

## New TSI Director Targets Traffic Safety Programs

John Phillips, new Director of the Transportation Safety Institute (TSI), is a strong supporter of traffic safety programs. "Traffic safety is our number one challenge," he said. "There is no simple solution – it must be a comprehensive approach that involves awareness, training, and targeted programs." The mission of TSI, an arm of the U.S. Department of Transportation's Research and Innovative Technology Administration (RITA), is to develop and conduct safety, security, and environmental training, products, and services for the public and private sectors. TSI develops and delivers highway safety training programs on occupant protection, enforcement, impaired driving, emergency medical services, and traffic safety program management for local, state, and Federal highway professionals. TSI offers nearly 600 courses and graduates about 20,000 students annually.

Prior to TSI, Mr. Phillips was the Chief of Ground Safety for the U.S. Air Force, a position with wide-ranging ground safety responsibilities, including traffic safety. One of the emerging traffic safety issues he addressed was motorcycle safety, a topic he is addressing at TSI. A new Motorcycle Safety Program Management Course has been developed and the primary customers have been those in the military. The program teaches participants about the various agencies that can partner on motorcycle safety issues and educates them on the

various hazards faced by motorcycle riders and the countermeasures that can improve safety.

In addition to addressing issues such as motorcycle safety, Mr. Phillips is working to increase awareness of TSI and the programs and services the agency offers. "Historically, our clients have been our best marketers. TSI has a reputation as a responsive agency with world class training," he said. He noted he was previously a TSI customer which is one of the reasons he took the job. "I knew I was going to an organization that had a customer focus." He indicated TSI has a variety of training programs, many of them off-the-shelf, that can be tailored to the needs of any agency or organization. To learn more about TSI visit <http://www.tsi.dot.gov/>.



*John Phillips, Director  
Transportation Safety Institute*

## The Effectiveness of Truck Lane Restrictions

The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) reported traffic fatalities in the U.S. dropped last year to a level not seen since 1994. This is the largest reduction in fatalities since 1992 and the lowest fatality rate (1.37) per 100 million vehicle miles traveled (VMT) ever recorded. Officials credit much of the reduction to the nationwide collaboration among law enforcement, engineering, education, and emergency medical services personnel. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) also announced reductions in impaired driving and increases in safety belt use. Impaired driving-related fatalities fell in 32 states with an overall national decrease of 3.7 percent from 13,491 fatalities in 2006 to 12,998 in 2007. In addition, safety belt usage increased from 82 percent in 2007 to 83 percent in 2008. Motorcycle safety continues to be a problem with fatalities increasing 6.6 percent in 2007. Motorcycles now account for 13 percent of all fatalities. To read the full press release, visit <http://www.dot.gov/affairs/dot11308.htm>.



*Traffic fatalities in the U.S. decreased to their lowest level since 1994.*

## Licensing Issues for Older Drivers

Licensing agencies have a role in assisting older adults' transition from driving to other mobility options. Screening and assessment tools used in licensing settings to identify when an older driver should transition away from driving must be valid, reliable, efficient, easily adopted, and cost effective. These are findings from a two-day workshop on older driver issues sponsored by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety. The workshop was designed to inform policy-makers about what currently is known about older drivers and provide guidance on a research agenda for senior safety and mobility. In addition to policy guidelines and research needs, the proceedings also presented information on best practices related to standardized education and training for clinicians, police officers, and licensing personnel. To view a copy of the proceedings, visit <http://www.aaafoundation.org/pdf/LPWorkshopProceedings.pdf>.

## Arizona Tribal Summit Targets Safety Issues

A review of Arizona's Tribal transportation safety issues and challenges; the identification of safety resources available to Arizona tribes; and the development of a process to continue the safety dialogue among the Tribal, state, and Federal transportation communities were the issues discussed at the Arizona Tribal Safety Summit on May 14-15, 2008.

The Summit, sponsored by the FHWA Office of Federal Lands, in collaboration with the FHWA Arizona and Montana Division Offices, the Tribal Technical Assistance Program (TTAP) in Colorado, and the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT), built on existing efforts including those initiated by the Tribal Safety Working Group (TSWG). Prior to the Summit, the TSWG grouped safety issues into four categories – enforcement,

engineering, education, and data. Participants fine-tuned the issues, shared success stories, and presented information on available resources. They also joined forces in developing solutions and agreed to continue the collaboration. For more information, please contact Chimai Ngo, FHWA, at [chimai.ngo@dot.gov](mailto:chimai.ngo@dot.gov).



