

of Transportation

Pipeline and Hazardous

Materials Safety

Administration

2023 Gas State Program Evaluation

for

ARKANSAS OIL AND GAS COMMISSION

Document Legend PART:

- O -- Representative, Dates and Title Information
- A -- Progress Report and Program Documentation Review
- B -- Program Inspection Procedures
- C -- State Qualifications
- D -- Program Performance
- E -- Field Inspections
- F -- Damage prevention and Annual report analysis



2023 Gas State Program Evaluation -- CY 2023 Gas

State Agency: Arkansas Rating:

Agency Status: 60105(a): Yes 60106(a): No Interstate Agent: No

Date of Visit: 05/06/2024 - 05/10/2024

Agency Representative: Gary Looney, Assistant Director-Arkansas Oil and Gas Commission

PHMSA Representative: Agustin Lopez, State Evaluator-PHMSA Commission Chairman to whom follow up letter is to be sent:

Name/Title: Jerry C. Langley, Chairman

Agency: Arkansas Oil and Gas Commission

Address: 100 E. 7th Street City/State/Zip: Smackover, AR 71762

INSTRUCTIONS:

Complete this evaluation in accordance with the Evaluator Guidance for conducting state pipeline safety program evaluations. The evaluation should generally reflect state program performance during CY 2023 (not the status of performance at the time of the evaluation). A deficiency in any one part of a multiple-part question should be scored as "Needs Improvement." Determine the answer to the question then select the appropriate point value. If a state receives less than the maximum points, include a brief explanation in the appropriate notes/comments section. If a question is not applicable to a state, select NA. Please ensure all responses are COMPLETE and ACCURATE, and they OBJECTIVELY reflect the state's program performance for the question being evaluated. Increasing emphasis is being placed on how the state pipeline safety programs conduct and execute their pipeline safety responsibilities (their performance). This evaluation, together with selected factors reported in the state's annual progress report attachments, provide the basis for determining the state's pipeline safety grant allocation.

Scoring Summary

PARTS		Possible Points	Points Scored
A	Progress Report and Program Documentation Review	0	0
В	Program Inspection Procedures	15	15
C	State Qualifications	10	10
D	Program Performance	50	50
E	Field Inspections	15	15
F	Damage prevention and Annual report analysis	10	10
TOTAL	\mathbf{S}	100	100
State Rating			100.0



PART A - Progress Report and Program Documentation Review

Points(MAX) Score

1 Were the following Progress Report Items accurate? (*items not scored on progress report)

Info Only Info Only

- Info Only = No Points
 - a. Stats On Operators Data Progress Report Attachment 1
 - b. State Inspection Activity Data Progress Report Attachment 2
 - c. List of Operators Data Progress Report Attachment 3*
 - d. Incidents/Accidents Data Progress Report Attachment 4*
 - e. Stats of Compliance Actions Data Progress Report Attachment 5*
 - f. List of Records Kept Data Progress Report Attachment 6 *
 - g. Staff and TQ Training Data Progress Report Attachment 7
 - h. Compliance with Federal Regulations Data Progress Report Attachment 8
 - i. Performance and Damage Prevention Question Data Progress Report

Attachment 10*

Evaluator Notes:

- a. Verifiied operator data with state files and PDM.
- b. Verified inspection data by reviewing data files and inspection reports.
- c. Verified operators with PDM and state files.
- d. No incidents in 2023.
- e. Reviewed compliance data to verify information.
- f. Keep electronic records which are secured.
- g. Verified qualifications with TQ Blackboard.
- h. Have adopted applicabable rule amendments.
- i. Have performance initiatives stated which include: Incorporate the new Gas Gathering Pipeline Rule into our safety program and dvancing safety program by including additional inspections above the comprehensive inspections

Total points scored for this section: 0 Total possible points for this section: 0



4

3

3

Do written procedures address pre-inspection, inspection and post inspection activities for each of the following inspection types: Chapter 5.1

Yes = 5 No = 0 Needs Improvement = 1-4

a. Standard Inspections, which include Drug/Alcohol, CRM and Public

Awareness Effectiveness Inspections

- b. TIMP and DIMP Inspections (reviewing largest operator(s) plans annually)
- c. OQ Inspections
- d. Damage Prevention Inspections
- e. On-Site Operator Training
- f. Construction Inspections (annual efforts)
- g. LNG Inspections

Evaluator Notes:

Section VI of the Arkansas OGC Pipeline Safety Program Manual has a list of all types of inspections. Section VII has inspections activities which include pre and post inspection activities.

