meeting will be held at Boeing Long Beach Division, 3855 Lakewood Boulevard, Long Beach, CA 90846.

The agenda will include the following: Tuesday, March 23: 8:00–8:30 a.m. (1) Registration; 8:30 a.m.–12:00 noon (2) Plenary Session: a. Welcome; b. Administrative Issues; c. Editorial Team; d. Group Report-ins; 1:00–5:00 p.m. (3) Working Group Breakout Sessions. Wednesday, March 24: 8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m. (4) Working Group Breakout Sessions; 4:30 p.m. (5) Papers delivered and provided to the Plenary. Thursday, March 25: 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m. (6) Working Group Breakout Sessions. Friday, March 26: 8:30 a.m.–12:00 noon (7) Plenary Session: a. Report-outs and Voting; b. Executive Report-out; c. Time and Place of Next Meeting; d. Administrative Issues; 12:00 noon (8) Adjourn.

Attendance is open to the interested public but limited to space availability. With the approval of the chairman, members of the public may present oral statements at the meeting. Persons wishing to present statements or obtain information should contact the RTCA Secretariat, 1140 Connecticut Avenue, NW., Suite 1020, Washington, DC 20036; (202) 833–9339 (phone); (202) 833–9434 (fax); or http://www.rtca.org (web site). Members of the public may present a written statement to the committee at any time.

Issued in Washington, DC, on March 5, 1999.

Janice L. Peters,

Designated Official.

[FR Doc. 99–6053 Filed 3–10–99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–13–M

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Highway Administration

Environmental Impact Statement: Washington County, Utah

AGENCY: Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of Intent.

SUMMARY: The FHWA is issuing this notice to advise the public that a study will be prepared for a new transportation corridor in Washington County, Utah. The new corridor will provide a new transportation facility to the east of I–15, from approximately milepost 1 on I–15 south of St. George, Utah to a connection with SR–9 near Hurricane, Utah.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Tom Allen, FHWA, Utah Division, 2520 West 4700 South, Suite 9–A, Salt Lake City, UT 84118, Telephone (801) 963–0182; or Ken Adair, Utah Department of Transportation (UDOT), 1345 South 350 West, Richfield, Utah 84701, Telephone (801) 896–9501 ×760.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: FHWA, in cooperation with the Utah Department of Transportation, will prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for a new transportation corridor approximately 20 miles in length to the east of I–15, from approximately milepost 1 on I–15 south of St. George, Utah to a connection with SR–9 near Hurricane, Utah. The study is being initiated as an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). If the scoping process does not identify potential for significant impacts, or identify controversy on environmental grounds, the study will be charged to an Environmental Assessment.

The study is intended to consider the need for additional capacity to serve transportation needs associated with expected regional growth in the project area, including several currently planned development projects. Existing travel-forecasting models will be updated and supplemented to forecast traffic patterns. The study will consider no-build, transportation system management, and build alternatives. The build alternative is expected to be a new 2–4 lane highway, with access control.

A project steering committee has been established to provide direction on the project. Additionally, a project advisory committee will be established to encourage early and on-going participation by interested parties. Letters describing the proposed action and soliciting comments will be sent to appropriate Federal, State, and local agencies, and to private organizations and citizens who have expressed an interest in this proposal. A series of public meetings will be held, including a scoping meeting expected in April 1999. In addition, a public hearing will be held. Public notice will be given of the time and place of the meetings and hearing. The environmental document will be available for review and comment prior to the public hearing.

To ensure that the full range of issues related to this proposed action are addressed and all significant issues identified, comments, and suggestions are invited from all interested parties. Comments or questions concerning this proposed action and the EIS should be directed to the FHWA at the address provided above.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Program Number 20.205, Highway Planning and Construction. The regulations implementing Executive Order 12372 regarding intergovernmental consultation on Federal programs and activities apply to this program.)

Issued on February 17, 1999.

Michael G. Richie,

Division Administrator, Utah Division, Federal Highway Administration, Salt Lake City, Utah.

[FR Doc. 99–6041 Filed 3–10–99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910–22–M

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Research and Special Programs Administration

[Contract DTRS–56–96–C–0010]

Quarterly Performance Review Meeting on The Contract ''Detection of Mechanical Damage in Pipelines''

AGENCY: Research and Special Programs Administration (RSPA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: RSPA invites the pipeline industry, in-line inspection (''smart pig'') vendors, and the general public to the next quarterly performance review meeting of progress on the contract ''Detection of Mechanical Damage in Pipelines.'' The meeting is open to anyone, and no registration is required. This contract is being performed by Battelle Memorial Institute (Battelle), along with the Southwest Research Institute, and Iowa State University. The contract is a research and development contract to develop electromagnetic in-line inspection technologies to detect and characterize mechanical damage and stress corrosion cracking. The meeting will cover a review of the overall project plan, the status of the contract tasks, progress made during the past quarter, and projected activity for the next quarter.

DATES: The next quarterly performance review meeting will be held on Monday, April 19, 1999 beginning at 1:00 p.m. and ending around 5:00 p.m.

ADDRESSES: The quarterly review meeting will be held at The Wyndham Anatole Hotel, 2201 Stemmons Freeway, Dallas TX 75207. The hotel's telephone number is (214) 748–1200.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Lloyd W. Ulrich, Contracting Officer's Technical Representative, Office of Pipeline Safety, telephone: (202) 366–4556, FAX: (202) 366–4566, e-mail: lloyd.ulrich@rspa.dot.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background

RSPA is conducting quarterly meetings on the status of its contract

''Detection of Mechanical Damage in Pipelines'' (Contract DTRS–56–96-C–0010) because in-line inspection research is of immediate interest to the pipeline industry and in-line inspection vendors. The research contract with Battelle is a cooperative effort between the Gas Research Institute (GRI) and DOT, with GRI providing technical guidance. The meetings allow disclosure of the results to interested parties and provide an opportunity for interested parties to ask Battelle questions concerning the research. Attendance at this meeting is open to all and does not require advanced registration nor advanced notification to RSPA.

