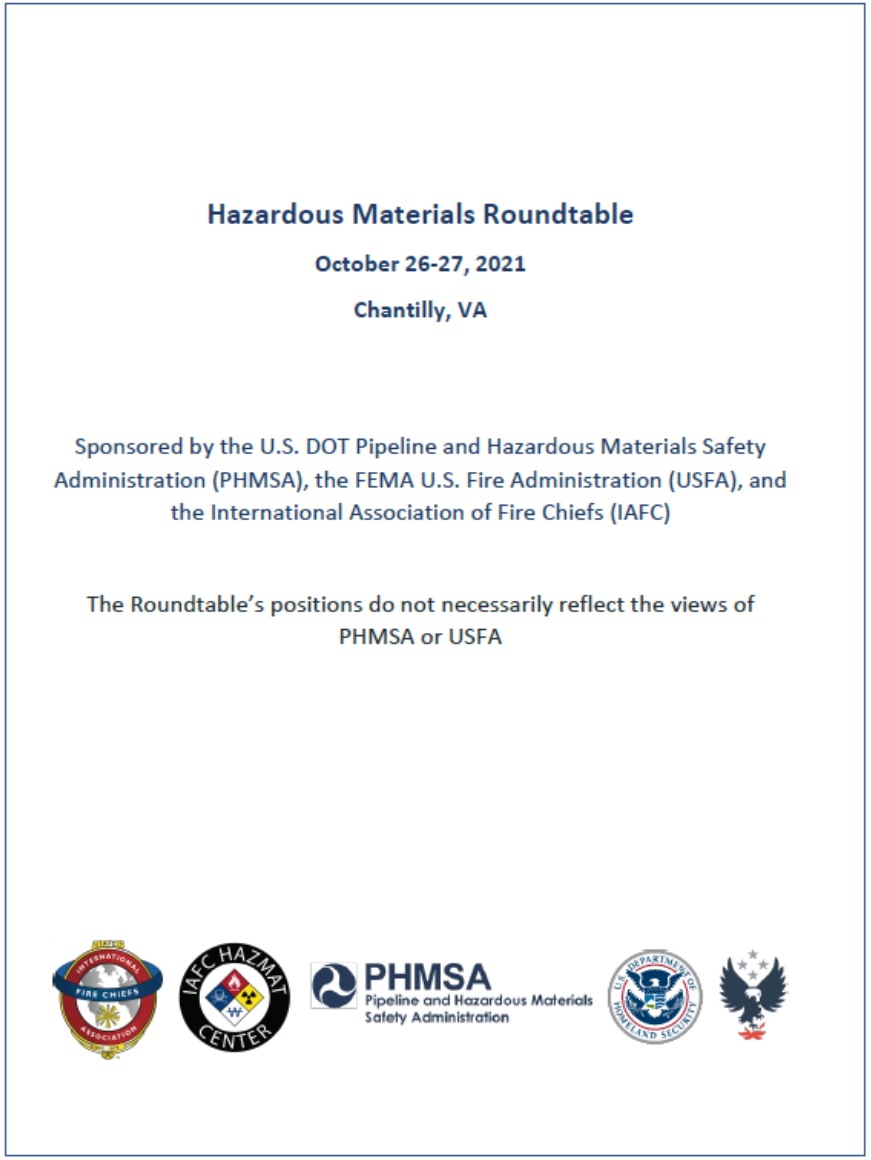
Hazardous Materials Roundtable Report

Summary and
Discussion of Report

https://www.phmsa.dot.gov/grants/hazmat/2021-hazardous-materials-emergency-response-roundtable-report



Hazardous Materials Roundtable

October 26-27, 2021

Chantilly, VA

Sponsored by the U.S. DOT Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA), the FEMA U.S. Fire Administration (USFA), and the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC)

The Roundtable's positions do not necessarily reflect the views of PHMSA or USFA

PHMSA
Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration

Meeting Observations & Recommendations

1. Improve Hazmat Planning and LEPC/TERC Performance
2. Improve Hazmat Prevention/Mitigation
3. Improve Risk-Based Response and Preparedness
4. Improve Hazmat Training
5. Improve Hazmat Standard of Care
6. Improve Funding
7. Improve Information Sharing

Improving Community Awareness/Education

2. IMPROVING COMMUNITY AWARENESS/EDUCATION

It was noted in the discussions that one of the principal concerns facing LEPCs is low public interest in hazardous materials risks in the community and in the work of the LEPC. It also was noted that public interest increases when the LEPC is working on things that are relevant to the community (e.g., meth lab preparedness, or wildfire preparedness). Conversely, public interest is low when the LEPC work is not seen as relevant.

Risk-Based Response and Preparedness

1. WHY RISK-BASED RESPONSE?

There was a strong and universal confirmation of the importance of Risk-Based Response (RBR) as a key to effective and safe management of hazmat incidents. *National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 470 – Standard for Hazardous Materials Emergency Response*, defines the Risk-Based Response Process as follows: Systematic process, based on facts, science, and the circumstances of the incident, by which responders analyze a problem involving hazardous materials/weapons of mass destruction (WMD) to assess the hazards and consequences, develop an incident action plan (IAP), and evaluate the effectiveness of the plan.

3.2 To compensate for smaller numbers of serious/complex hazmat incidents and the reduced hazmat incident scene experience of students, ensure that RBR training includes high quality realistic incident scene simulations with extensive size-up drill and practice. The training should encompass a range of risk-based scenarios, including low frequency / high consequence and high frequency / high consequence scenarios.

3. Need to Mitigate Risks from Hazmat Releases Caused by Natural Disasters

Attendees concurred that the risk of hazmat releases from natural disaster scenarios has often been under-addressed in hazmat prevention/mitigation efforts. For example, it was noted that the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) reported in 2012 that "Natural hazards were the cause of approximately 16,600 hazardous material releases reported to the National Response Center (NRC) between 1990 and 2008 - approximately 3% of all reported hazmat releases. Large releases were most frequently due to major natural disasters. For instance, hurricane-induced releases of petroleum liquids from storage tanks account for a large fraction of the total volume of petroleum released during 'natechs' (understood here as a natural hazard and the hazardous materials release that results). Among the commonly released chemicals were nitrogen oxides, benzene, and polychlorinated biphenyls.