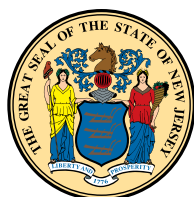




STATE OF NEW JERSEY HIGHWAY SAFETY PLAN

FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR 2008
October 1, 2007 through September 30, 2008

EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW



JON S. CORZINE
GOVERNOR



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EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW

Federal law requires the New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety (DHTS) to develop and implement an annual Highway Safety Plan (HSP) that addresses the primary causes of motor vehicle-related crashes and the resulting injuries, deaths and property-damage. Using crash data provided by the New Jersey Department of Transportation's Bureau of Safety Programs and the New Jersey State Police Fatal Accident Reporting System (FARS), DHTS, with assistance from Rutgers-CAIT, identified who is being injured and killed on our roadways, where crashes are occurring, and the causes of roadway user crashes.

In addition to crash data, DHTS, for the first time, engaged members of the Governor's Highway Traffic Safety Policy Advisory Council (HTSPAC) and the 14, county-based Community Traffic Safety Programs (CTSPs) in an assessment of the state's traffic safety needs. Their input, coupled with a thorough review of New Jersey's first Comprehensive Strategic Highway Safety Plan (CSHSP) which focuses heavily on crash reduction through education, is helping to ensure that the HSP is not duplicative, but a well-coordinated plan of attack for improving safety at both the state and local level. This new direction will ensure that DHTS funds countermeasures that have the greatest potential for reducing crashes on our roadways.

NEW JERSEY'S CRASH PROBLEM

Over the past ten years, 746 people, on average, have died annually on New Jersey's roadways. In 2006, 770 people were killed as a result of traffic crashes, a 3.2% increase over the previous year. Car drivers accounted for the greatest number of fatalities (331), followed by pedestrians (166), car passengers (162), motorcyclists (99), and bicyclists (12). While no county is immune from traffic crashes, injuries and fatalities, highly congested Middlesex County had the highest number of

crash victims (69) in 2006, while more rural Cape May had the least (15).

What's causing traffic crashes in the Garden State? Speed/aggressive driving, alcohol use, inexperience, and distraction/inattention are some of the most significant contributing factors. The HSP takes into consideration the following key 2006 crash data analysis findings:

- 31.2% of traffic fatalities were alcohol-related (no significant drop from previous years) and most victims had a Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) level of 0.11% or higher
- pedestrians represent 22% of all traffic fatalities, 11% higher than the national average
- bicycle fatalities dropped 29% statewide over the previous year with similar gains in most counties
- motorcycle fatalities more than doubled from 50 in 2005 to 102 last year
- young driver crashes are on the decline, down 5% since 2002, but young drivers 17-20 years of age are twice as likely as adult drivers to be involved in a crash
- speed-related crashes increased by 33% in the past year and nearly doubled since 2002
- 91.4% of motorists and passengers wear their safety belts, one of the highest usage rates in the nation, but nearly 50% of those individuals killed in traffic crashes were unbelted
- nearly 54% of crashes occurred on municipal and county roads (particularly in intersections or as the result of roadway departure) rather than on state and interstate highways

The HSP also incorporates the HTSPAC and CTSP member assessments which ranked young drivers, aggressive drivers, pedestrians/bicyclists, and driver safety awareness as top priorities at both the state and local level. The similarities between the newly developed CSHSP and DHTS' previous

safety plans were also taken into consideration with a particular emphasis on the human factors aspect of crash reduction. And, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) national priority areas are also included in the plan.

PLAN EMPHASIS AREAS

The HSP outlines how more than \$15 million in federal funds will be used to address the state's most pressing traffic safety problems through statewide and local education, enforcement and engineering initiatives. Emphasis areas include: occupant restraint (safety belts and car seats); speed/aggressive and impaired driving; pedestrian, bicycle, motorcycle and intersection safety; and young and impaired drivers. In addition, the HSP includes, for the first time, funding for a statewide public awareness campaign to call attention to the seriousness of New Jersey's traffic crash and fatality problem, and the Smooth Operator program, currently deployed in several Mid-Atlantic States, to combat aggressive driving. The plan also provides continued support for the state's traffic

crash records management system and emergency medical services.

While DHTS is responsible for developing and implementing statewide educational and enforcement programs such as *Click It or Ticket* (safety belts) and *Over the Limit, Under Arrest* (impaired driving), many programs are initiated at the local level by the CTSPs, and county and municipal government agencies. Local programs earmarked for funding in the 2008 HSP specifically address, through crash data analysis, a statewide and/or local traffic safety need and include clearly defined performance measures. This is a change from previous plan years, when projects were selected for funding based on group input and targeted selection.

GOING FORWARD

DHTS' is committed to a "zero bottom-line"—no crashes, injuries or fatalities. To accomplish this, however, takes a state-of-the-art, traffic crash records management system coupled with ongoing data analysis to ensure that resources are dedicated to those traffic safety problems with the greatest potential for improvement. To accomplish this, DHTS is working in partnership with NJDOT, New Jersey State Police and the New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission (MVC) to develop a portal that will allow for the electronic submission of crash reports (NJTR1) by all police agencies; co-location of all FARS units for better data collection and analysis; and the rollout of Plan4Safety, a web-based crash data analysis and countermeasures recommendation tool.

In addition to technology, DHTS will use its resources to market safety so that the public not only recognizes that New Jersey has a traffic crash problem, but acts upon it through real and significant behavioral change. DHTS will also step up its efforts to address two of the state's most vulnerable driving populations – teens and seniors – through its partnership with MVC and other safety organizations.

Finally, DHTS will continue to work with its state and local partners (grantees) to identify (through crash data analysis and survey tools) and fund countermeasures that reduce crashes and injuries, and save lives.

See the complete New Jersey Highway Safety Plan FY 2008 for detailed information.