



U.S. Department of Transportation
**Pipeline and Hazardous Materials
Safety Administration**

Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) Research and Development (R&D) Research Brief General Guidance

A Research Brief is intended to summarize the final technical report in order to provide insight to its readers without reading the entire report. The Research Brief contains a statement of the problem/gap, background information, concise analysis, and main conclusions.

Typically, a Research Brief will:

- Be less than four pages in length (approximately 5 percent the technical portion of the report);
- Be written in language appropriate for the target audience;
- Consist of short, concise paragraphs;
- Begin with a summary;
- Be written using the same headings/subheading as the main report;
- Include only material present in the main report;
- Include the recommendations from the main report;
- Provide the justification;
- Have a summarized conclusion; and
- Be readable separately from the main report.

Importance:

Research Briefs are an important communication tool used in both academia and business. Research Briefs are an introduction between the writers of the report and their target readers, which include decision makers, potential customers, and/or peers. A decision to continue reading a certain report often depends on the impression that the Research Brief gives. Attached is an example template.

Research Brief

TITLE OF THE RESEARCH RESULTS REPORT

SUMMARY

This section is to deliver a high-level overview of the work undertaken in the research study and its outcome. It includes information on:

- A synopsis of the main findings(s) from the research
- The principal participants involved
- The reason for undertaking the research
- The methodology applied
- A condensed version of key conclusions reached.

Include figures in these sections to help illustrated important points and add text to the figures.

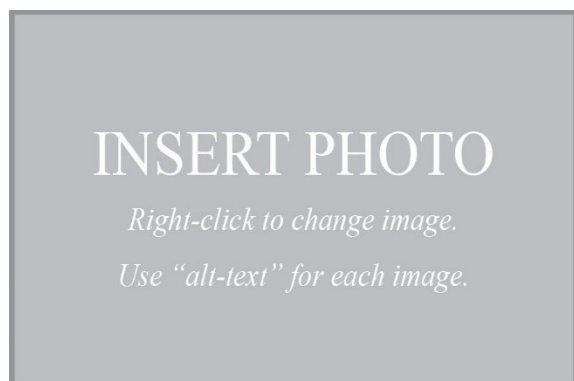


Figure 1

BACKGROUND

This Section establishes the contest for initiating the research, as well as which entities were in volved in funding and participating in the project. Include references to prior related work is recommended. If applicate, also include a

brief description of the researchers' expected findings at the end of testing and inspection phases.

OBJECTIVES

This section describes what the research is intended to achieve. A well-written objective is concise, reasonable, measurable and time bound.

METHODS

Although discussion of methodology typically conveys highly technical information, it is important to keep in mind that the audience for Research Results will range from those with limited technical knowledge to those with highly specialized knowledge. Technical language and details are appropriate if the content remains comprehensible to a general audience.

Include a figure(s) in this section to illustrate the methods applied in the study. Do not forget to add alt-text to the figure

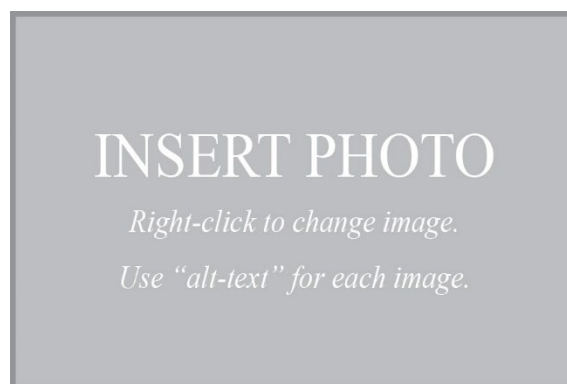


Figure 2

RESULTS

This is the main section of the Research Results to set out the findings or results from the study.

Include an appropriate figure(s) in this section to help illustrate important points. Add alt text to all figures.

(Author, Name of Web Page, Year)

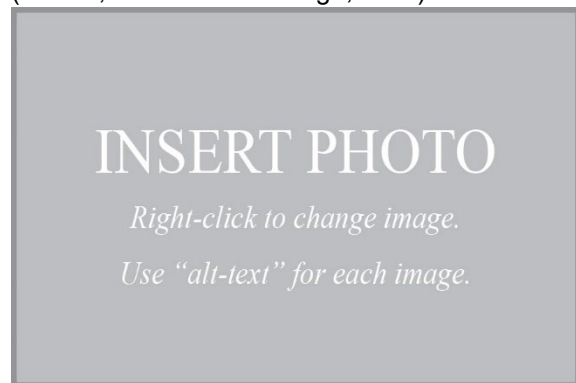


Figure 3

CONCLUSIONS

This section summarizes the chief takeaways and insights gained from the research and reinforces for readers the value of the work undertaken and its future implication. If the results from the study were not definitive, future work or next steps may be recommended in the following section.

FUTURE ACTION

If results from the study did not lead to definitive answers and/or further research work might be necessary or beneficial, then this section would outline recommended actions to take in the future, including any work currently being planned based upon the given Research Results Study.

REFERENCES

Author. (Year). Journal Title. *Journal Name*, Pages.

Author. (Year, Month Day). *Name of Web Page*. Retrieved from Name of Web Site: URL

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This section offers an opportunity to recognize the various individuals and organizations who participated in or contributed towards the research project.

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