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SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: NHTSA recommends that all visitors arrive at least 45 minutes early in order to sign in with security. Visitors to the building should enter through the Southwest Lobby to sign in with security and to be escorted to the meeting room.

NHTSA will provide auxiliary aids to participants as necessary. Any person desiring such auxiliary aids (sign language interpreter, telecommunications devices for deaf persons (TDDs), readers, taped tests, brailled materials, or large print materials, and magnifying devices) should contact Julia Goldson at (202) 366-9944, by Wednesday, August 13, 2003.

Issued on: July 30, 2003.

Kenneth N. Weinstein,

Associate Administrator for Enforcement.

[FR Doc. 03-19902 Filed 8-4-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-59-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

[Docket No. NHTSA-2003-14620]

Safety Belt Use Integrated Project Team (IPT) Plan

AGENCY: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of availability of document.

SUMMARY: This notice announces the availability of NHTSA's third of four high priority safety reports describing the agency's current and planned activities to address safety belt use. The report is available from the Docket Management System, U.S. Department of Transportation, at <http://dms.dot.gov> or on NHTSA's Web site at <http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/ipreports.html>. While the document is final, the agency is offering the public the opportunity to comment on the agency's planned safety belt use activities. The comments will be considered for future agency efforts.

DATES: Comments must be received no later than September 19, 2003.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments identified by Safety Belt Use DOT DMS Docket Number [NHTSA-2003-14620] by any of the following methods:

- Web site: <http://dms.dot.gov>.

Follow the instructions for submitting comments on the DOT electronic docket site.

- Fax: 1-202-493-2251.

- Mail: Docket Management Facility; U.S. Department of Transportation, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Nassif Building, Room PL-401, Washington, DC 20590-001.

- Hand Delivery: Room PL-401 on the plaza level of the Nassif Building, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal Holidays.

Instructions: All submissions must include the agency name and docket number. Note that all comments received will be posted without change to <http://dms.dot.gov>, including any personal information provided.

Docket: For access to the docket to read background documents or comments received, go to <http://dms.dot.gov>, at any time or to Room PL-401 on the plaza level of the Nassif Building, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal Holidays.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Barbara Sauers, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Room 6240, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590. Telephone: 202-366-0144 or Dee Williams, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Room 5208, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590. Telephone: 202-366-0498.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Safety belt use is the single most effective strategy a person can employ to prevent deaths and injuries and reduce the costs associated with motor vehicle crashes. Despite over 30 years of efforts and the expenditure of substantial resources, safety belt use in the United States is currently 75 percent. Although safety belt use has risen dramatically and has saved more than 100,000 lives in the past twenty years (13,000 in 2002 alone), the current level of nonuse in the U.S. still results in thousands of lives lost, over 100,000 serious injuries and billions of dollars in economic losses each year. NHTSA has made finding solutions to increase safety belt use one of the agency's highest priorities. Initiatives the agency plans to pursue include:

- (1) Behavioral Strategies
 - a. Upgrade Existing Safety Belt Laws
 - b. High Visibility Enforcement
 - c. National Communications Plan
 - d. Employer Policies and Regulation
 - e. Insurance Industry Collaboration
- (2) Vehicle Strategies
 - a. Safety Belt Reminders, Voluntary Installation of In-Vehicle Devices and Evidence of Safety Belt Use

- b. Improvements to Safety Belt Comfort and Convenience

NHTSA believes the initiatives described in this report will lead to both near-term and longer-term solutions to increase safety belt use among the United States population.

In September 2002, NHTSA assembled integrated project teams (IPTs) to address four highway safety programs of special interest: safety belt use; impaired driving; vehicle compatibility; and vehicle rollover. The reports associated with vehicle compatibility and vehicle rollover were released in June 2003 and can be found on NHTSA's Web site at <http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/ipreports.html> and also on DOT's docket management system (DMS) at <http://dms.dot.gov/>. Once completed, the fourth report addressing impaired driving will also be found in these locations. The docket numbers for each of the respective draft reports are as follows:

- Safety Belt Use: NHTSA-2003-14620;
- Impaired Driving: NHTSA-2003-14621;
- Rollover Mitigation: NHTSA-2003-14622; and
- Vehicle Compatibility: NHTSA-2003-14623.

Each document describes the safety problem and provides strategies the agency plans to pursue in addressing vehicle compatibility; increasing safety belt use, reducing impaired driving and mitigating rollover. Comments received will be evaluated and incorporated, as appropriate, into planned agency activities.

How Do I Prepare and Submit Comments?

Your comments must be written and in English. To ensure that your comments are correctly filed in the Docket, please include the Docket number of this document (NHTSA-2003-14620) in your comments.

Please send two paper copies of your comments to Docket Management or submit them electronically. The mailing address is U. S. Department of Transportation Docket Management, Room PL-401, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590. If you submit your comments electronically, log onto the Docket Management System website at <http://dms.dot.gov> and click on "Help & Information" or "Help/Info" to obtain instructions.

How Can I Be Sure That My Comments Were Received?

If you wish Docket Management to notify you upon its receipt of your