MANAGEMENT REVIEW ELEMENTS – HIGHWAY SAFETY PROGRAM

State Management Review - Self Assessment Checklist

PURPOSE AND INSTRUCTIONS

A. PURPOSE:

To develop a simple, easy-to-use instrument that State Highway Safety Offices (SHSOs) can deploy both prior to a Management Review (MR) and at periodic intervals between the triennial MRs to assess the manner in which they manage their highway safety offices and administer Federal highway safety grant funds.

B. MANAGEMENT REVIEW PROJECT HISTORY

In 2003, the General Accounting Office (GAO) issued a report suggesting that the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) could improve its oversight of state highway safety programs. As a result, NHTSA initiated the MR process in which every state program is reviewed at least once every three years. The MR addresses both administrative and financial aspects of a state highway safety program. Congress subsequently made the requirement for triennial MRs permanent by incorporating it into Section 2008 of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) and continuing the program in 2012 through Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) .

The first MRs were conducted in FY 2005. In 2007, the Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA) and NHTSA worked together to refine the MR process. That joint effort resulted in the development of specific categories of MR outcomes - findings, management considerations and commendations. A revision of the MR Elements, Guidelines, training curriculum and informational reports were completed and are provided on the GHSA web site at GHSA Resources and in the Members Only section.

Since that time, GHSA has reviewed a number of completed MR reports submitted by the States and used this information to develop several tools. GHSA has developed a “Management Review and Deadline Reminder Table”. The Table is intended to assist States in: tracking key MR Elements; identifying important deadlines; and identifying best practices related to the Highway Safety Performance Plan, monitoring and grant management. There is also a “Management Review Timeline Schedule” which is a listing of key deadlines and is explained in more detail below.

The most comprehensive MR tool to be developed is the MR Self-Assessment Checklist. The Checklist provides the SHSO with a method to provide for the continuous quality improvement of their own program using their own resources. The process of conducting the self assessment also creates an opportunity to educate and cross train staff on the many SHSO responsibilities and requirements. Preparation for a MR should be an ongoing process and not necessarily just for the actual MR visit. Following a self assessment process will allow a SHSO to keep abreast of their operations on a regular basis and not just every three years when a MR is due. In essence, a State is always prepared for a MR.

C. SCOPE

The basis of the MR Self Assessment Checklist is the three programmatic areas and subcategories within the NHTSA MR Elements. To build the Checklist, common MR findings, management considerations and commendations were gathered from completed NHTSA MR Reports which have been reviewed over the past three years. The Checklist is revised each time the NHTSA MR Elements are updated.

D. CHECKLIST FORMAT

The same organizational system used in the NHTSA MR Elements is the basis for enumeration of the MR Self Assessment Checklist. This allows direct correlation of the MR Self Assessment Checklist contents to the MR Elements. There are a few items that are not enumerated within the NHTSA MR Elements. For ease of reference to these items while working with the MR Self Assessment Checklist, enumerations have been added using the following system: i, ii, iii, etc.

Each area and subcategory within the MR Elements is presented along with the following:

- Required Actions (corrective action which must be implemented to resolve non compliance with Federal and/or State laws, regulations, rules, etc.)
- Recommended Actions (combination of NHTSA MR Management Considerations or State best practices with the potential to enhance the overall efficiency and/or effectiveness of the program)
- Links to Resources (Federal and GHSA as well as a place to add links to State policy)
- Commendations (names of States recognized for outstanding program or process during a MR)
- Checkboxes for the SHSO reviewer to indicate if each criteria has or has not been met (or to indicate "not applicable" for Recommended Actions), and,
- Space to identify any SHSO follow up response needed and the anticipated timeline for completion.

E. CHECKLIST USE

The MR Self Assessment Checklist is intended to be used by the director of the SHSO program who can be referred to as the Governor's Representative (GR), Coordinator or another title. The self assessment may be conducted periodically or several months before an anticipated triennial NHTSA MR. The task may be assigned to one or more staff members or to an external reviewer such as a peer from another State SHSO or consultant. To address the amount of staff time needed to conduct the full Self Assessment at one time, the SHSO might consider dividing the Checklist into several portions and completing them in a series throughout the course of a year or years prior to the next MR.

The Checklist does not contain policy or regulation statements but provides the user with links to relevant documents. If there are specific questions regarding a Checklist item, the user will need to reference the resources identified for that item. The GHSA Policy and Procedures Manual is a resource which is frequently cited in the Checklist because it contains more detail regarding most management issues.