Do written procedures address inspection priorities of each operator, and if necessary each unit, based on the following elements and time frames established in its procedures?

Chapter 5.1

Yes = 4 No = 0 Needs Improvement = 1-3

- a. Length of time since last inspection
- b. Operating history of operator/unit and/or location (includes leakage, incident and compliance activities)
- c. Type of activity being undertaken by operators (i.e. construction)
- d. Locations of operator's inspection units being inspected (HCA's, Geographic area, Population Centers, etc.)
- e. Process to identify high-risk inspection units that includes all threats -

(Excavation Damage, Corrosion, Natural Forces, Outside Forces, Material and Welds,

Equipment, Operators and any Other Factors)

f. Are inspection units broken down appropriately?

Evaluator Notes:

Section VI of the AOGC Pipeline Safety Program Manual has risk based inspection scheduling based on type of pipeline, length of last inspection, pipe material, pipe size, leak history, age of pipe, incident history. Inspection cycles are conducted on an annual or bi-annual bases.

3 (Compliance Procedures) Does the state have written procedures to identify steps to be taken from the discovery to resolution of a probable violation? Chapter 5.1

Yes = 3 No = 0 Needs Improvement = 1-2

- a. Procedures to notify an operator (company officer) when a noncompliance is identified
- b. Procedures to routinely review progress of compliance actions to prevent delays or breakdowns
- c. Procedures regarding closing outstanding probable violations

Evaluator Notes:

Sections XIV, XV, and XVI provide detailed procedures for actions taken if compliance issues are found during inspections. Civil Penalty options are not addressed in procedures. AOGC laws has description and laws in issuing civil penalties which will be referenced in procedures. Section XVI has follow-up procedures for corrective actions to avoid breakdowns and delays. Section XVI has closing out procedures that gives guidance on closing out cases. Section XV states that correspondence will be sent to company officials.

4 (Incident/Accident Investigations) Does the state have written procedures to address state 3 actions in the event of an incident/accident?

Yes = 3 No = 0 Needs Improvement = 1-2

a. Mechanism to receive, record, and respond to operator reports of incidents, including after-hours reports



b. If onsite investigation was not made, do procedures require on-call staff to obtain sufficient information to determine the facts to support the decision not to go on-site.

Evaluator Notes:

Section XII of AOGC Pipeline Safety Program Manual has Incident Investigation procedures that provide guidance to inspectors.

5 General Comments:

Info Only = No Points

Info Only Info Only

Evaluator Notes:

The AROGC is mainly complying with Part B of the evaluation.

Total points scored for this section: 15 Total possible points for this section: 15

5

a. Completion of Required OQ Training before conducting inspection as lead

b. Completion of Required DIMP/IMP Training before conducting inspection as lead

c. Completion of Required LNG Training before conducting inspection as lead

d. Root Cause Training by at least one inspector/program manager

e. Note any outside training completed

f. Verify inspector has obtained minimum qualifications to lead any applicable standard inspection as the lead inspector (Reference State Guidelines Section 4.3.1)

Evaluator Notes:

Verified training with TQ Blackboard to assure inspectors are qualified to lead each type of inspection. Root cause has been taken by inspectors.

2 Did state records and discussions with state pipeline safety program manager indicate adequate knowledge of PHMSA program and regulations?

5

5

Yes = 5 No = 0 Needs Improvement = 1-4

Evaluator Notes:

Yes, Gary Looney is knowledgable of the pipeline safety program.

3 General Comments:

Info Only Info Only

Info Only = No Points

Evaluator Notes:

The AROGC is mainly complying with Part C of the evaluation.

