

2013 Roger W. Jones Award for Executive Leadership  
Nomination of Daniel C. Smith  
Biography

Daniel C. Smith has been the Senior Associate Administrator for Vehicle Safety at the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) since October 2010. His office is responsible for rulemaking, research, and enforcement in the areas of vehicle safety and fuel economy and the collection, analysis and dissemination of all highway safety data.

Mr. Smith served as the Associate Administrator for Enforcement at NHTSA for the preceding five years. In that job he provided executive leadership to offices responsible for assuring compliance with the federal motor vehicle safety standards through crash tests and other methods. Investigating possible defects in motor vehicles and equipment; ensuring that safety recalls occur; collecting penalties for violations of the Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards; conducting criminal investigations of odometer fraud violations; and implementing the Car Allowance Rebate System (CARS). He has managed hundreds of successful investigations involving noncompliant or defective vehicles and equipment (including tires and child seats) that resulted in recalls.

Before joining NHTSA, Dan was the Associate Administrator for Safety at the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA). He provided leadership for the entire railroad safety program, including regulatory development, safety inspection, accident investigation, and enforcement actions. He led the development of the Rail Safety Action Plan, a comprehensive response to critical safety issues that reduced train accidents when implemented. Mr. Smith spent most of his 27 years at FRA as an attorney, first as a trial attorney and, for 13 years, as the Assistant Chief Counsel for Safety. In that role he managed a large division of lawyers that handled enforcement, rulemaking, litigation, and legislation for the safety program.

Mr. Smith attended law school at the University of San Diego and has a master's degree (from the University of Wisconsin) and bachelor's degree (University of Detroit) in political science. He is a member of the California and District of Columbia bar associations.

During his 35 plus years in the Federal government, Mr. Smith has received numerous performance and special act awards at the Agency and Department level. Perhaps the most prestigious of all his awards is his 2010 Presidential Rank Award given to only a very small number of career senior executives each year.