

Hazardous Materials Transportation Safety Instructor Best Practices Proposal

U. S. Department of Transportation Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration and Dangerous Goods Advisory Council Partnership Agreement

The Parties

The Dangerous Goods Advisory Council (DGAC), is an international, educational, nonprofit organization with member companies representing shippers of varying sizes, carriers of all modes, container manufacturers and reconditioners, emergency response and waste clean-up companies. Its member companies, representing virtually all sectors of the hazardous materials transportation industry, are engaged in activities within the jurisdiction of the U.S. Department of Transportation's Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA). PHMSA is the federal agency responsible for promulgating a national safety program that will minimize the risks to life and property inherent in commercial transportation of hazardous materials.

Background

DGAC and many of its member companies conduct training programs designed to ensure persons involved in various activities related to hazardous materials transportation are properly trained in the application and use of the Hazardous Materials Regulations (HMR) promulgated by PHMSA. The HMR contain training requirements that apply to all hazardous materials (hazmat) employees. These training requirements are designed to be very flexible, allowing employers to seek the most effective means of providing training while ensuring that each hazmat employee receives all the training needed to safely perform his or her duties. Nearly all of DGAC's 180 members have employees who are subject to the hazmat training requirements. Included are employees who are responsible for safe transportation of hazardous materials, as well as those who cause them to be transported in commerce.

Many companies elect to send hazmat employees to outside training schools, such as those operated either by DGAC, some of its member companies, or other firms. Others elect to provide their own training, using employees or outside sources specifically for that purpose. A variety of methods are available and acceptable to provide training, e.g. classroom, on-line, and CDs. The HMR do not specify standards for trainers, and there is no instructor qualifications program in the United States for hazmat training instructors.

DGAC and its members, as both providers and consumers of training programs, and as beneficiaries of the safety outcomes achieved by compliance with the HMR, have a vested interest in the quality of training provided and ensuring that training addresses the competencies needed by hazmat employees to carry out their responsibilities in a manner that promotes hazmat transportation safety. It is also in PHMSA's interest that the

training provided is effective in supporting the safety objective of the Hazardous Materials Regulations. Both parties agree that effective training is a key element in providing for the safe transportation of hazardous materials and that effective instructors are of paramount importance in meeting the safety objective. PHMSA and DGAC therefore agree to partner for this project.

Training and education are an integral part of both the hazardous materials regulatory program and DOT's responsibility to ensure the safe transportation of hazmat. PHMSA develops and disseminates hazmat training programs through training on CD-ROM and publication development and distribution. Additionally, PHMSA provides training and outreach by hosting multimodal seminars and hazardous materials transportation workshops for both industry and State and local hazmat professionals through the Hazardous Materials Safety Assistance Team (HMSAT). The HMSAT also provide training to State and local government and emergency responders. In fulfillment of the HMR's regulatory requirement for training, the majority of hazmat employees are trained by safety instructors and the methods and competencies of these instructors impact the quality and effectiveness of training and ultimately the competencies of hazmat employees.

Project Scope and Objectives

The purpose of this project is to develop voluntary best practices and guidelines for hazmat instructors and hazmat training programs to move the industry towards a performance oriented program that demonstrates the effectiveness of hazmat training to ensure the safe transportation of hazardous materials. The scope of the project includes a review of the factors that enhance the training experience and make it effective, development of voluntary best practices for a training program, assessment of basic course materials needed, and identification of scope and benefits of different testing methods applicable to intended competencies of students for knowledge learned.

The voluntary best practices can be used by:

- training academies and organizations to self-assess the quality of their program and to assess the candidacy of potential instructors,
- instructors to assess the quality of their work product, and
- consumers of training (hazmat employers/employees) to objectively evaluate potential training providers

PHMSA and DGAC will investigate the possibility of structuring three levels of voluntary best practices:

1. Develop basic voluntary best practices for instructors of hazardous materials training programs. These practices would focus on general awareness competencies.
2. Develop intermediate voluntary best practices. These practices would focus on criteria for teaching multiple modes and will build on the core practices for general awareness competency.
3. Develop expert voluntary best practices. These practices would focus on specialized training programs tailored to specific needs and function specific competencies.

Terms of Agreement

DOT/PHMSA and DGAC hereby enter into this partnership with the purpose of developing voluntary best training practices that will enhance the safe transportation of hazardous materials by reducing incidents that may result in fatalities, injuries, and property damage and improve the professionalism and effectiveness of hazmat instructors.

This agreement does not preclude PHMSA from entering into other agreements with parties interested in achieving similar goals, or for parties other than DGAC from participating openly in the efforts described in this agreement. By entering into this agreement, PHMSA is not endorsing or promoting DGAC (or its member companies) as an organization or any of its activities. A condition of this agreement is that DGAC will provide interested parties the opportunity to participate in the process and help PHMSA ensure that a broad and diverse group of interested and affected stakeholders contribute to the anticipated results.

PHMSA will not provide DGAC with any appropriated funding to conduct this project.

DGAC and PHMSA will work together to solicit input from members of the training community, chemical production facilities, hazmat transportation industry, relevant industry associations, and other transportation sectors requiring hazmat training. Based on information from this input and interactive discussion, DGAC and PHMSA will jointly draft voluntary best practices and distribute outreach materials that reflect this effort.

Once developed, PHMSA will post the proposed best practices and guidelines for comment by all interested parties.

Upon reasonable notice to the other party, either party may terminate the partnership.

Signed: _____ Date: _____
Theodore L. Willke
USDOT/PHMSA

Signed: _____ Date: _____
Mike Morrissette
DGAC