



Improving Road Safety for All Users on Federal-Aid Projects Request for Information (RFI)

Background

- ↳ [National Roadway Safety Strategy](#) and the [Moving to a Complete Streets Design Model: A Report to Congress on Opportunities and Challenges](#) include commitments and strategies to address national crisis of traffic fatalities and serious injuries
 - ↳ Adopt the Safe System Approach
 - ↳ Develop standards and guidance that promote safety for all users
 - ↳ Make Complete Streets the default approach
- ↳ Goal of Zero Fatalities and Serious Injuries
 - ↳ Prioritize safety in all Federal highway investments and projects

Funding and Regulations

- ← Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) (23 U.S.C. 148) only 6% of Federal-Aid Highway Program
 - ← Specific requirements to address safety
 - ← HSIP alone will not achieve goal of zero fatalities
- ← Other Federal-aid formula funds can be used for safety improvements
 - ← No prescribed process for incorporating safety
- ← U.S.C. and CFR require consideration of safety
 - ← 23 U.S.C. 109 – provide facilities that are conducive to safety and consider the AASHTO *Highway Safety Manual* (HSM) when developing design criteria
 - ← 23 U.S.C. 134 and 135 – planning processes that provide for safety of all users
 - ← 23 CFR 625 – provide highest practical and feasible level of safety

Design Standards for Highways

↳ 23 CFR 625 Design Standards

- Governs design standards applicable to new construction, reconstruction, resurfacing (except for maintenance resurfacing), restoration, and rehabilitation projects on the NHS
- Incorporates by reference AASHTO publication, *A Policy on Geometric Design Highways and Streets* (Green Book) which provides language and ranges of values allowing for flexibility
- Allows design exceptions when standards are not met

↳ Agencies have developed Complete Streets policies, ordinances, or laws to integrate people and place in the planning, design, construction, operation, and maintenance of our transportation networks

Safety Performance Assessments

- ← Agencies have developed evidence-based policies, procedures, and tools to assess and analyze existing and proposed safety performance of facilities and projects and qualitative safety examinations of safety through Road Safety Audits (RSAs)
 - ← Quantify the potential effects of transportation investment decisions in terms of crash frequency and severity
 - ← Lack consistency on how they are applied across all programs and projects
- ← Further the consideration of safety in project development
- ← Encourage use of Proven Safety Countermeasures

Two Main Sections

- ◀ Design Standards for Highways (NHS System)
- ◀ Safety Performance Assessments

Request for Information (RFI)

Request Comments on:

- Request Comments on:
 - Whether changes to FHWA's Design Standards regulation or other FHWA regulations are needed to better serve all users;
 - How the safety performance of Federal-aid projects should be assessed; and,
 - How to include features that improve safety performance across Federal-aid projects.

Twenty-seven questions in six topic areas:

- Improving Road Safety for All Users;
- Design Standards for the NHS;
- Safety Performance Assessment Applicability;**
- Conducting a Safety Performance Assessment;**
- Safety Performance Assessment Process Evaluation and Outcomes; and,**
- Safety Performance Assessment Implementation Considerations**

Post-RFI Actions

- ◀ Use information gathered to:
 - ◀ Consider future rulemaking options
 - ◀ Develop guidance or other resources (case studies, informational briefs, etc.) related to design standards or for safety performance assessments on Federal-aid projects
- ◀ Support BIL implementation across programs
- ◀ Inform Complete Streets initiative activities
 - ◀ Provide additional recommendations for addressing the five opportunity areas in the Complete Streets Report to Congress



Discussion

- ◀ For purposes of this RFI and as referenced throughout the questions, a safety performance assessment involves the application of analytical tools and techniques for quantifying the potential effects of transportation investment decisions in terms of crash frequency and severity, **or a formal qualitative examination of safety performance such as an RSA.**

Request for Information (RFI)

← Twenty-seven questions in six topic areas:

- ← Improving Road Safety for All Users;
- ← Design Standards for the NHS;
- ← **Safety Performance Assessment Applicability;**
- ← **Conducting a Safety Performance Assessment;**
- ← **Safety Performance Assessment Process Evaluation and Outcomes; and,**
- ← **Safety Performance Assessment Implementation Considerations**

Request for Information (RFI)

Agency Type	Comments
Advocacy	16
Concerned Citizen	50
Industry Organization	13
Local Agency	10
Regional Agency	8
State Department of Transportation	26
Other	2
Total	125

Safety Performance Assessment Applicability

- ◀13. For which current projects (i.e., by improvement type, funding program/level, facility type, etc.) are safety performance assessments or analyses conducted in your State?
- ◀14. To what extent is the safety performance assessed on non-HSIP funded projects?
- ◀15. What policies or procedures on conducting project-specific safety performance assessments and analyses does your agency have? Provide examples and citations to relevant laws, regulations, policies, procedures, or other materials where possible.

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Conducting a Safety Performance Assessment

← **16. What methods, tools, and types of safety performance assessments are used to analyze project-specific safety performance? What are the minimum data and analysis requirements that should be considered on how to conduct a safety performance assessment?**

← 17. With whom do States engage (i.e., counties, cities, MPOs, rural planning organizations, and other political subdivisions) when assessing safety performance? How do States engage the public or use the safety performance assessment results to communicate to the public using inclusive and representative processes?

← 18. How are safety performance assessments integrated into the overall project development cycle? At which stage(s) of the project development process (e.g., planning and programming, environmental analysis, design, operations and maintenance) are project-specific safety performance assessments conducted? Are evaluations conducted after the project has been implemented? Responses may include examples of projects where safety performance assessments were conducted and how they informed the final project deliverables.

← 19. How is safety performance assessed or considered at the system level planning or early transportation project identification/prioritization stage? How is network screening used to inform project decisionmaking?

Safety Performance Assessment Process Evaluation and Outcomes

←20. What indicators or measures have been used to determine the effectiveness of safety performance assessments?

←21. To what extent is the safety performance assessment or analysis used to inform project decisionmaking? How is safety performance weighted in relation to factors such as environmental impact or traffic congestion? Are there requirements to include countermeasures or evaluation of alternative designs that are expected to improve safety performance? If yes, please provide examples of the requirements or projects where the safety performance assessment led to the implementation of countermeasures and strategies that improved safety performance.

←22. How is safety performance evaluated after the project is implemented? To what extent are countermeasures, alternative designs, or strategies to improve safety performance replicated on other projects, based on past project evaluations?

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Safety Performance Assessment Implementation Considerations

- ← 23. What challenges or concerns does your agency see with possible Federal requirements for safety performance assessments on certain Federal-aid projects?
- ← 24. What challenges or concerns does your agency see with possible Federal requirements for implementing cost-effective safety improvements resulting from safety performance assessments?
- ← 25. What benefits does your agency see with possible Federal requirements for safety performance assessments on certain Federal-aid projects where safety may not be the sole motivation for the project? What benefits does your agency see for any Federal requirements for cost-effective safety improvements resulting from the assessments?
- ← 26. What criteria, thresholds, characteristics, or other factors should States consider when determining when to conduct a project-specific safety performance assessment or analysis for projects on the Federal-aid highway system?
- ← 27. What additional resources (i.e., staff, guidance, tools, budget, etc.) would be necessary to adequately assess the expected safety performance of Federal-aid projects?

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Discussion

- ◀ Is any research currently in the works that could be helpful for assessing scale and scope of safety assessments? What other research may be needed?
- ◀ What research is realistically possible in gauging the effectiveness of safety assessments in project development, including potential tools, methods, or approaches used for them, as it relates to outcomes (reduced fatal and serious injury crashes)?
- ◀ What guidance could be useful for practitioners?
- ◀ For state DOTs, what has worked well in regards to substance of safety assessments, timing during planning/project development, scale/scope of the assessment depending on scale/scope of the overall project?