Total points scored for this section: 10 Total possible points for this section: 10



Did state inspect all types of operators and inspection units in accordance with time intervals established in written procedures? Chapter 5.1

5 5

Yes = 5 No = 0 Needs Improvement = 1-4

- a. Standard (General Code Compliance)
- b. Public Awareness Effectiveness Reviews
- c. Drug and Alcohol
- d. Control Room Management
- e. Part 193 LNG Inspections
- f. Construction (did state achieve 20% of total inspection person-days?)
- g. OQ (see Question 3 for additional requirements)
- h. IMP/DIMP (see Question 4 for additional requirements)

Evaluator Notes:

Yes, reviewed randomly selected inspection reports to verify inspection cycles. Inspect units within the required 5 year interval. The AOGC has no distribution or LNG operators.

Did inspection form(s) cover all applicable code requirements addressed on Federal Inspection form(s)? Did State complete all applicable portions of inspection forms? Chapter 5.1. Do inspection records indicate that adequate reviews of procedures, records and field activities, including notes and the appropriate level of inspection person-days for each inspection, were performed?

10 10

Yes = 10 No = 0 Needs Improvement = 1-9

- a. Standard (General Code Compliance)
- b. Public Awareness Effectiveness Reviews
- c. Drug and Alcohol
- d. Control Room Management
- e. Part 193 LNG Inspections
- f. Construction
- g. OQ (see Question 3 for additional requirements)
- h. IMP/DIMP (see Question 4 for additional requirements)

Evaluator Notes:

Reviewed randomly selected inspection reports to verity completeness and verify that any issues identified are documented properly. Inspection reports are on website which can be reviewed by the public.

Is state verifying monitoring (Protocol 9/Form15) of operators OQ programs? This should include verification of any plan updates and that persons performing covered tasks (including contractors) are properly qualified and requalified at intervals established in the operator's plan. 49 CFR 192 Part N

2

2

2

2

Yes = 2 No = 0 Needs Improvement = 1

Evaluator Notes:

Yes, the AROGC conducts OQ program and Protocol 9 inspections to assure compliance with regulations.

4 Is state verifying operator's integrity management Programs (IMP and DIMP)? This should include a review of plans, along with monitoring progress. In addition, the review should take in to account program review and updates of operator's plan(s). 49 CFR 192 Subparts O and P

Yes = 2 No = 0 Needs Improvement = 1

- a. Are the implementation plans of the state's large/largest operators(s) being reviewed annually to ensure they are completing full cycle of the IMP process?
- b. Are states verifying with operators any plastic pipe and components that have shown a record of defects/leaks and mitigating those through DIMP plan?
- c. Are the states verifying operators are including low pressure distribution systems in their threat analysis?

Evaluator Notes:

Did the state review the following (these items are NTSB recommendations to PHMSA that have been deemed acceptable response based on PHMSA reviewing these items during the evaluation process): Chapter 5.1

Yes = 2 No = 0 Needs Improvement = 1

- a. Operator procedures for determining if exposed cast iron pipe was examined for evidence of graphitization and if necessary remedial action was taken;
- b. Operator procedures for surveillance of cast iron pipelines, including appropriate action resulting from tracking circumferential cracking failures, study of leakage history, or other unusual operating maintenance condition? (Note: See GPTC Appendix G-18 for guidance);
- c. Operator emergency response procedures for leaks caused by excavation damage near buildings and determine whether the procedures adequately address the possibility of multiple leaks and underground migration of gas into nearby buildings Refer to 4/12/01 letter from PHMSA in response to NTSB recommendation P-00-20 and P-00-21:
- d. Operator records of previous accidents and failures including reported thirdparty damage and leak response to ensure appropriate operator response as required by 192.617:
- e. Directional drilling/boring procedures of each pipeline operator or its contractor to determine if they include actions to protect their facilities from the dangers posed by drilling and other trench less technologies;
- f. Operator procedures for considering low pressure distribution systems in threat analysis?
- g. Operator compliance with state and federal regulations for regulators located inside buildings?

