

Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) Guidance

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This guidance cancels SHSP Interim Guidance Issued April 5, 2013.

BACKGROUND

The Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) is a core Federal-aid program. This program is codified at 23 U.S.C. 148 with implementing regulations at 23 CFR Part 924. To obligate HSIP funds, among other requirements, a State shall have in effect a State highway safety improvement program under which the State develops, implements, and updates a Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) that identifies and analyzes highway safety problems and opportunities as described under the program. (23 U.S.C. 148(c)).

PURPOSE

The purpose of this guidance is to clarify SHSP requirements in 23 U.S.C. 148 and 23 CFR Part 924 that were initiated in the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) Act and continue under the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act. Specifically, this guidance addresses the SHSP: 1) features; 2) update cycle; 3) approval of update process; and 4) penalty for failure to have an updated, approved plan. Additional information regarding SHSP development, implementation and evaluation is referenced in Attachment A.

SHSP FEATURES

The SHSP is a State's comprehensive transportation safety plan, based on safety data, developed after consultation with a broad range of safety stakeholders, and approved by the Governor of the State or a responsible State agency. (23 U.S.C. 148(a)(11)). The SHSP shall demonstrate the following features:

A Consultative Approach

States shall develop the SHSP in consultation with the following stakeholders identified in 23 U.S.C. 148(a)(11)(A):

- a highway safety representative of the Governor of the State;
- regional transportation planning organizations and metropolitan planning organizations, if any;
- representatives of major modes of transportation;
- State and local traffic enforcement officials;
- a highway-rail grade crossing safety representative of the Governor of the State;
- representatives conducting a motor carrier safety program under section 31102, 31106, or 31309 of title 49;
- motor vehicle administration agencies;
- county transportation officials;



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- State representatives of nonmotorized users; and
- other major Federal, State, tribal, and local safety stakeholders.

While not required, States may also consult with stakeholders not explicitly identified in 23 U.S.C. 148(a)(11)(A), depending on their transportation safety needs. Consultation should achieve active involvement of multidisciplinary stakeholders and sharing of safety data and information systems.

Strategic Direction and Coordination

The SHSP shall provide strategic direction for State plans, such as the HSIP, the Highway Safety Plan (HSP) and the Commercial Vehicle Safety Plan (CVSP) (23 CFR Part 924.9(a)(3)(x)). It also shall provide direction for local and tribal safety plans. This means, for instance, that State, local and tribal entities should coordinate their safety planning efforts with the SHSP and incorporate the goals, emphasis areas, and strategies of the SHSP into their plans, as appropriate.

The law also requires other agencies to coordinate their State safety plans with the SHSP. Specifically, the State shall coordinate its HSP, data collection, and information systems with the SHSP (as required under Highway Safety Programs) (23 U.S.C. 402(b)(1)(F)(v)). The lead State commercial motor vehicle safety agency must also coordinate the plan, data collection, and information systems with the State highway safety improvement program required under section 148(c) of title 23 (49 U.S.C. 31102(c)(2)(K)). Plans such as the Long-Range Statewide Transportation Plan and Metropolitan Transportation Plan should also be developed in coordination with the SHSP. Where relevant, this coordination should include, at a minimum, high-level goals, objectives and strategies that are consistent with those in the SHSP.

In turn, the SHSP shall consider the results of other State, regional or local transportation and highway safety planning processes (23 U.S.C. 148 (a)(11)(E)) and should also consider tribal planning processes and outcomes. These processes can inform the SHSP, particularly in terms of the roadway safety issues faced in local, regional and tribal areas. The SHSP shall also be consistent with 23 U.S.C. 135(g), which pertains to the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) (23 U.S.C. 148(a)(11)(H)). Consistency with 23 U.S.C. 135(g) could be demonstrated, for example, by showing that the SHSP and STIP were developed cooperatively by the same planning partners.