*Billboards such as this are one way Tribes are seeking to improve traffic safety on Tribal lands.*

## An Analysis of Safety Corridor Programs

How effective are safety corridor programs? That was a question posed by several Midwestern states interested in implementing them. The Center for Transportation Research and Education at Iowa State University compiled information from states with safety corridor programs, including Alaska, California, Florida, Kentucky, Minnesota, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Washington.

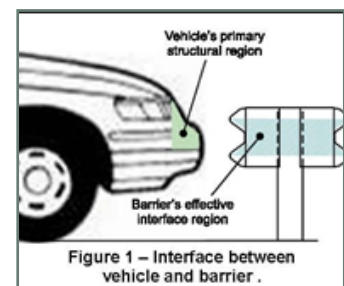
The study found that effective programs use a multidisciplinary approach; limit the number of corridors active at any given time; use crash and death/injury data (including rates) for selection, evaluation, and decommissioning; develop and monitor Safety Action Plans; establish criteria and increase fines in the corridor; conduct road safety audits; and implement low-cost engineering improvements. To review a copy of the full report, go to <http://www.ctre.iastate.edu/mtc/reports/SafetyCorridorSynthesis.pdf>.

## Maryland Develops New Median Barrier Standard

Maryland's recent effort to develop a new standard for median barriers is an excellent example of Federal-state collaboration. Officials at Maryland's State Highway Administration (SHA) contacted the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) Office of Safety Research and Development for assistance on median barrier placement.

Maryland wanted to know which elements of a median barrier would effectively contain and redirect an impacting vehicle which does not stay at a constant height. The National Crash Analysis Center (NCAC), which is part of the George Washington University and funded by FHWA and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), conducted research to determine the ideal placement of a median barrier which would allow it to function effectively regardless of where it was hit and by what type of vehicle.

NCAC performed a vehicle dynamics analysis (VDA) which uses commercially available software to show the position of a vehicle at any moment during the vehicle's passage across a median and how that vehicle will engage the barrier at impact. For more information about this application, contact Ken Opiela, FHWA Office of Safety R&D, 202-493-3371.



*Figure 1 shows where a vehicle would impact a median barrier when both are on level ground.*

## Interactive Web Site Allows Individual Safety Search

A new interactive web site allows individuals to determine the safety situation in their own backyard. The Center for Excellence in Rural Safety combines information from the Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) and Google Maps to give users a visual representation of where crashes are occurring in their neighborhood, along their commute to work, and to and from their child's school. Dynamically generated maps also can show how changes in public policy can improve safety in a particular region. The web site also has educational tools and videos on the importance of safe driving. To visit the web site, go to <http://www.saferoadmaps.org>.

## A Report on Safe Routes to Schools

Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS) is a Federal program designed to make walking and bicycling to school a safe and routine activity. The Federal Highway Administration's Office of Safety oversees the program and makes funding available for a variety of programs and projects, from building safer street crossings to establishing programs encouraging children and their parents to walk or bicycle safely to school.

Recently the U.S. DOT National Safe Routes to Schools Task Force released a report on the program detailing successes, challenges, opportunities, and strategies for advancing the effort. Even though the program is relatively new, all 50 states and the District of Columbia have SRTS

programs in various stages of implementation, and as of January 2008 over 2,000 schools were involved nationwide.

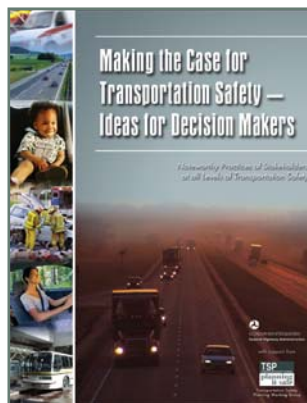
The Task Force report recommends building on current successes, improving Federal support for the program in forthcoming transportation legislation, promoting and encouraging support among program partners, and looking to the future for innovative solutions. To view a full copy of the report, go to [http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/task\\_force/collateral/task\\_force\\_report.web.pdf](http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/task_force/collateral/task_force_report.web.pdf).