Evaluator Notes:

AOGC utilizes an Addendum to Inspection Form which include NTSB and ADB questions to ask the operator during inspections.

6 Did the State verify Operators took appropriate action regarding advisory bulletins issued 1 since the last evaluation? (Advisory Bulletins Current Year)

Yes = 1 No = 0 Needs Improvement = .5

Evaluator Notes:

AOGC utilizes an Addendum to Inspection Form which include NTSB and ADB questions to ask the operator during inspections.

7 (Compliance Activities) Did the state follow compliance procedures (from discovery to resolution) and adequately document all probable violations, including what resolution or further course of action is needed to gain compliance? Chapter 5.1

10 10

2

2

Yes = 10 No = 0 Needs Improvement = 1-9

- a. Were compliance actions sent to company officer or manager/board member if municipal/government system?
- b. Were probable violations documented properly?
- c. Resolve probable violations
- d. Routinely review progress of probable violations
- e. Did state issue compliance actions for all probable violations discovered?
- f. Can state demonstrate fining authority for pipeline safety violations?
- g. Does Program Manager review, approve and monitor all compliance actions? (note: Program Manager or Senior Official should sign any NOPV or related enforcement action)
- h. Did state compliance actions give reasonable due process to all parties? Including "show cause" hearing, if necessary.
- i. Within 30 days, conduct a post-inspection briefing with the owner or operator outlining any concerns
- j. Within 90 days, to the extent practicable, provide the owner or operator with written preliminary findings of the inspection. (Incident investigations do not need to meet 30/90-day requirement)

Evaluator Notes:

The AROGC documents and issues compliance letters within their requirements in their procedures. There were no breakdowns in issuing compliance actions in a timely manner. Compliance actions are tracked electronically on the AROGC database. Eventhough there have not been any issues or delays in compliance actions, it was suggested that the AROGC track compliance actions on spreadsheet or a tracking system.

8 (Incident Investigations) Were all federally reportable incidents investigated, thoroughly 10 documented, with conclusions and recommendations?

Yes = 10 No = 0 Needs Improvement = 1-9

- a. Does state have adequate mechanism to receive and respond to operator reports of incidents, including after-hours reports?
- b. Did state keep adequate records of Incident/Accident notifications received?
- c. If onsite investigation was not made, did the state obtain sufficient information from the operator and/or by means to determine the facts to support the decision not to go on site?
- d. Were onsite observations documented?
- e. Were contributing factors documented?
- f. Were recommendations to prevent recurrences, where appropriate, documented?
- g. Did state initiate compliance action for any violations found during any incident/accident investigation?
- h. Did state assist Region Office or Accident Investigation Division (AID) by taking appropriate follow-up actions related to the operator incident reports to ensure accuracy and final report has been received by PHMSA?
- . Does state share any lessons learned from incidents/accidents?

Evaluator Notes:

There were no reportable incidents in 2023. The AROGC does have procedures which they follow in case there are any reportable incidents.

9 Did state respond to Chairman's letter on previous evaluation within 60 days and correct 1 or address any noted deficiencies? (If necessary) Chapter 8.1

Yes = 1 No = 0 Needs Improvement = .5

Evaluator Notes:

Response not required.

Did State conduct or participate in pipeline safety training session or seminar in Past 3 Info Only Info Only Years? Chapter 8.5
Info Only = No Points

Evaluator Notes:

The AOGC is co-sponsor & attends the Pipeline Safety Seminar in New Orleans each year.

Has state confirmed transmission operators have submitted information into NPMS Info Only Info O

Evaluator Notes:

Yes, question is part of the inspection form.

Does the state have a mechanism for communicating with stakeholders - other than state pipeline safety seminar? (This should include making enforcement cases available to public).

Yes = 1 No = 0 Needs Improvement = .5

Evaluator Notes:

Yes, the AROGC website is very transperant which provides pipeline safety information and inspection reports.

Did state execute appropriate follow-up actions to Safety Related Condition (SRC) 1 Reports? Chapter 6.7



No SRCR in 2023.