In summary, the SHSP and the relevant transportation plans within a State should be developed in a cooperative process and have consistent safety goals and objectives that support a performance-based highway safety program.

Data Driven Problem Identification

Under 23 U.S.C. 148(a)(11)(B), SHSPs shall analyze and make effective use of State, regional, local, or tribal safety data. States should use the best available safety data to identify critical highway safety problems and safety improvement opportunities on all public roads, including non-State-owned public roads and roads on tribal land. (23 U.S.C. 148(a)(11)(D)). When determining State transportation safety problems and priorities, States should analyze, at a minimum, crash (fatalities and serious injuries), roadway, and traffic data.

States shall also consider additional safety factors when identifying emphasis areas and strategies for their SHSP updates (23 U.S.C. 148(d)(1)(B)). These factors are:

- Findings of Road Safety Audits (RSA). RSA findings can be analyzed to identify common countermeasure recommendations, which may be particularly appropriate for systemic implementation.
- Locations of fatalities and serious injuries.
- Locations that possess risk factors for potential crashes.
- Rural roads, including all public roads, commensurate with fatality data.
- Motor vehicle crashes that include fatalities or serious injuries to bicyclists and pedestrians.
- Cost-effectiveness of improvements.
- Improvements to rail-highway grade crossings.
- Safety on all public roads, including non-State-owned public roads and roads on tribal land.

A Performance-Based Approach

Congress has established a performance-based Federal-aid highway program, which requires that States develop performance-based plans and programs. SHSPs have been at the forefront of a performance-based approach since they were first required in 2005. SHSPs shall continue to support this approach by adopting performance-based goals that are consistent with the safety performance measures established by FHWA in accordance with 23 U.S.C. 150 and shall be coordinated with other State highway safety programs (23 CFR 924.9(a)(3)(v)). SHSPs should also include multi-year objectives, which encourage monitoring of the status and progress of SHSP implementation efforts.

As part of the performance-based program, States are also required to set annual targets for safety performance measures to carry out the HSIP. (23 U.S.C. 150(d)(1)). The SHSP goals are not the same as the HSIP targets. However, the SHSP process provides an opportunity to establish longer term goals and objectives, to which the annual targets can align. This provides consistency and direction across all safety plans and programs.

The SHSP goals span multiple years and are often ambitious in nature, such as “striving toward zero deaths.” However, SHSPs typically establish measurable multi-year objectives as well, which provides an opportunity to drive consistency for the annual targets. To establish consistency between SHSP objectives and annual targets, States should ensure that the agencies involved in the development of annual targets for the HSP and the HSIP are also involved in developing the multi-year SHSP objectives and defining desired progress.

Another recommended practice is to align the method used for establishing annual safety targets with those used for establishing the SHSP objectives and to obtain agreement on the method from the State Department of Transportation, State Highway Safety Office and other SHSP stakeholders involved in developing annual targets (e.g., Metropolitan Planning Organizations). Once the method is agreed upon, States can develop the fatality and serious injury objectives for the multi-year period of the SHSP. This can be used as the starting point for establishing the annual targets as well. Since annual targets are updated more frequently than the multi-year SHSP objectives—and should take into account the impact of planned programs and projects—annual HSP and HSIP targets may deviate from the multi-year SHSP objectives.

Use of Effective Strategies and Countermeasures

The SHSP describes a program of strategies to reduce or eliminate safety hazards. (23 U.S.C. 148(a)(11)(F)). High priority should be given to implementing those strategies that have been proven to significantly reduce roadway fatalities and serious injuries in the SHSP emphasis areas (see Attachment A for references regarding effective countermeasures). Systemic improvements and low-cost countermeasures should also be given consideration.

