Developing County Solutions to Improve Rural Road Safety

Road Safety Forum Peer to Peer Exchange

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Peoria, IL

Co- Sponsored by FHWA, NACo and NACE

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The Death Toll on American Highways is not Acceptable!

2007:

- *Every 13 minutes* someone is killed on American highways.
- The *daily* death toll from vehicle-related crashes is 112.
- 41,059 crash fatalities were reported in 2007, a rate of 1.37 per 100 million VMT.

2008:

- Early estimates for 2008 – 37,313 crash fatalities, a rate of 1.28 per 100 million VMT (every 14 minutes, 102 per day).
Between 2004 and 2006, the fatality rate remained relatively steady. The rate ticked upward to 1.45 in 2005; down to 1.37 in 2007 continuing downward 1.28 in 2008 (lowest on record)

Early estimates show overall fatalities in 2008 were down 9.1% to 37,313 compared to 41,059 in 2007. This decline in traffic deaths contributed to the lowest fatality rate ever — 1.28 fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles traveled (VMT) lowest on record

Still, there is much work to be done to ensure that this progress is maintained and accelerated.

As VMT increases, fatality numbers will increase, unless we do more.
To Save Lives, We Must Partner

- We will all benefit from reducing the highway death toll.
- No single organization or agency can reduce roadway fatalities alone.
- Together, we can develop solutions.
- Comprehensive highway safety programs include the 4 “E’s”—Engineering, Education, Enforcement, and Emergency Medical Services (EMS).
Highway Safety

- Approximately 8.4 million lane miles
- Rural Roads account for over 6 million
Highway Safety

National Fatality Trends

![National Fatality Trends Graph]

![Fatality Rates Graph]
What is the FHWA Safety Program’s Core Mission?

“Safe Roads for a Safer Future”

- Core Mission ("it’s what we do").
- Fourth “E” in roadway safety, and often overlooked.
- Improve the safety of roadway infrastructure —
  - Through design and engineering improvements.
  - Speed management improvements.
- Key element in a comprehensive roadway safety program.
Objective of this Effort

To help counties reduce highway fatalities and serious injuries on rural roads in their communities working and educating elected officials on how they can take a leadership role.

- Identifying counties that incur a high number of crashes in rural areas
- Assisting them in developing approaches to reduce the number of incidents
- Helping them to secure resources to continue that effort
- Develop and disseminate successful practices information via web and best practices guide.
FHWA, Office of Safety

Resources
What is the FHWA Safety Program?

The “FHWA SAFETY PROGRAM” includes:

- FHWA Office of Safety (Headquarters).
- FHWA Resource Center-Safety and Design Team.
- Turner-Fairbank Office of Safety Research.
- FHWA Division Offices.

We work closely with our DOT modal partners:
- Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration.

For more information [http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov](http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov)
What Does the FHWA Safety Program Provide?

The FHWA Safety Program provides customers with *information, tools and other resources* including:

- Targeted Programs.
- Road Safety Research.
- Technology Development.
- Technology Transfer.
- Training.
- Technical Assistance.
Focus on Fatality Facts

- Fundamental Strategy ("it’s how we do what we do").
- Data-driven, strategic approach.
- Focus on implementing countermeasures to prevent most deadly types of crashes.
FHWA Targeted Safety Programs

- Roadway Departure Crashes—59% of fatalities.
- Intersection Crashes—21% of fatalities.
- Pedestrian Deaths—11% of fatalities.
- Speed-Related Crashes—32% of fatalities.
- Comprehensive Strategic Planning.

Fatality data based on NHTSA FARS 2007.
FHWA is committed to working with our Road Safety Partners to enable us all to make America’s highways safer.

Actions for you to consider:

- Promote Comprehensive Strategic Planning.
- Promote partnerships to leverage safety resources.
- Promote use of FHWA safety tools and resources.
- Provide feedback i.e. Countermeasures
Comprehensive Approach

4 Es
- Engineering
- Education
- Enforcement
- EMS
Resources - Funding for Highway Safety

- Federal-State Relationship
- Federal-aid Funds
  - Interstate Maintenance (IM)
  - National Highway System (NHS)
  - Surface Transportation Program (STP)
  - Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ)
  - Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)
Resources - Funding for Highway Safety

**HSIP**
- New “Core” program under SAFETEA-LU
- Funding doubled from TEA-21
  - $650M to $1.3B per year
- Funding set-asides
  - High Risk Rural Roads ($90M/year)
  - Rail-highway crossings ($220M/year)
- Strategic Highway Safety Plans (SHSPs) required
- 10% flex allowed
Tools

- Engineering Study
- Road Safety Audit
- Crash Reduction Factors
Countermeasures

- Rumble strips
- Delineation (RPM, pavement marking, signing)
- Illumination

Before

After
Countermeasures

- Safety Edge
- Remove Roadside Obstacles
- Trim vegetation
- Guiderail
Countermeasures

- Improving Sight Distance
  - Removing embankment
  - Realign intersection
- Roundabouts
- Widen Shoulders
- Retro-reflective Signage
- Street Light (especially at intersections)
Let’s Work Together to Save Lives

- The FHWA seeks stronger and broader partnerships for Road Safety.

- The FHWA is always open to your input.

- Let us know about your concerns and needs.

- Please give us feedback on how our products and services can be more helpful and effective.
For More Information

FHWA Division Offices
http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/field.html

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