



Memorandum

**U.S. Department of
Transportation**

Office of the Secretary
of Transportation
Office of Inspector General

Subject: **INFORMATION:** Audit Announcement –
FHWA’s Oversight of Bridge Safety
Project No. 14M3001M000

Date: November 5, 2013

From: Joseph W. Comé 
Assistant Inspector General
for Highway and Transit Audits

Reply to
Attn. of: JA-40

To: Federal Highway Administrator

There are over 600,000 highway bridges on public roads that carry, on average, over 4 billion vehicles per day. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) established the National Bridge Inspection Standards for proper safety inspections of public highway bridges and oversees States’ efforts to ensure that bridges within their jurisdictions are safe. Since 2006, the Office of Inspector General (OIG) has issued three reports recommending improvements to FHWA’s oversight of States’ bridge programs. In 2011, FHWA announced a new bridge safety initiative designed to more consistently monitor how States are performing bridge inspections and to target problem areas in specific States.

On June 12, 2013, the Ranking Member of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure requested that OIG assess FHWA’s efforts to improve bridge safety, and its progress in addressing related OIG recommendations. For this second audit, in a series of audits to address the congressional request,¹ our objectives are to assess whether (1) FHWA Division Offices are effectively overseeing the States’ bridge inspection programs and (2) FHWA Headquarters is identifying and addressing high-priority risks to bridge safety at the national level. We plan to begin the audit immediately and will contact your audit liaison to schedule an entrance conference. If I can answer any questions or be of further assistance, please contact me at (202) 366-5630 or Gary Middleton, Program Director, at (202) 366-0625.

¹ On August 5, 2013, OIG announced the first audit in this series of bridge safety audits, focused on FHWA’s implementation of prior OIG bridge program recommendations and bridge provisions in the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act. OIG announcement letters and reports are available on our Web site at <http://www.oig.dot.gov>.

#

cc: DOT Audit Liaison, M-1
FHWA Audit Liaison, HAIM-13