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Reference: *Comments on the OMB Draft 2004 Report to Congress
on the Costs and Benefits of Federal Regulations,*
69 Fed. Reg. 7987 (February 20, 2004)

On behalf of the Associated Wire Rope Fabricators (AWRF), I am submitting the following comment for Nomination for Regulatory Reform Improvement and Guidance Document Improvement. Please address any questions to Barry Epperson, AWRF General Counsel, 201 West Fifth Street, Suite 501, Tulsa, Oklahoma 74103, Telephone (918) 585-5641, Facsimile (918) 585-2758, Email jbarrye@aol.com.

OSHA Sling Safety Standard

Regulating Agency	Department of Labor (DOL), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)
Citation:	29 CFR Part 1910.184
Authority:	29 U.S.C. §655(b)(1)-(5)

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Description of the Problem:

Companies in the lifting, rigging and load securement industry typically use slings made of wire rope and synthetics to lift objects by crane. The current OSHA standard, nearly 30 years old, is considered by many in the industry to be dangerously outmoded, especially when compared to an applicable consensus standard ("B30.9") promulgated by the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME). OSHA inspectors continue to issue citations to companies for failure to meet the outmoded OSHA sling standard even though they meet the requirements of the B30.9 standard. Companies in the industry have made numerous requests of OSHA to issue an updated sling standard. OSHA has not honored this request. The companies, through their trade associations such as Associated Wire Rope Fabricators (AWRF) and the National Association of Chain Manufacturers (NACM) have previously asked the House of Representatives Science Committee, Subcommittee on Environment, Technology & Standards to conduct an oversight investigation of this matter.

Proposed Solution:

Request OSHA to a) explain why a rulemaking such as a direct and final rule on a new standard has not been started, B) promptly commence the process to develop a new sling standard, and c) issue a public enforcement notice citing the ASME B30.9 standard as the sole basis for OSHA citations regarding sling safety until the revised OSHA sling standard is implemented.

Estimate of Economic Impact:

The affected companies and their employees will no longer be required to adhere to a dangerously outmoded standard, thus saving noticeable sums in training costs and OSHA-inflicted penalties while, more importantly, enhancing the inestimable value of the affected employees' safety. Manufacturing will be enhanced as the stability of a new standard diverts company resources away from wasteful product liability suits, workers compensation claims and OSHA claims allowing allocation of these resources to capital improvement, expansion, increased production, and more jobs.