A Process for Implementing Strategies

The SHSP shall describe the *process* and potential resources for implementing the strategies in the emphasis areas (23 CFR 924.9(a)(3)(xi)). For example, the SHSP could reference that the behavioral strategies will be implemented through projects or actions in the HSP and, similarly, infrastructure projects will be implemented through the HSIP. Resources can include the agency or champion that will implement the strategy and/or the funding source that may be considered for implementing the strategy. The SHSP shall also include, or be accompanied by, *actions* that address more specifically how the SHSP emphasis area strategies will be implemented (23 CFR 924.11(c)). Often States accomplish this by developing SHSP emphasis area action plans. These action plans typically include the strategy, related actions (e.g., projects), the plan where the action resides, the agency and/or person that will champion implementation of the action, the resources, and the timeframe. The examples of emphasis area action plans below illustrate how an emphasis area strategy is implemented through specific actions and how progress will be measured.

Emphasis Area Action Plan: Occupant Protection

Strategy 1.	Action/Project	Plan	Agency/Champion	Resources	Timeframe	Performance Measures
High Visibility Enforcement of Seat Belt Laws	Overtime Seat Belt Enforcement	HSP	State Highway Safety Office	Section 402 funds	2x per year (November and May)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of seat belt citations Observed seat belt use
	Click it or Ticket Media Campaign	HSP	State Highway Safety Office	Section 402 funds and Penalty Transfer Funds	2x per year (November and May)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awareness of seat belt laws and enforcement campaign

Emphasis Area Action Plan: Roadway Departure

Strategy 1.	Action/Project	Plan	Agency/Champion	Resources	Timeframe	Performance Measures
Minimize the consequences of leaving the road	Shoulder Widening	HSIP	State DOT	HSIP and Surface Transportation Block Grant funds	Completion estimated: 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roadway departure fatalities Roadway departure serious injuries
	Removal of roadside objects	HSIP	State DOT	HSIP funds	Completion estimated: 2017	

Consideration of 4Es When Determining Highway Safety Strategies

A comprehensive SHSP shall address a variety of factors when determining strategies for the SHSP emphasis areas. (23 U.S.C. 148(a)(11)(C)). Key factors include the highway safety elements of engineering, education, enforcement, and emergency services (the 4 Es). This can apply to both infrastructure and non-infrastructure emphasis areas, as appropriate. For example, if speed is an emphasis area in a State SHSP, the State may consider a variety of 4 E strategies to reduce or mitigate the impact of speeding. Strategies might include increasing law enforcement efforts to reduce speeding (enforcement), applying traffic calming measures such as speed humps and roundabouts (engineering), delivering public information campaigns that focus on the dangers of speeding (education), and utilizing Emergency Medical Services data to quantify the burden to the health care system and the cost to the community (emergency services).

A Process for Evaluation

As States update their SHSPs, they should pay particular attention to how they will measure future progress and performance. States should have in place mechanisms for regularly tracking SHSP implementation and monitoring progress. This should include a review of SHSP implementation (assessing whether the strategies are being implemented as planned) and reviewing State progress in meeting SHSP goals and objectives, such as reductions in the number and rate of crashes, fatalities and serious injuries in the SHSP emphasis areas.

At a minimum, States shall evaluate their SHSPs as part of the States' regularly recurring SHSP update process. Regular evaluation, based on current safety data, confirms the validity of the emphasis areas and strategies. (23CFR 924.13 (a)(2)(i)). For example, if an SHSP goal or objective is not met, the results may suggest a strategy is ineffective, or in some cases, the process for implementation did not go as planned and needs to be reconsidered. See Attachment A for additional evaluation resources.

Address Special Rules

The law also requires States to include in their SHSP Update:

- Their definition of “High Risk Rural Road”. (23 U.S.C. 148(a)(1)).
- Strategies to address older driver and pedestrian safety, if there has been an increase in fatalities and serious injuries to older drivers and pedestrians. (23 U.S.C. 148(g)(2)).

SHSP UPDATE CYCLE

States shall complete an SHSP update no later than 5 years from the previous approved version (23 CFR 924.9(a)(3)(i)). SHSP updates shall meet the requirements for a State SHSP as defined in 23 U.S.C. 148(a)(12) and meet the requirements for SHSP updates and approvals as described in 23 U.S.C. 148(d) and 148(g)(2), and that are further defined in 23 CFR 924.