We specifically want that segment of the pipeline industry involved with in-line inspection to be aware of the status of this contract. To assure that a cross section of industry is well represented at these meetings, we have invited the major domestic in-line inspection company (Tuboscope Vetco Pipeline Services) and the following pipeline industry trade associations: American Petroleum Institute, Interstate Natural Gas Association of America, and the American Gas Association. Each has named an engineering/technical representative and, along with the GRI representative providing technical guidance, form the Industry Review Team (IRT) for the contract.

The original objective was to open each quarterly performance review meeting to the public. The first quarterly meeting was conducted on October 22, 1996, in Washington, DC. However, preparing for a formal briefing each quarter takes a considerable amount of time and resources on Battelle's part that could be better used to conduct the research. Therefore, Battelle requested and RSPA concurred that future public meetings would be conducted semi-annually. Conducting public meetings semi-annually will provide all interested parties with sufficient update of progress in the research. Only the IRT and RSPA staff involved with the contract will be invited to the quarterly performance review meetings held between the public semi-annual meetings.

Another objective is to conduct each semi-annual meeting at the same location and either before or after a meeting of a pipeline industry technical meeting to enable participation by pipeline technical personnel involved with nondestructive evaluation. Previous semi-annual meetings have been held before or after GRI's Nondestructive Evaluation Technical Advisory Group. This meeting is being held in Dallas the afternoon before the 1999 API Pipeline Conference which starts on Tuesday, April 20, 1999 at the Wyndham Anatole Hotel. Each of the future semi-annual meetings will be announced in the **Federal Register** at least two weeks prior to the meeting.

II. The Contract

The Battelle contract is a research and development contract to evaluate and develop in-line inspection technologies for detecting mechanical damage and cracking, such as stress-corrosion cracking (SCC), in natural gas transmission and hazardous liquid pipelines. Third-party mechanical damage is one of the largest causes of pipeline failure, but existing in-line inspection tools cannot always detect or accurately characterize the severity of some types of third-party damage that can threaten pipeline integrity. Although SCC is not very common on pipelines, it usually appears in high-stressed, low-population-density areas and only when a limited set of environmental conditions are met. Several attempts have been made to develop an in-line inspection tool for SCC, but there is no commercially successful tool on the market.

Under the contract, Battelle is evaluating and advancing magnetic flux leakage (MFL) inspection technology for detecting mechanical damage and two electromagnetic technologies for detecting SCC. The focus is on MFL for mechanical damage because experience shows MFL can characterize some types of mechanical damage and can be successfully used for metal-loss corrosion under a wide variety of conditions. The focus for SCC is on electromagnetic technologies that can be used in conjunction with, or as a modification to, MFL tools. The technologies to be evaluated take advantage of the MFL magnetizer either by enhancing signals or using electrical currents that are generated by the passage of an inspection tool through a pipeline.

The contract includes three major tasks. Task 1 evaluated existing MFL signal generation and analysis methods and established a baseline from which today's tools can be evaluated and tomorrow's advances measured. Then, improvements to signal analysis methods were developed and verified through testing under realistic pipeline conditions. Finally, it built an experience base and defect sets to generalize the results from individual tools and analysis methods to the full range of practical applications.

Task 2 evaluated two inspection technologies for detecting stress corrosion cracks. The focus in Task 2 was on electromagnetic techniques that have been developed in recent years and that could be used on or as a modification to existing MFL tools. Three subtasks evaluated velocity-induced remote-field techniques, remote-field eddy-current techniques, and external techniques for sizing stress corrosion cracks.[1]

Task 3 is verifying the results from Tasks 1 and 2 by tests under realistic pipeline conditions. Task 3 is (1) extending the mechanical damage detection, signal decoupling, and sizing algorithms developed in the basic program to include the effects of pressure, (2) verifying the algorithms under pressurized conditions in GRI's 4,700 foot, 24-inch diameter Pipeline Simulation Facility (PSF) flow loop, and (3) developing techniques to measure stress and determine the severity of mechanical damage and cracks.

A drawback of present pig technology is the lack of a reliable pig performance verification procedure that is generally accepted by the pipeline industry and RSPA. The experience gained by the pipeline industry and RSPA with the use of the PSF flow loop in this project will provide a framework to develop procedures for evaluating pig performance. Defect detection reliability is critical if instrumented pigging is to be used as an in-line inspection tool in pipeline industry risk management programs.

The ultimate benefits of the project could be more efficient and cost-effective operations, maintenance programs to monitor and enhance the safety of gas transmission and hazardous liquid pipelines. Pipeline companies will benefit from having access to inspection technologies for detecting critical mechanical damage and stress-corrosion cracks. Inspection tool vendors will benefit by understanding where improvements are beneficial and needed. These benefits will support RSPA's long-range objective of ensuring the safety and reliability of the gas transmission and hazardous liquid pipeline infrastructure.

Issued in Washington, D. C. on March 8, 1999.

Richard B. Felder,

Associate Administrator for Pipeline Safety.

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BILLING CODE 4910–60–P

[1] The report summarizing the work conducted under tasks 1 and 2 can be found from viewing the RSPA home page, http://ops.dot.gov.