



# Memorandum

Subject: **ACTION:** Eligibility of Crash Cushion  
devices (*Manual for Assessing Safety Hardware*  
(MASH) 16 sunset date)

Date: **DEC 20 2018**

From: Michael S. Griffith   
Director, Office Safety Technologies

In Reply Refer To:  
HSST-1

To: Division Administrators  
Directors of Field Services  
Federal Lands Highway Division Directors

## Purpose

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide guidance to the FHWA Division Offices on the eligibility of National Cooperative Highway Research Program 350 (NCHRP 350) compliant crash cushions on the National Highway System (NHS) in the absence of an acceptable American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO) MASH 16 compliant crash cushion.

## Background

On January 7, 2016, FHWA issued a memorandum announcing the execution of a Joint Agreement between FHWA and AASHTO to implement the MASH 16 ([https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/roadway\\_dept/countermeasures/reduce\\_crash\\_severity/docs/memo\\_joint\\_implementation\\_agmt.pdf](https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/roadway_dept/countermeasures/reduce_crash_severity/docs/memo_joint_implementation_agmt.pdf)). The agreement established sunset dates for use of roadside hardware on the NHS that has not been tested to MASH 16. In accordance with the agreement, on December 31, 2018, non-MASH compliant crash cushions will no longer be eligible for use on the NHS.

To date, there are nine MASH 16 compliant crash cushions that have received an FHWA eligibility letter and are listed on FHWA's website.

## Action

For contracts on the NHS with a letting date after December 31, 2018, State Departments of Transportation (DOTs) may request a substitution to specify a NCHRP 350 compliant crash cushion when an equivalent MASH 16 compliant crash cushion doesn't exist. With the crash cushions currently available on the market, certain sizes/configurations have not been crash tested or analyzed according to MASH 16. For example, a 24-inch wide crash cushion could have successfully passed MASH 16 crash testing, but a similar 48-inch wide crash cushion is needed but hasn't been evaluated against MASH 16 yet.

If a State DOT requests federal-aid reimbursement for a NCHRP 350 crash cushion (that has not been evaluated against the MASH 16 crash test criteria) on the NHS, then the

Division Office should have the State provide an explanation. The explanation should provide reason(s) on specifying a NCHRP 350 crash cushion and be included in the DOT project design file. Based on the explanation, the Division Office may determine that the installation of the NCHRP 350 crash cushion on the NHS is acceptable and, therefore, eligible for Federal-aid reimbursement.

For further information, please contact Michael Matzke at (202) 366-1331 or [michael.matzke@dot.gov](mailto:michael.matzke@dot.gov)