense of conviction that life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness cannot be destroyed by an act of terrorism."

The spirit of the Turner-Fairbank plaque and 11 redbud trees honoring our fallen friends and co-workers will forever serve to stir our memories of those 11 DOT employees who died serving their country. "We Will Never Forget."

The commemorative plaque is dominated by an etching of a tree representing not only the grove, but also the nature and spirit of the living memorial.



Secretary Peña and NHTSA Administrator Martinez present Margaret Caulhome, a Hotline Representative, with a Hammer Award certificate.

President Gore's special recognition to teams who have made significant contributions in support of the principles of putting customers first; cutting red tape; empowering employees; and getting back to basics.

"The Hotline is the critical link between NHTSA and the public. Calls to the Hotline sparked 75 percent of the defect investigations opened in 1994," NHTSA Administrator Dr. Ricardo Martinez said. "Along with receiving safety-related complaints, the Hotline provides one-stop shopping for important safety information on child safety seats, crash test results, recalls and more."

Dr. Martinez said that while the services of the Hotline have increased significantly, the cost of providing these services has not.

"From October 1989 to May 1995, the number of consumer inquiries to the Hotline increased by 30 percent with no increase in cost. New technologies such as fax-on-demand, electronic forms and an automated caller tracking system only partially account for these savings. The bulk comes from the improved productivity of the Hotline representatives themselves," said Dr. Martinez.

Vice President Gore Gives Hammer Award To NHTSA's Auto Safety Hotline

On behalf of Vice President Gore, Secretary Peña recently presented a Hammer Award to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) Auto Safety Hotline.

The Hotline is a toll-free number consumers can call to request auto safety information or to report safety-related problems with motor vehicles. Representatives are available Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., and an automated system can be accessed 24 hours a day. The Hotline provides information over the phone, by mail or by fax.

The Hammer Award is Vice



Secretary Peña, seen here, makes the first call to the Auto Safety Hotline from the Petersen Automotive Museum in Los Angeles during a recent news conference. Secretary Peña inaugurated the toll-free phone link between the Petersen Automotive Museum in Los Angeles and the Auto Safety Hotline in Washington, D.C. so visitors can quickly find out how various new cars and trucks performed in government crash tests.

The exhibit, located at the front entrance of the museum, will serve as a resource for the public to obtain the latest crash test results to help them factor safety into their next vehicle purchase decision. Direct access to the Hotline will also enable the public to learn about and easily communicate auto safety problems directly to the federal government, which serves as NHTSA's "single point of contact" for consumers.

The museum is open daily, except Monday, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m., and until 9 p.m. on Friday. The museum is located at 6060 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, California.

Clinton Gives Florida More Than \$38 Million For Hurricane Damaged Roads

President Clinton recently released \$38.8 million in Federal Highway Emergency Relief funds to expedite repairs to federal-aid highways in Florida. The highways were damaged during heavy rains and flooding from Hurricane Opal in October.

In announcing the funds, President Clinton stressed that "These roads are vital lifelines for the people who work and live in the Panhandle. Working hand-in-hand with community leaders and private businesses, we're continuing to help people rebuild their lives."

Within hours after the hurricane struck, Secretary Peña, Federal Highway Administrator Rodney E. Slater, Federal Emergency Management Agency Director James Lee Witt and Philip Lader, Administrator of the Small Business Administration, had arrived in Florida and were visiting damaged areas. There they announced an initial allocation of \$1 million to Florida in response to the state's request for federal assistance. The additional money President Clinton released brings Florida's total federal-aid package to more than \$39 million.

The funding is based on preliminary damage assessments and will be used to repair and reconstruct several washed-out sections of roadway, traffic signs, traffic signals and roadway lighting.



Lane Kirkland "troops the line" during a parade in his honor at the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy prior to his induction into the Kings Point Hall of Distinguished Graduates.

Veteran Labor Leader Honored At Kings Point

Among the ranks of U.S. Merchant Marine Academy alumni, perhaps no individual has been as nationally visible as Lane Kirkland.

This Class of '42 Kings Point graduate served at the helm of the AFL-CIO for 16 years until his retirement last August.

On Sept. 13, the Academy recognized Kirkland for his remarkable career accomplishments by inducting him into its Hall of Distinguished Graduates. The labor leader and his wife, Irena, traveled to Kings Point for a day of honors that included a formal regimental parade, the induction ceremony, and a reception and dinner that attracted numerous union chiefs, government officials like DOT's Maritime Administrator, Albert Herberger, who presented Kirkland with a departmental award, and many Academy alumni.

After graduating from the Academy, Kirkland sailed as a licensed merchant marine officer during World War II, attaining a shipmaster's license. Following the war, he studied at Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service and joined the staff of the AFL-CIO in 1948.