Was the State responsive to:

1

1

1

1

Yes = 1 No = 0 Needs Improvement = .5

- a. Surveys or information requests from NAPSR or PHMSA; and
- b. PHMSA Work Management system tasks?

Evaluator Notes:

AOGC completes survey requests via NAPSR, IM notifications, & WMS tasks. Currently no task items open awaiting AOGC input.

15 If the State has issued any waivers/special permits for any operator, has the state verified conditions of those waivers/special permits are being met? This should include having the operator amend procedures where appropriate.

Yes = 1 No = 0 Needs Improvement = .5

Evaluator Notes:

No open waivers.

Were pipeline program files well-organized and accessible?

Info Only Info Only

Info Only = No Points

Evaluator Notes:

Yes, keep electronic records.

Discussion with State on accuracy of inspection day information submitted into State Inspection Day Calculation Tool (SICT). Has the state updated SICT data?

Yes = 3 No = 0 Needs Improvement = 1-2

3

3

Evaluator Notes:

Discussed the SICT and there are no issues or concerns.

Discussion on State Program Performance Metrics found on Stakeholder Communication Info Only Info Only site.\ http://primis.phmsa.dot.gov/comm/states.htm?nocache=4805
Info Only = No Points

Evaluator Notes:

Discussed the State Performance Metrics with the AROGC. No concerns or issues with the data.

Did the state encourage and promote operator implementation of Pipeline Safety

Management Systems (PSMS), or API RP 1173? This holistic approach to improving pipeline safety includes the identification, prevention and remediation of safety hazards.

Info Only = No Points

- a. https://pipelinesms.org/
- b. Reference AGA recommendation to members May 20, 2019

Evaluator Notes:

AOGC has included PSMS in the addendum accompanying the standard O&M inspection.

20 General Comments:

Info Only Info Only

Info Only = No Points
Evaluator Notes:

The AROGC is mainly complying with Part D of the evaluation.

Total points scored for this section: 50 Total possible points for this section: 50

1	Operator, Inspector, Location, Date and PHMSA Representative (enter specifics into the Info Only Info On	nly
	comments box below)	

Info Only = No Points

- a. What type of inspection(s) did the state inspector conduct during the field portion of the state evaluation? (i.e. Standard, Construction, IMP, etc)
- b. When was the unit inspected last?
- c. Was pipeline operator or representative present during inspection?
- d. Effort should be made to observe newest state inspector with least experience

Evaluator Notes:

Merit Energy

Bryan Brown, Lead Inspector

Ft. Smith, AR

May 8, 2024

Agustin Lopez, State Evaluator

- a. Standard Inspection
- b. Last inspected in 2021.
- c. Yes, operator representatives were present during inspection.
- d. Bryan Brown is only inspector with the AROGC.
- Did the inspector use an appropriate inspection form/checklist and was the form/checklist used as a guide for the inspection? (New regulations shall be incorporated)

 Yes = 2 No = 0 Needs Improvement = 1

2

2

Evaluator Notes:

Yes, the inspector utilized an inspection form as a guide and to document the inspection results.

3 Did the inspector adequately review the following during the inspection

10 10

Yes = 10 No = 0 Needs Improvement = 1-9

- a. Procedures (were the inspector's questions of the operator adequate to determine compliance?)
- b. Records (did the inspector adequately review trends and ask in-depth questions?)
- c. Field Activities/Facilities (did inspector ensure that procedures were being followed, including ensuring that properly calibrated equipment was used and OQ's were acceptable?)
- d. Other (please comment)
- e. Was the inspection of adequate length to properly perform the inspection?

Evaluator Notes:

- a. Only specific procedures were reviewed.
- b. Records were reviewed in great detail.
- c. Performed an inspection of the pipeline facilities.
- d. no other type of inspection activity was performed.
- e. Yes, the inspection was adquate in length for the amount of pipe in this units.
- From your observation did the inspector have adequate knowledge of the pipeline safety program and regulations? (Evaluator will document reasons if unacceptable)

2

1

2

1

Yes = 2 No = 0 Needs Improvement = 1

Evaluator Notes:

Yes, Bryan Brown was knowledgeable of the pipeline safety rules and regulations.

