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Mid-Term Progress report

The U.S. Department of Transportation, Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) awarded the Pipeline Safety Trust a Technical Assistance Grant to increase the understanding among involved staff and thought leaders from tribal and local governments, and environmental and community organizations about the main risks from and to pipelines, and how pipelines are constructed, operated, maintained, inspected, and regulated. The expected program outputs from the grant proposal are each stated below, with discussion of the work performed during the first half of the grant period following each expected output.

1. Arranging and customizing a three-day intensive training session lead by industry professionals (RCP Inc - http://www.rcp.com/) with participation from others in the pipeline industry and PHMSA.

In October we negotiated and entered into a contract with RCP to provide a three-day pipeline safety training for between 20-30 individuals. The normal cost of such training at RCP is $2000/person, but in support of this project they offered us a rate of $650/person, with a total contract amount not to exceed $20,500. The general outline for the training is as follows:

1. Why have pipelines?
2. The different types of pipelines (production, gathering, transmission, distribution), with an emphasis on the difference between gas and liquid; and transmission and distribution
3. The historical safety record of pipelines
4. The regulatory scheme for pipelines (who regulates what, and when) at the federal and state level
5. PHMSA regulations – scope and major programs required; Inspections and Enforcement programs and trends
6. The major pieces and parts of a pipeline system: Storage, pipe, pumps, compressors, valves, meters, instrumentation / SCADA
7. The design, construction, and initial testing of pipelines
8. Operator Qualification

9. Pipeline corrosion control programs
10. Pipeline monitoring, operation, and control (local / control room / SCADA)
11. Pipeline ROW patrol programs and requirements
12. Public Awareness programs and coordination with government officials / others
13. In-line inspections (ILI): how do they work and what do they do?
14. The various types of leak detection systems and how they work
15. Emergency response planning requirements: 49 CFR 192 and 195; and OPA 90 in 49 CFR 194.

2. Using our national contacts to choose and enlist 20-30 key individuals from tribal or local governments, or environmental or community organizations, who have a desire to learn more about the specifics of pipeline safety operations and regulation.

In early November we designed and launched an online application form for people interested in participating in the Houston pipeline safety training. We also sent an email notice out to several hundred contacts we have, and posted the training opportunity on our listservs and Facebook page. In the end we received 60 complete applications. We then narrowed the applicants down to about 30 people by prioritizing people who work for organizations over concerned individuals, are likely to have a long term interest in pipelines, and have the potential for leadership in pipeline safety conversations in their communities. Of the 30 we invited 27 have confirmed participation and received approval to participate from their organizations. We also tried to ensure a diversity of participants from organizational types and geographic locations. The 27 trainees come from 19 different states. The list of trainees is attached.

3. Using our national contacts to enlist the participation of industry personnel and regulators who can communicate well, as well as have an interest in the concerns of those outside of the pipeline industry.

We also reached out to all the major pipeline associations (AGA, INGAA, API, AOPL, APGAA) and PHMSA and NAPSR to ensure participation by industry and regulatory experts on the last day of the training when we will set aside at least half of the day for discussions of issues of interest to all parties. Space at the training facility is limited, so we needed to limit non-trainee participation to 5-7 individuals. Industry and regulatory participation has been confirmed by:

- Alan Mayberry, Associate Administrator for Pipeline Safety, PHMSA
- C.J. Osman, Director of Operations, Safety and Integrity, INGAA
- David Murk, Pipeline Manager, American Petroleum Institute
- Bill Byrd, President, RCP
- Mark Hereth, Managing Director, Process Improvement Performance Consultants
- Karen Lynch, Program Manager, Community Liaison Services, PHMSA
- Stephanie Weidman, Pipeline Safety Program Manager, Railroad Commission of Texas

4. Arranging and coordinating travel in an efficient manner so these key individuals can afford to attend such training, which would normally be out of their ability to afford.

As of this date we have negotiated a discounted rate at the Aloft Hotel in Downtown Houston (http://www.alofthoustondowntown.com/) which is within walking distance of the RCP training facility to help keep costs down. We have also arranged airline reservations for all 27 trainees.

5. Use the trust we have established over years of working with diverse stakeholder groups, and our well developed facilitation skills, to make the training a rich learning experience where all sides can safely discuss concerns.

Most of the actual implementation of the training and associated discussions will occur during the training itself in May, but we have started laying the groundwork to ensure the training is valuable to all involved. We have done this by choosing participants with a variety of experience, from a range of different types of organizations with differing goals and concerns about pipelines. We have begun to introduce them to each other via email and by collecting short biographies and descriptions of why they are interested in this training, along with questions they hope the training will answer. We have arranged not only the training, but a couple of other more informal get-togethers for the participants to mingle amongst themselves and with the other stakeholders. We also chose industry and regulatory participants who are well spoken, interested in greater public engagement, and can represent their own stakeholder groups well.

6. Provide an ongoing follow up system to allow participants from all the stakeholders to continue to communicate and learn from each other.

This will be discussed and designed after the May training.

7. Implement an evaluation system to inform ourselves, PHMSA, and all involved stakeholders of whether the benefits of such a training program outweighs the costs.

In January we designed and launched an online pre-test to obtain a basic idea of the level of understanding of pipeline safety basics for the selected trainees. The pre-test contained 15 questions, and the average score was 55.4% correct. I have attached the pre-test results. This will be used along with a post-test and a training evaluation form to gather input of the value of this training effort along with suggestions for making such an effort better.

Please let me know if you have any questions or need any additional information for this report.

Thanks for your assistance.

Carl Weimer, Executive Director
Pipeline Safety Trust