

**B. Purpose of the Workshop**

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This is an invitation-only workshop, and all of you were invited because you are experts on roadside safety hardware, researchers, manufacturers, or users. Many of you are also members of standards and regulations-setting groups in your respective countries. As such, you have a strong influence on the use of roadside safety hardware.

We in the United States believe that international harmonization of test and evaluation procedures is worthwhile, and other countries do also. The FHWA has written to 54 different countries asking about their interest and support of international harmonization. Most of their replies have been supportive. We believe international harmonization will lead to increased safety by encouraging introduction of products such as crash cushions, end treatments, new traffic barriers, new sign and luminaire supports, and other types of roadside safety hardware. We also believe it will promote increased trade.

What is harmonization? Harmonization is not standardization. Standardization deals primarily with defining physical details of hardware; while on the other hand, harmonization implies identifying general performance characteristics of a device so that acceptable comparisons can be made. It also implies common measurement procedures, or acceptable surrogates.

Why are we holding this workshop now? We felt that this was an opportune time to have a workshop to continue the discussion that was begun at a workshop entitled "Strategic Highway Research Program and Traffic Safety on Two Continents," held in September 1989, and initiated by Thomas Turbell. A second reason is that the highway community in the United States was updating its test and evaluation procedures, (NCHRP Report 230); U.S. bridge rail specifications are also being updated. The final reason is that the Euro-

pean Community is scheduled to develop its test and evaluation procedures by the close of 1992. Some of the registrants are members of the EC organization, CEN, Technical Committee 226, Working Group 1, which is charged with developing those procedures. Registrants from other countries also are interested in updating standards. While they may not primarily be developers of safety hardware, they are users of hardware, and therefore are interested in criteria for comparing different safety features.

The immediate goal of this workshop is to progress toward a general measurement framework; to do that we are going to discuss specific test and evaluation procedures and philosophies. We are going to discuss various existing national conditions, including traffic and size and weight of vehicles. We are also going to address possible impediments to international harmonization. We believe it is possible to develop a framework to compare roadside safety devices while still meeting various national conditions, and while still providing necessary safety. The intent of international harmonization is not to develop one individual test and evaluation procedure, but to develop a method of comparison.

During this workshop, we will have presentations by various experts on test and evaluation procedures. The first set of presentations will be from the United States on the philosophy behind development of the U.S. standards and our proposed new standards. Then, we will have a set of presentations on test and evaluation procedures being addressed by the EC in developing their new standard. These presentations will include one by a representative from Australia to show how Australian sizes and weights of vehicles affect the kinds of devices they would like to use. We will then go into four breakout groups for discussion on issues that were raised by the individual presenters.