Some 31 years later, he succeeded legendary labor leader George Meany as AFL-CIO national president, a position to which Kirkland regularly was reelected until his decision to retire last summer.

The Academy's Hall of Distinguished Graduates was established in 1994 to call attention to the outstanding career accomplishments of selected alumni. Its two other members to date are the Honorable Joseph B. Williams '44, a New York State Supreme Court Justice who was the Academy's first African-American graduate; and the Honorable Romulo Espaldon '50, the Philippines Ambassador to Saudi Arabia and Yemen who attended Kings Point through a special post-World War II program of economic and educational aid to the Philippines.

Disability Awareness Day: An Event for All Ages

by Trish Day

October 25, 1995 marked the department's celebration of National Disability Employment Awareness month with an event that reached both the very young and the young at heart. The event, themed *ADA +5: Value Added...Barrier Free* commemorated the fifth anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act and celebrated the contributions of DOT's employees with disabilities.

The celebration included a technology and resource fair held in the DOT Headquarters Nassif building courtyard. The fair featured more than 30 vendors and service providers, showcasing everything from accessible transportation, to the latest in communication technology, to two organizations who train man's best friend to assist people with various disabilities.

A highlight of the event was presented by United Cerebral Palsy of Washington and Northern Va., Inc. Staff from that organization presented a puppet show entitled *Kids on the Block*, which featured puppets with disabilities. Preschool classes from the DOT day care and other area day care centers attended the performance.

Federal Highway Administrator Rodney E. Slater delivered the keynote address for the event, saying, "Together, we can build a society that is truly barrier free. Together we can all reap the benefits of the value added by every person in this department. Let this department be a role model for the rest of our government and the people we serve."

The two employee groups that sponsored the celebration were DOT Accessibility and Disability Awareness (DOT/ADA) and the Deaf Employees Association for the Department of Transportation (DEAF/DOT). Both groups are open to all employees concerned about disability or deafness issues. For information on DOT/ADA, contact Mary-Elizabeth Peters chairperson, at (202) 366-0002, or for DEAF/DOT, contact Mark Tessier President, at (202) 366-2901 (TDD).



Kids on the Block delighted kids of all ages and dispelled many myths about people with disabilities.



The DOT Headquarters Nassif building Fitness Center recently recognized employees who either participated in at least

1,000 supervised fitness classes, performed at least 1,000 weight training workouts of 30 minutes or more, or has run or walked at least 10,000 miles since working at the DOT.

Those recognized for achieving the Fitness Centers high level of commitment were given "all-weather" jackets,

Headquarters Fitness Center Recognizes "Fittest-of-the-Fit" Employees

donated by the DOT Employee Recreation Association. Executive Vice President of the Recreation Association, and former President of the Association, Marvin Futrell was on hand to present the awards to the outstanding fitness center award winners.

Award winners, the Fitness Center staff and DOT Recreation Association Vice President Marvin Futrell (far right) take time out from their workouts to capture the moment.

November Is Native American Heritage Month Cherokee Nation Pride

by Robert Albertson

The Cherokee Indians language descended from the Iroquois linguistic stock. The Cherokee called themselves "Ani'-Yun'wiyah," meaning "Leading or Principal Peoples."

One of the greatest cultural contributions was the development of their written language by Chief Sequoyah in 1821.

Sequoyah created an ingenious system which contained 85 characters called the "Talking Leaves." Within six months after completing his 12-year effort, nearly all Cherokees were literate.

The Cherokee Nation was and is a democratic society. The same strong traits that saw the Cherokee people survive repeated hardships will continue to serve them as they look toward the future. Because of hardships, they did not have a principal chief for 64 years, until 1971.

For more information on the Cherokee Nation, please call Robert Albertson at 202-267-1427.

CALENDAR November

Native American Heritage Month

6-21 Secretary Peña, FRA Administrator Moliotis travel to Asia. Itinerary includes Japan, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam and Thailand.

10 Veterans Day

11-22 USCG Commandant Kramek heads U.S. delegation to International Maritime Organization Meeting. London, United Kingdom.

30 Assistant Secretary Palmer addresses American Concrete Paving Association annual convention. Marco Island, Fla.

December

National Drunk and Drugged Driving Month(3D)

Nationwide education and enforcement campaign to raise awareness of impaired driving during the holiday season.

15 "Lights On For Life"

a one day nationwide headlight observance in remembrance of persons killed or injured in alcohol-related crashes. Law enforcement, businesses, government agencies and private citizens are being asked to keep their vehicle headlights on as they drive throughout the day, to remember those killed and injured in alcohol-related crashes, and as a reminder of law enforcement's watchful eye on impaired drivers.

The best gift you can give your family this year is a DUI-free holiday. Don't drink and drive. Designate a driver. And, protect you and your family by always using your safety belts.

Have a safe holiday season!