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Highlights

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Employee Recognitions

Outstanding Research and Special Programs Administration (RSPA) employees were honored at the Secretary's Twenty-Fourth Annual Awards Ceremony on October 18, 1991. RSPA's Administrator Travis P. Dungan was on stage with the Secretary to present awards.

William J. Nash, Office of Management Training and Career Development Division, Transportation Safety Institute (TSI), for leadership and resourcefulness in developing and implementing international civil aviation security training and assistance programs, and,

Hattie L. Mitchell, Office of Hazardous Materials Standards, for her outstanding contributions to the development of regulations to improve safety in the transportation of hazardous materials cargo tank motor vehicles.

Receiving the Secretary's Award for Excellence were:

Susan P. Jarrell, Office of the Director, Volpe National Transportation Systems Center (VNTSC), for her consistently outstanding contribution to RSPA/VNTSC as a first-rate professional secretary,



Travis P. Dungan, RSPA Administrator, Hattie L. Mitchell, Office of Hazardous Materials Standards, and Secretary Samuel K. Skinner at annual awards ceremony.

Lisa Kleiner, Office of Management and Administration, for her outstanding performance and professionalism providing service to employees and the public,

Karen Philpott, Office of Financial Management, VNTSC, for her exceptionally high standards in performing her accounting responsibilities, and

Kathleen M. Brennick, Office of Plans and Programs Technical Support Services Office, VNTSC,

for her outstanding Office Automation support and contributions to VNTSC's Technical Support Services Office.

The Secretary's Award for Outstanding Achievement in Diversity (formerly EEO Award) was granted to James P. Andersen, Office of Plans and Programs, VNTSC, for his extraordinary contribution and commitment to the Department's emphasis on managing diversity.

Research and Special Programs Administration (RSPA) is responsible for transmodal issues relative to the safe, effective and efficient transportation of people and goods throughout the world.



Office of Emergency Transportation Hosts NATO Meeting

RSPA's Office of Emergency Transportation (OET) recently hosted a meeting of a subgroup of the NATO Civil Aviation Planning Committee (CAPC) in Washington. CAPC is one of eight NATO civil planning boards, which are responsible for coordinating national plans for civil crisis management in the 16-nation Alliance. CAPC is specifically tasked with planning and implementing civil aviation support to NATO military operations and to essential civilian requirements in a crisis. CAPC arranges for the commitment of aircraft by the Alliance members for reinforcement of Europe, and administers programs for NATO taskings through an aviation crisis management organization.

The subgroup which met here was charged with assessing the impact of geopolitical changes in Europe and, particularly, the evolving NATO military strategy on the future work program of CAPC. Administrator Travis P. Dungan welcomed the group and outlined their challenging assignment. He noted the overwhelming importance of civil aviation in the Gulf conflict and its importance in future crises. The President's National Security Strategy, issued just a week before, makes clear the continued U.S. obligation to NATO, while accepting the desire of the European nations for a distinct security identity. He closed by assuring the group of the Department's continued commitment to its NATO responsibilities.

The meeting was chaired by the Chairman of CAPC, Mr. Richard Williams of the U.K. Mr. Lloyd Milburn, Director of RSPA's Of-

fice of Emergency Transportation and the Vice-Chairman of CAPC, represented the United States. Other participating nations were Germany, Belgium, Portugal, and Norway, along with the NATO international staff.

The conference produced a series of recommendations on the long-term direction of NATO civil aviation to be introduced at the next CAPC Plenary in November.

Cooperative Hazardous Materials Enforcement Development Program

The Cooperative Hazardous Materials Enforcement Development (COHMED) program is an outreach activity of the RSPA's, Hazardous Materials Safety Program that has been in operation for over five years. It was developed to foster coordination, cooperation, and communication between Federal and state agencies and tribal nations having regulatory and enforcement responsibilities for the safe transportation of hazardous materials. All fifty states, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Canada and Mexico have participated in various phases of its diversified program.