*SRTS programs combine engineering, education, encouragement, enforcement, and evaluation strategies to impact traffic safety, traffic congestion, pollution, and air quality issues associated with school travel.*

## The Case for Transportation Safety

*Making the Case for Transportation Safety – Ideas for Decision Makers* is a compilation of noteworthy practices that have been implemented by stakeholders, executives, managers, and practitioners at all levels. This booklet, developed by the Transportation Safety Planning Working Group (TSPWG), includes 20 case studies detailing what states, Tribal governments, Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO), transit agencies, and their partners have implemented, including key accomplishments and results. Contact information and additional resources are provided for each practice. Copies are available on the TSPWG web site at <http://tsp.trb.org>.



## ITS/Operations Resource Guide 2008

The latest version of FHWA's Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) and Operations Resource Guide is now available. Included in the guide are listings of more than 500 documents, web sites, training courses, software tools, and points of contact covering a variety of ITS topics such as Integrated Corridor Management Systems and Integrated Vehicle-Based Safety Systems; and operations topics such as the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, and Traffic Incident Management. The safety section of the guide includes information on commercial vehicle information systems and networks, emergency management, and public safety; highway-rail intersections; and intelligent safety systems. A free copy of the guide is available by calling FHWA's ITS/Operations help line at 1-866-367-7487 or e-mailing [itspubs@dot.gov](mailto:itspubs@dot.gov). Be sure to include a complete mailing address. The guide can be viewed on-line at [www.resourceguide.its.dot.gov/default.asp](http://www.resourceguide.its.dot.gov/default.asp).

## Guidance Provided on Safety Countermeasures

One of the roles of the FHWA's Office of Safety is to help Federal, state, local, and tribal governments improve safety. A recent memorandum from the Office provides guidance on road safety audits, rumble strips and stripes, median barriers, safety edges, roundabouts, left and right turn lanes at controlled intersections, yellow change intervals, medians and pedestrian refuge areas, and walkways. Each section includes a description of countermeasures and their benefits, guidance on when the countermeasure should be applied, links to reference documents, and FHWA technical contacts. A copy of the memorandum is available at <http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/policy/memo071008.pdf>.



*Recent guidance from FHWA's Office of Safety includes the effectiveness and benefits of rumble strips.*

## Newsletter Targets Road Safety Audits

The FHWA Office of Safety recently launched a newsletter to provide current information on road safety audits (RSA). The newsletter includes snapshots of RSA programs across the country, information on the agency's RSA peer-to-peer program (RSA P2P), and updates on programs such as Pedestrian RSAs. The newsletter also includes information on upcoming events. To obtain a copy please visit <http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/rsa/newsletter/summer2008/summer2008.pdf>.

## Aggressive Driving Target of New FMCSA Program

Aggressive driving is the focus of a new Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) program called TACT – Ticketing Aggressive Cars and Trucks. The program's purpose is to help states educate motorists and truck drivers about the dangers of various driving behaviors around trucks, including unsafe lane changes, tailgating, failure to signal, failure to yield right-of-way, and speeding. Aggressive driving is defined as any combination of two or more of those behaviors.

A new TACT web site identifies action planning tips for starting a TACT program, guidelines for conducting a TACT high-visibility traffic enforcement program, participating TACT states as well as public and private sector partners, funding and grant opportunities, relevant research, and tips for motorists and professional drivers. To learn more about the program, visit the TACT web site at <http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/safety-security/tact/index.htm>.

## Transit Agencies Get Help on Pedestrian Safety Issues

Transit agencies can now easily find information on ways to improve safety from the FHWA Pedestrian Safety Guide for Transit Agencies. The guide is designed to help transit staff set policies, monitor transit performance, establish optimal transit stop locations and schedules, train transit operators, and engage communities in Transit-Oriented Development efforts. The guide also is useful for transit agency partners responsible for pedestrian safety issues.

The guide includes information on addressing common pedestrian safety issues near transit stations and bus stops; descriptions of effective engineering, education, and enforcement programs; background information about pedestrian safety and access to



transit; and references to publications, guides, and other tools helpful in addressing pedestrian safety problems. A copy of the full report can be viewed at [http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/PED\\_BIKE/ped/ped\\_transguide/transit\\_guide.pdf](http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/PED_BIKE/ped/ped_transguide/transit_guide.pdf).