The document is a Word template. The shaded check boxes may be electronically checked. A narrative response can be provided in the SHSO Response and Timeline box by typing in the text box provided. To move between the boxes, the Tab and Shift Tab keys should be used.

The SHSO can customize the template to suit their specific needs. To access this capability, the document can be opened in Microsoft Word and the "Forms" toolbar opened. Using the Forms toolbar, the form can be "unlocked". The template can now be edited. NOTE: When the form is unlocked, the check boxes and text comment field will no longer function unless the template is again "locked".

The MR Self Assessment Checklist can also be printed and used as a hard copy checklist.

F. SELF ASSESSMENT TIMELINE SCHEDULE

- To assist the SHSO in understanding and tracking compliance with the timelines which apply to the MR Element items, a companion MR Self Assessment Timeline Schedule is available. The Timeline Schedule is a Microsoft Word document that can easily be adapted to best fit the specific needs of the SHSO.
- The Timeline Schedule is organized in the same order as the MR Elements and contains a line for each MR Element item which generates a deadline or periodic reporting requirement.
- The first column provides space for the SHSO to insert the initials of the individual assigned to ensure compliance with each item.
- The second column is used to identify items which should be checked frequently, e.g. monthly, quarterly, annually or an ongoing basis.
- The remaining columns are for each month of the year.
- Each timeline item is coded as "S" for "suggested" or "R" for "required." Because it is a Word document, the information can be maintained electronically and will be available for quick reference.
- The Self Assessment Timeline Schedule is intentionally brief to provide a quick reference document for the SHSO.
- The GHSA MR and Deadline Reminder Table, also available on the GHSA web site, is a separate document which contains additional deadlines. The Table is lengthier with more detailed explanations of some key MR items, best practice tips and citations to the corresponding Federal regulations. The Table is not a complete list of best practices but contains only the priority and most frequently cited MR Elements only. The SHSO will find both the Self Assessment Timeline Schedule and the MR and Deadline Reminder Table to be helpful tools.

G. SELF ASSESSMENT TIPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- The items highlighted in "yellow" within the Checklist are either high risk or frequently cited in MR reports and should receive special attention.
- The NHTSA MR Guidelines and other related NHTSA documents and policies, "GHSA MR Commendation Summary Report", "GHSA MR and Deadline Reminder Table", "GHSA Policy and Procedures Manual" and the "GHSA Monitoring Advisory", are additional resource documents which should be consulted by the SHSO to prepare for a MR.
- One of the first steps in preparation for an MR should be a review of the results of the State's previous MR report. The current status of the SHSO's completion of the prior MR Corrective Action Plan items (if any) and response to the MR Recommended Action Tracking Form (if any) should be determined and action taken to resolve any pending items prior to the next MR being conducted.
- The "NHTSA MR Preparation Worksheet" form will be provided to the SHSO by the Regional Office for completion 60 days before the MR visit. The requested documentation must be sent by the SHSO to the MR Team prior to the visit or be made available on site. In particular, a copy of any State policies, laws or regulations applicable to the MR Elements must be available on site for the MR Team (and should always be accessible for quick reference by the SHSO staff). Some States save their response to the MR Preparation Worksheet in an electronic format for ease of providing the information to the Region, periodic use within the SHSO and for updating the information prior to the next MR.
- The final column on the Self Assessment Checklist, "SHSO Response and Timeline" is intended to provide the SHSO with space for tracking the current status of each item while completing the Checklist. This column can be modified to best fit the SHSO needs. It is suggested that for key items the SHSO should answer the typical "who, what, where, when and how" questions and record their answers on the form. If the completed Checklist is retained by the SHSO, the SHSO will have a permanent record of the location of the various items requested for the MR and an indication of the

responsible staff person for reference. This information can then be periodically updated in preparation for the next MR.

#####

Definitions and Acronyms

This MR Self Assessment Checklist uses the following terms and acronyms:

AL -	Alcohol
DOT –	Department of Transportation
EO –	Executive Order
GHSA –	Governors Highway Safety Association
GR –	Governors Representative
GTS –	Grant Tracking System
HE –	Hazard Elimination
HSP –	Highway Safety Plan
LEL –	Law Enforcement Liaison
MR –	Management Review
NHTSA –	National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
OP -	Occupant Protection
P&A –	Planning and Administration
P&P –	Policies and Procedures
PAR –	Personal Activity Report
SHSO –	State Highway Safety Office
TR -	Traffic Records