The program has evolved into a Federal/state partnership dedicated to serving as a focal point for information sharing about hazardous materials transportation issues and delivery of services. Some of the primary services provided through COHMED include:

- Enforcement Training
- Emergency Response Training
- Conferences/Workshops
- Inspection Manuals
- Information Exchange

- Quarterly Newsletters
- Special Bulletins
- Hazardous Materials Studies
- Congressional Testimony

COHMED participation is open to state and municipal agencies involved with the regulation of hazardous materials transportation and municipal enforcement activities and emergency response planning. There is no cost to participate. Some of the various state and local agencies that actively participate in COHMED activities include: departments of public safety, law enforcement agencies such as state highway patrols and metropolitan police departments, emergency management agencies, state fire marshall's offices, state disaster and emergency services, motor vehicle agencies, state departments of transportation and public utility commissions.

COHMED also serves as an important communication link for the states by: representing their views and needs to RSPA and to other agencies of the Federal government; developing joint Federal/state programs; seeking uniformity of standards, training, and inspection activities; and by providing a forum whereby the states can exchange ideas, information and plans.

During the past several years, COHMED has sponsored regional and national workshops to bring hazardous materials issues to the attention of state enforcement personnel and department heads. Special studies have been conducted in selected states to improve programs nationally and training aids and informational services have been tailored to meet expanding needs.

Four COHMED committees were formed last year to more effectively utilize the expertise of

the participants. The committees are: Enforcement, Investigation and Compliance; Routing and Risk Assessment; Training, Publications and Resource Development; and Emergency Response. Each committee confers throughout the year to plan hazardous materials initiatives based on lessons learned by the various states under "real world" situations. For example, many sessions on the program for this year's Annual COHMED Conference held in October in Burlingame, California, were planned by these committees: Arizona and Washington presented a review of their Regional Response Team activities; Illinois and New York described their Awareness Training Courses and Idaho and Louisiana discussed their Model State Enforcement Programs for the Hazardous Materials Regulations (HMR).

Through COHMED, five state law enforcement agencies completed a study to measure the thickness of the shells and heads of cargo tanks used to transport corrosive liquids (primarily sulfuric acid). RSPA awarded the contract to the state agencies after tank measurements over the past several years indicated that some acid cargo tanks in sulfuric acid service appear to be thinning to below the required minimum specification thickness allowed under the HMR. The purpose of the study was to determine the cause of the apparent deterioration of the acid carrying cargo tanks. Cargo tank car measurements were taken in Arizona, Maryland, Missouri, Oregon, and Washington. Results of the study indicated that states with warmer climates had a more serious problem with premature deterioration of specification cargo tanks than states with colder climates. RSPA is reviewing the

results of the study to determine if further research or rulemaking may be required to remedy the problems.

Largest-Ever Disaster Exercise

The Department of Transportation (DOT) joined 26 Federal agencies and 7 states recently in the largest disaster exercise ever conducted - RESPONSE 91A. Nearly 200 employees from throughout DOT dealt with the terrible devastation that could occur from a 7.6 Richter earthquake on the New Madrid fault in the Midwest.

RSPA's Office of Emergency Transportation coordinated exercise "play" at Headquarters and 12 field sites. RSPA Administrator Dungan captured the essence of the exercise: "It's not a matter of if such a catastrophe will occur, but when!"

Summer Intern Program

The Summer Transportation Intern Program for Diverse Groups was sponsored by RSPA's Office of University Research and Education. This successful program provided an excellent opportunity for students at the undergraduate and graduate levels to meet transportation professionals, examine issues in a workplace setting and to gain practical experience. The summer program marked the beginning of what should be a long and productive effort for RSPA and the Department.