5 Did the inspector conduct an exit interview, including identifying probable violations? (If inspection is not totally completed the interview should be based on areas covered during time of field evaluation)

Yes = 1 No = 0 Needs Improvement = .5

Evaluator Notes:

Yes, an exit interview was performed at the conclusion of the inspection. There were no issues identified.

Was inspection performed in a safe, positive, and constructive manner?

Info Only = No Points

Info Only Info Only

- a. No unsafe acts should be performed during inspection by the state inspector
- b. What did the inspector observe in the field? (Narrative description of field observations and how inspector performed)
- c. Best Practices to Share with Other States (Field could be from operator visited or state inspector practices)
- d. Other

Evaluator Notes:

Yes, the inspection was performed in a safe, positive and constructive manner.

7 General Comments:

Info Only Info Only

Info Only = No Points Evaluator Notes:

Bryan Brown performed an excellent inspection of Merit Energy's transmission pipeline units.

Total points scored for this section: 15 Total possible points for this section: 15



4

Yes = 2 No = 0 Needs Improvement = 1

Evaluator Notes:

AOGC reviews each operator annual report including GT & Type R for accuracy and trends. There are no incident reports to analyze.

2 Has the state verified that the operators analyze excavation damages for the purpose of determining root causes and minimizing the possibility of a recurrence? (192.617) Has the state verified that the operators have appropriately identified excavators who have repeatedly violated one-call laws and damaged their facilities. Have the operators taken steps to mitigate that risks? (192.1007)

2

2

4

Yes = 2 No = 0 Needs Improvement = 1

Evaluator Notes:

There have been no damages on jurisdictional lines. AOGC does inquire about trends, if any, on non-jurisdictional lines.

3 Has the state reviewed the operator's annual report pertaining to Part D - Excavation Damage?

Yes = 4 No = 0 Needs Improvement = 1-3

- Is the information complete and accurate with root cause numbers?
- Has the state evaluated the causes for the damages listed under "One-Call Notification Practices Not Sufficient" (Part D.1.a.)?
- Has the state evaluated the causes for the damages listed under "Locating Practices Not Sufficient" (Part D.1.b)? For each operator, does the state review the following?
- Is the operator or its locating contractor(s) qualified and following written procedures for locating and marking facilities?
- Is the operator appropriately requalifying locators to address performance deficiencies?
- What is the number of damages resulting from mismarks?
- What is the number of damages resulting from not locating within time g. requirements (no-shows)?
- Is the operator appropriately addressing discovered mapping errors resulting in excavation damages?
- i. Are mapping corrections timely and according to written procedures?
- Has the state evaluated the causes for the damages listed under "Excavation j.

Practices Not Sufficient" (Part D.1.c.)?

Evaluator Notes:

AROG has no distribution operators so there is no Part D date to review. The AROG does review excavation damages with operators if there are any in the year. Do check damage prevention programs to assure operators are in compliance with pipeline safety rules involving one call and damage prevention.

4 Has the agency or another organization within the state collected data and evaluated trends on the number of pipeline damages per 1,000 locate requests? Yes = 2 No = 0 Needs Improvement = 1

2

2

- What stakeholder group is causing the highest number of damages to the pipelines? Operator, contractor, locating company or public.
 - Has the state verified the operator is appropriately focusing damage prevention education and training to stakeholders causing the most damages?
 - Has the state evaluated which of the following best describes the reason for the excavation damages; i.e., operator or contractor not following written procedures, failure to maintain marks, failure to support exposed facilities, failure to use hand tools were required, failure to test-hole (pot hole), improper backfilling practices, failure to maintain clearance or insufficient excavation practices.
 - Has the state verified the operator is appropriately focusing damage prevention education and training to address the causes of excavation damages?

Evaluator Notes:

5 General Comments:

Info Only = No Points

Evaluator Notes:

Although some of the questions don't apply to the AROG juridictional operators, the AROG still assure operators are in compliance with the one-call laws and the pipeline safety rules involving damage prevention.

Total points scored for this section: 10

Info Only Info Only

Total possible points for this section: 10