APPROVAL OF SHSP UPDATE PROCESS

A State shall seek approval of its process for updating the SHSP as described in 23 U.S.C. 148(d)(2). To fulfill these requirements, a State shall submit to the FHWA Division Administrator its updated SHSP along with a detailed description of the process it used to update the plan. (23 U.S.C. 148 (d)(2)(A)(ii)). A State should include this description as a section, chapter, or appendix in the SHSP. See attachment B for an example. The State should address, at a minimum, the elements discussed in this guidance and any other requirements included in 23 CFR 924. A good practice is to seek feedback on the update process throughout SHSP development.

A State’s SHSP update process will be approved if: (1) the SHSP is consistent with section 148(d) and 148(a)(11); and (2) the process the State used to update the SHSP is consistent with the requirements of

section 148. (23 U.S.C. 148(d)(2)(B)). The FHWA Division Administrator will notify the State when its updated SHSP process has been approved. The FHWA Division Administrator may seek input from the appropriate National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) Regional Administrator and Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) Division Administrator during the approval process. The updated SHSP will be posted on the USDOT website. (23 U.S.C. 148(h)(3)).

PENALTY FOR FAILURE TO HAVE AN APPROVED UPDATED SHSP

A State that does not have an updated SHSP by August 1, 2017, with a process approved by the FHWA Division Administrator, will not be eligible to receive additional formula obligation limitation during the annual redistribution of one-year obligation limitation of Federal-Aid Highway Program funds (often referred to as “August Redistribution”). See Attachment C for more information on August Redistribution. The penalty will remain in effect for each succeeding fiscal year until the fiscal year during which the plan has an approved process, which shall be by August 1 to avoid the penalty that year. (23 U.S.C. 148(d)(3)).

ATTACHMENT A

SHSP References and Resources

Related Information

- [Highway Safety Improvement Program Rulemaking](#)
- [Highway Safety Improvement Program Web Page, FHWA Office of Safety](#)
- [Highway Safety Improvement Program \(HSIP\) MAP-21 Interim Guidance](#)
- [High Risk Rural Roads Guidance](#)
- [Section 142: Older Drivers and Pedestrians Special Rule Interim Guidance](#)
- [Transportation Performance Management \(National Goals, Performance Requirements Summary, etc.\)](#)

SHSP Development, Implementation and Evaluation

- [Strategic Highway Safety Plan Community of Practice, FHWA Office of Safety](#)
- [Strategic Highway Safety Plan Web Page, FHWA Office of Safety](#)
- [Strategic Highway Safety Plans: A Champion's Guidebook to Saving Lives, Second Edition, FHWA, Office of Safety](#)
- [Toward Zero Deaths: A National Strategy for Highway Safety](#)
- [Guidance for the Implementation of the AASHTO Strategic Highway Safety Plans – 23 Topic Area Volumes, Transportation Research Board, NCHRP Report 500, Volume 1 through 23](#)
- [Integrated Safety Management Process, Transportation Research Board, NCHRP Report 501](#)
- [Crash Modification Factors \(CMF\) Clearinghouse, FHWA](#)
- [Countermeasures that Work: A Highway Safety Countermeasure Guide for State Highway Safety Offices, Sixth Edition, NHTSA](#)
- [Proven Safety Countermeasures, FHWA, Office of Safety](#)
- [Strategic Highway Safety Plan Implementation Process Model, FHWA, Office of Safety](#)
- [Strategic Highway Safety Plan Evaluation Process Model \(EPM\), FHWA, Office of Safety](#)
- [The Art of Appropriate Evaluation-A Guide for Highway Safety Program Managers, NHTSA](#)
- [FMCSA Motor Carrier Safety Assistance Program \(MCSAP\), FMCSA](#)
- [State Highway Safety Plans, NHTSA](#)
- [Highway Safety Manual \(AASHTO\)](#)
- [Systemic Safety Project Selection Tool \(FHWA\)](#)