## Annual Transportation Statistics Available

Need information on the number of highway-related transportation fatalities or the number pedestrians and killed in traffic crashes? The U.S. DOT's Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS), part of the U.S. Department of Transportation's Research and Innovative Technology Administration (RITA), has released its annual statistical report on the nation's transportation system that includes safety, economic performance, energy use, and environmental impact data. To view a copy of the full report go to [http://www.bts.gov/publications/transportation\\_statistics\\_annual\\_report/2007/pdf/entire.pdf](http://www.bts.gov/publications/transportation_statistics_annual_report/2007/pdf/entire.pdf).

The BTS also produces a transportation statistical profile for each of the 50 states and the District of Columbia. The report includes information on infrastructure, safety, freight movement, travel, registered vehicles and vehicle miles of travel, economy and finance, and energy and environment. Safety information includes safety belt use, motorcycle helmet laws, maximum posted speed limits by road type, and highway-rail grade crossing incidents by incident and type. To view a copy of the full report, go to [http://www.bts.gov/publications/state\\_transportation\\_statistics/state\\_transportation\\_statistics\\_2007/pdf/entire.pdf](http://www.bts.gov/publications/state_transportation_statistics/state_transportation_statistics_2007/pdf/entire.pdf).

## Updated MMUCC Guidelines Available

An updated version of Model Minimum Uniform Criteria (MMUCC) guidelines has been released by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and the Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA). This third edition of MMUCC guidelines will help states collect consistent, reliable crash data, identify traffic safety problems, establish goals and performance measures, monitor progress, and allocate resources for enforcement, engineering, and education. The MMUCC web site is a one-stop source for information on the guidelines and includes web-based training on the data elements and a discussion forum about MMUCC implementation efforts. To obtain a copy of the guidelines, go to <http://www.mmucc.us>.

## Driver Decision-Making and Distractions

How do drivers decide whether or not to engage in various tasks while driving? That question was the focus of recent research from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) on how drivers decide when to use in-vehicle technology. Researchers found there was little planning and preparation for activities and little tendency for drivers to delay activities. The in-vehicle task factor most important in driver considerations was visual demand. People did not think, for instance, that common cell phone tasks were risky. There also were differences in the willingness to engage in these tasks among various age groups with teen drivers and those with “high-intensity” driving styles (those who drive aggressively or multitask) being most willing. To view a copy of the full report, go to <http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/portal/site/nhtsa/menuitem.54757ba83ef160af9a7ccf10dba046a0/>.

### Research News

## Accident Modification Factors For Traffic Engineering and ITS Improvements

Accident modification factors (AMF), provide a quick way of estimating crash reductions associated with highway safety improvements. States and local jurisdictions use AMFs to make decisions on specific treatments and to determine the costs and benefits of a selected approach. National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP) Report 617: Accident Modification Factors for Traffic Engineering and ITS Improvements explores the application of AMFs for traffic engineering and intelligent transportation system improvements. To view a copy of the report, go to [http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/nchrp/nchrp\\_rpt\\_617.pdf](http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/nchrp/nchrp_rpt_617.pdf).

## How to Reduce Vehicle Speeds at High-Speed Intersections

The most effective treatments to reduce vehicle speeds at high-speed intersections are reviewed in the National

Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP) Report 613: Guidelines for Selection of Speed Reduction Treatments at High-Speed Intersections. The report discusses dynamic warning signs, transverse pavement markings, transverse rumble strips, longitudinal rumble strips, wider longitudinal pavement markings, roundabouts, approach curvature, splitter islands, speed tables and plateaus, reduced lane width, visible shoulder treatments, and roadside design features. The full report can be found at [http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/nchrp/nchrp\\_rpt\\_613.pdf](http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/nchrp/nchrp_rpt_613.pdf).



*Dynamic warning signs are one of the treatments to reduce speed at high-speed intersections.*

## New NCHRP Guidebooks Available

The latest National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP) guidebooks to support AASHTO’s Strategic Highway Safety Plan are now available. Volume 20, A Guide for Reducing Head-On Crashes on Freeways, provides guidance on reducing fatal head-on crashes by keeping vehicles from leaving the roadway; minimizing the likelihood of head-on crashes; reducing the severity of median-barrier crashes; enhancing enforcement and awareness of traffic regulations; and improving coordination of safety initiatives. A copy is available at [http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/nchrp/nchrp\\_rpt\\_500v20.pdf](http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/nchrp/nchrp_rpt_500v20.pdf).

