




Memorandum

**U.S. Department of
Transportation**

Office of the Secretary
of Transportation
Office of Inspector General

Subject: INFORMATION: Audit Announcement –
FHWA’s Oversight of the Highway Safety
Improvement Program
Project No. 12M3002M000

Date: February 06, 2012

From: Joseph W. Comé 
Assistant Inspector General for Highway and
Transit Audits

Reply to
Attn. of: JA-40

To: Federal Highway Administrator

Approximately 33,000 people died on the Nation's highways in 2010, and according to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the financial impact of highway crashes nationwide is approximately \$230 billion per year. In 2005, the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users¹ established the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) as a data-driven and performance-based program to significantly reduce traffic fatalities and serious injuries on public roads. Beginning in fiscal year 2006, HSIP has received approximately \$1.2 billion in funding annually to implement the new approach to prioritizing safety improvement projects. FHWA’s oversight is critical to ensuring that States use data-driven, performance-based approaches to target Federal dollars to the highest priority safety risks.

Accordingly, we plan to evaluate FHWA’s oversight of HSIP. Specifically, we will assess whether FHWA (1) provides sufficient guidance and assistance to enable the States to effectively implement the data-driven, performance-based approach called for in HSIP’s enabling legislation and (2) evaluates HSIP results, which States report to FHWA annually, to determine the program's impact.

We plan to begin this audit immediately and will coordinate with your audit liaison to schedule an entrance conference. If I can answer any questions or be of further assistance, please contact me at (202) 366-5630 or Wendy Harris, Program Director, at (366) 366-2794.

cc: Audit Liaison, FHWA
Audit Liaison, OST

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¹ Pub. L. No. 105-99 (2005).