Data and Performance Measures

- [Guidance on State Safety Data Systems](#)
- [Traffic Safety Performance Measures for States and Federal Agencies, NHTSA](#)
- [A Primer on Safety Performance Measures for the Transportation Planning Process, FHWA](#)
- [Safety Target Setting Final Report, FHWA](#)
- [Data-Driven Approaches to Crime and Traffic Safety \(DDATCS\)](#)
- [Model Performance Measures for State Traffic Records Systems](#)
- [Road Safety Audits](#)

Technical Assistance/Noteworthy Practices

- [SHSP Related Peer Exchange Reports and Request for Technical Assistance](#)
- [SHSP Noteworthy Practices](#)
- [Web-based Highway Safety Improvement Program \(HSIP\) Courses, National Highway Institute \(NHI\)](#)

ATTACHMENT B

Sample Format/Content for SHSP Update Description

Each State shall provide a detailed description of the SHSP update process. (23 U.S.C. 148(d)(2)(A)(ii)). This description may be a section, chapter or appendix in the SHSP, and should include, at a minimum, a description of the:

- **Consultative Process:** Describe a process that demonstrates States have consulted with stakeholders, as identified in 148(a)(11)(A), early in the SHSP development process, considered their input prior to decision making, and routinely involved them with actions taken regarding SHSP development.
- **Coordination:** Describe coordination of the SHSP with other transportation plans, and how the State aligns the high-level goals, objectives, and strategies of other (relevant) plans with the SHSP.
- **Data-Driven Process:** Describe how priority or emphasis areas were selected. Demonstrate that the selection was data-driven and considered additional safety factors. Summarize the data and methods used for analysis.
- **Performance-Based Approach:** Describe how goals and objectives will be used to track and monitor the status of SHSP implementation efforts and progress. Discuss how the performance measures are directly tied to the goals and objectives established in the SHSP and how they are consistent with performance measures established by U.S. Department of Transportation in accordance with 23 U.S.C. 150, and coordinated with other State highway safety programs.
- **Strategy Selection:** Describe the process used to select effective emphasis area strategies and how the 4Es of safety were addressed as key factors in strategy selection.
- **Schedule to Evaluate and Update SHSP:** Document the State's plans and schedule to evaluate and update the SHSP.

ATTACHMENT C

August Redistribution

The law provides for the redistribution, after August 1 of every fiscal year, of States' one-year obligation limitation that will not be used before the end of the fiscal year, and would otherwise expire at the end of the fiscal year (see, for example, section 120(c) of the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2016). Typically, only obligation limitation associated with allocated contract authority is returned for redistribution. Formula obligation limitation can also be returned for redistribution, but this is uncommon. Only the obligation limitation is redistributed—not any of the contract authority that is associated with it.

The returned obligation limitation is redistributed as formula obligation limitation to States that can use it prior to the end of the fiscal year. The returned obligation limitation is redistributed proportional to the States' relative shares of unobligated balances of funds apportioned under sections 144 (as in effect on the day before the date of enactment of Public Law 112-141) and 104 of title 23, United States Code. No State, however, will be redistributed more formula obligation than it has indicated it can use prior to the end of the fiscal year.

Many States use all of their formula obligation limitation in a given fiscal year, therefore they can greatly benefit from the annual redistribution process. This is particularly true for States that have projects ready to go and can quickly obligate them using the additional formula obligation limitation. In recent fiscal years, the total obligation limitation redistributed to the States as formula obligation limitation has been in the area of \$1 billion annually, although the amounts vary from one fiscal year to another. The redistributed formula obligation limitation may be utilized to obligate projects under any program for which the State has unobligated balances of funding (e.g., Surface Transportation Block Grant Program, Highway Safety Improvement Program, Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program).