Office of Pipeline Safety Work Redesign

The Office of Pipeline Safety (OPS) in RSPA initiated a major organizational assessment in February 1991 to improve operating efficiency, effectiveness, productivity, and job satisfaction. Known as "OPS REBORN," this assessment involves a top-to-bottom examination of how OPS functions. A Work Design Team composed of eight OPS employees representing a diagonal slice of OPS is assessing the organization and proposing recommendations for improvement. The team was chartered and is guided by a Steering Committee composed of seven senior managers in OPS and RSPA. Consultants from the Volpe National Transportation Systems Center are providing training and guidance on the work redesign process.

The team has completed three major analyses. A Stakeholder Analysis was conducted to gain a better understanding of external stakeholder expectations of OPS and how well OPS is meeting those expectations. A Social System Analysis was undertaken to increase understanding of the work environment and how it affects individual and organizational performance. And, a Technical Analysis was done to assess tools, methods, and systems for performing the work.

Each analysis has resulted in a list of problem areas or areas where improvements need to be made. For example, stakeholders would like to see more thorough preparation and justification of documents (regulations, budgets, cost-benefit analyses, etc.) and periodic updates on significant OPS activities. OPS staff members would like to have



better communications between Headquarters and Regional Offices, more training, and defined career paths. The technical analysis underscored that OPS is too reactive, strategic planning is lacking, and resources are not well coordinated.

The Team presented its preliminary recommendations to the Steering Committee in August 1991. After agreement is reached between the Team and the Steering Committee on the recommendations, the Team will formalize its final report including a broad implementation plan and a detailed information systems model to support the recommendations. Team work is expected to be concluded in November.

With the full and continuing support of RSPA Administrator Travis Dungan, the OPS work redesign project holds promise for benefits to all of RSPA.

Automated Tariffs Collected \$1 Million- Plus

More than \$1 million in user fees from air carrier tariff filings in FY 1991 was collected by RSPA's Office of Automated Tariffs.

International air carriers file tariffs with DOT that show changes in passenger fares, cargo rates, and rules for the application of the pricing information. Both U.S. and foreign carriers file tariffs for scheduled passenger and cargo transportation by air.

Benefits from such filings affect the public as well as the air carrier industry. Pricing data and related information promote price competition. This enables prompt pricing responses by a filing carrier's competitors, and encourages innovative pricing for the traveling public.

HAZMAT Field Offices

In Fiscal Year 1991, RSPA established three regional field offices under the Associate Administrator for Hazardous Materials Safety, Al Roberts, to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of its hazardous materials enforcement program. The Eastern Region Office in Newark, New Jersey, the Central Region Office in Des Plaines, Illinois and the Western Regional Office in Ontario, California are currently operational.

The field offices will report to John O'Connell, Director of the Office of Hazardous Materials Enforcement. When fully staffed, four inspectors will be assigned to both the Eastern and Western offices, and five will be assigned to the Central office. The inspectors will conduct at least 22 weeks of field inspections of packaging manufacturers and brokers; cylinder retesters, reconditioners, repairers, and rebuilders; shippers offering hazardous materials for transportation in packagings other than bulk; exemptions and approvals issued by RSPA; and international shipments of hazardous materials at major ports.

While the primary mission of RSPA's hazardous materials enforcement program is to gain compliance with the hazardous materials regulations, by conducting compliance inspections and initiating enforcement actions, RSPA's field offices will also perform other important functions. RSPA is committed to having the field offices serve as contact points for state enforcement organizations. The regional office inspectors will be available to provide special assistance to state enforcement agencies, including training in conducting terminal or shipper inspections, information

dissemination, hosting of Interagency Personnel Assignment (IPA) personnel from state agencies, and general liaison with RSPA headquarters.

New R&D Management System

RSPA's Office of Research Policy and Technology Transfer has substantially improved the system that manages the DOT's research. The new system is a direct response to the importance placed by Secretary Skinner on technology programs. The system's foundation is the "Statement of U.S. Department of Transportation Research and Development Policy," signed by the Secretary in January. Travis P. Dungan, RSPA Administrator and Chairman of the R&D Coordinating Council, said that the R&D program agenda "focuses DOT's technical resources on the most serious needs, and those that will provide the biggest payoff opportunities."