Volume 21, Safety Data and Analysis in Developing Emphasis Area Plans, provides information on identifying emphasis areas, setting appropriate injury (and fatality) reduction goals, choosing treatments to reach identified goals, and targeting implementation to subpopulations of road users, vehicle types, or roadway locations. A copy is available at [http://onlinepubs.trb.org/Onlinepubs/nchrp/nchrp\\_rpt\\_500v21.pdf](http://onlinepubs.trb.org/Onlinepubs/nchrp/nchrp_rpt_500v21.pdf).

## Reorganization Supports SHSP

In 2006, the Washington Traffic Safety Commission (WTSC), which led the development and implementation of the State's Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) "Target Zero," realized the existing organizational and funding structures were not aligned to fully integrate statewide implementation of the SHSP. To address the situation, the WTSC reorganized their office and ensured grant funding was redistributed to key emphasis areas where the greatest number of lives could be saved.

As a result, Washington has seen measurable results during the first year of implementation. Fatalities decreased by 9 percent, impaired driving by 13 percent, and speeding by 9 percent. For more information, contact Lowell Porter, Director, Washington Traffic Safety Commission, 360-753-4018, [lporter@wtsc.wa.gov](mailto:lporter@wtsc.wa.gov).

## Crash Reduction Initiative

The South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT) initiated the Crash Reduction by Improving Safety on Secondaries (CRISOS) program to address the problem of the third highest vehicle miles traveled (VMT) death rate in the nation. CRISOS used crash and fatality rates to identify high-risk rural secondary roads, and once identified, used road safety audits to identify problems and potential solutions.

The program resulted in the inclusion of low-cost, short-term safety improvements in the State's Strategic Highway Safety Plan. The initiative proved to be successful and fatalities on CRISOS roads declined from an average of 71 deaths per year between 1998 and 2002 to an average of 62 deaths between 2006 and 2007, a 13 percent reduction. For more information, contact Terecia Wilson, Director, Strategic Highway Safety Plan, SCDOT, 803-737-0403, [wilsontw@scdot.org](mailto:wilsontw@scdot.org).

Following is a listing of upcoming training sessions and workshops being conducted by the National Transit Institute and the National Highway Institute that may be of interest to transportation planners and other safety professionals.

### National Transit Institute

[www.ntionline.com/CourseDates.asp](http://www.ntionline.com/CourseDates.asp)

#### *Introduction to Metropolitan Transportation Planning*

12/2-4/2008, Baltimore, MD

#### *Transit Planning*

12/8-12/2008, Louisville, KY

### National Highway Institute

[www.nhi.fhwa.dot.gov/home.aspx](http://www.nhi.fhwa.dot.gov/home.aspx)

#### Highway Safety

##### *Roadside Safety Design*

12/9-11/2008, Baton Rouge, LA

12/9-11/2008, Schenectady, NY

##### *Low-Cost Safety*

##### *Improvements Workshop*

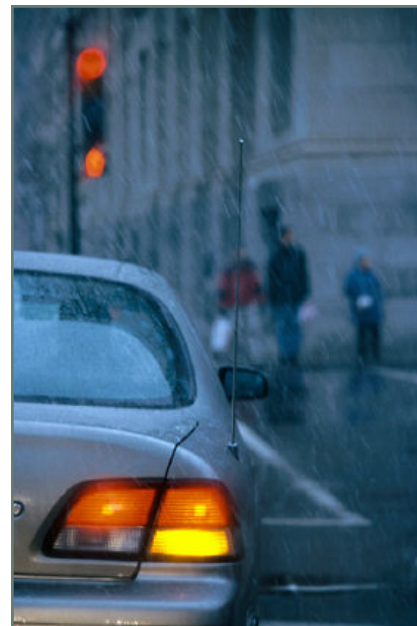
12/1/2008 Hollidaysburg, PA

##### *New Approaches to Highway Safety Analysis*

1/14-16/2009, Arlington, VA

##### *Designing and Operating Intersections for Safety*

3/3-5/2009, Sterling, VA



## Directions in Road Safety

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