

# AGENCY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES



## U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board

- *The Budget Blueprint to Make America Great Again* states that “A budget that puts America first must make the safety of our people its number one priority – because without safety, there can be no prosperity.”
- The U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board (CSB) is one of 19 agencies proposed for elimination in the budget. Of the 19 agencies targeted, **the CSB is the only agency that has a safety mandate.**
- The CSB was created by Congress, under the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990, “to investigate accidents to determine the conditions and circumstances which led up to the event and to identify the cause or causes so that similar events might be prevented.”
- The CSB is a **unique** agency, modeled on the U.S. National Transportation Safety Board. The CSB investigations identify the **root causes** of chemical incidents and share these findings broadly across industries to **prevent** future incidents. Investigations routinely involve scientific peer review to confirm facts, analysis and conclusions. No other Federal agency or private entity performs this type of comprehensive investigation.
- The CSB mission is to drive chemical safety change through **independent** investigations to protect people and the environment.
- The CSB is an independent, **non-regulatory** agency. While other agencies such as the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) or the Department of Labor/Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) have a rulemaking and enforcement role, Congress specifically directed that the CSB be completely independent from these agencies. In fact the legislative history states that the investigations conducted by EPA, OSHA and others “with dual responsibilities tend to focus on violations of existing rules and the cause of the accident almost to the exclusion of other contributing factors for which no enforcement or compliance actions can be taken. The purpose of an accident investigation... is to determine the cause or causes of an accident whether or not those causes were in violation of any current and enforceable requirement.”
- The CSB investigations are **transparent**, with investigative materials available on the agency's website. The CSB conducts on-scene press briefings and public hearings to share its findings, obtain additional facts and to hear public concerns.

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- There is no civil or criminal liability associated with a CSB investigation. The CSB only issues **recommendations** to prevent incidents from occurring. The CSB examines the role of both the regulator and the regulated in its investigations and makes recommendations to both.
- The CSB has investigated over 130 major chemical incidents and issued 788 safety recommendations, 78% of which have been closed.
- The CSB products (e.g. safety reports, recommendations, bulletins, and videos) are routinely used and cited in training throughout the industrial community, academia and professional associations, first responders, labor, and community leaders. The safety videos accompanying major investigative reports are posted on the agency's website and digital platforms. The CSB's award-winning video program has produced 68 video products that have been viewed more than 6.4 million times. The agency's YouTube account has nearly 20,000 subscribers.
- The CSB operates on a budget of \$11 million and a staff of 40, which has remained relatively flat for nine years. The CSB leadership is committed to improved management metrics and accountability to ensure that investigations are completed in a timely manner. The CSB adopted a new strategic plan; engaged in an organizational assessment to identify needs and is currently working on implementing the recommendations. Since 2016, the agency has closed 34 of 37 open inspector general recommendations.
- In the 2016 Federal employee viewpoint survey (FEVS), the CSB was one of the top five most improved agencies, for agencies with 100 or fewer employees. The CSB leadership takes the FEVS seriously and has conducted listening sessions with staff to understand the rankings. Moreover, the agency has committed to supporting the staff with professional and leadership development training, and creating a workforce improvement committee.

