

# Regional Safety Task Force Meeting

## HIGHLIGHTS OF OCTOBER 16, 2009 MEETING

### **1. Welcome & Introductions**

Larry Bucci, RSTF Co-chairperson welcomed everyone. Introductions followed.

### **2. Summary of July 2009 Meeting**

Mr. Bucci asked for a motion to approve the highlights from the July 29, 2009 meeting. The meeting highlights were approved.

### **3. AARP Special Programs and Initiatives**

Janine Bauer, AARP mobility volunteer and transportation lawyer, provided information about AARP's mobility agenda and Complete Streets initiative. AARP considers Complete Streets to be a crucial issue, especially as the number of seniors continues to increase, and as greater numbers of elderly citizens are no longer able to drive. Studies conducted by AARP have found that two-thirds of planners and engineers are not currently considering the needs of older road users in their multimodal planning. AARP's Livable Communities Campaign includes lobbying efforts at the federal level to promote legislation that would make communities safer for walking and bicycling.

The Complete Streets initiative addresses these and other mobility and equity issues. Ms. Bauer said that Complete Streets accommodate all users through the design and operation of facilities that are safe, comfortable, and convenient for all users. Since one-third of Americans do not drive at all, Complete Streets can achieve a broad societal benefit, in addition to benefiting older drivers. Ms. Bauer showed numerous examples of incomplete streets. She encouraged everyone to take pictures of incomplete streets in their own neighborhoods, in order to build the case for and encourage local projects. Ms. Bauer also encouraged those interested to join the Complete Streets Coalition. More information is available at [www.completestreets.org](http://www.completestreets.org).

### **4. Panel: Reducing Aggressive Driving in the DVRPC Region**

A panel of experts discussed efforts to reduce aggressive driving in the region. The panel consisted of: Cathy Rossi, AAA Mid-Atlantic; Gary Chilutti, Chester County Council on Addictive Diseases (COAD); Shari Willis, Rowan University; and Lt. Neil Brosnan, New Jersey State Police.

Zoe Neaderland, DVRPC, informed the group that the 2009 Safety Action Plan (DVRPC Publication #09032), a separate data memo providing crash analysis (#08054), and a set of cards summarizing the seven safety emphasis areas from the plan (#09032A) were complete and would be recommended for adoption by the DVRPC Board on October 22<sup>nd</sup>. The Safety Action Plan identifies seven emphasis areas that address 96 percent of the contributing factors to fatal crashes in the Delaware Valley region. Aggressive Driving was found to be the most significant emphasis area, contributing to over 50 percent of fatalities. The Regional Safety Task Force will explore strategies and programs to continue to address one of the seven safety emphasis areas per meeting. The goal is to discuss what is being done, and to figure out what more we can do together.

Richard Simon, Deputy Regional Administrator for Region 2 National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), provided opening remarks. He praised DVRPC for being ahead of the curve in terms of safety planning at the MPO level. Mr. Simon stressed using data to guide decision-making and employing countermeasures that are proven to work. In his experience, high-visibility enforcement efforts that incorporate education, enforcement, and publicity are often highly effective.

Catherine Rossi, Manager of Public and Government Affairs for AAA Mid-Atlantic, took on the difficult task of defining the problem of aggressive driving, which is the result of many behaviors and causes. The Mid-Atlantic Foundation for Traffic Safety has found that although a majority of people view aggressive driving as a serious problem, nearly as many admit to engaging in the behavior themselves. Ms. Rossi pointed out that although New Jersey and 10 other states have laws against aggressive driving, Pennsylvania does not. AAA Mid-Atlantic is currently lobbying for aggressive driving legislation in Pennsylvania.

Gary Chilutti, Executive Director of Chester County Council on Addictive Disease, compared the aggressive driving problem to that of driving under the influence (DUI). He noted that the accidents and fatalities attributed to aggressive driving are merely the tip of the iceberg, and do not account for many times more near-misses. Like DUI, Mr. Chilutti said that most aggressive drivers engage in the behavior many times before and after they are caught. He expressed a need among safety stakeholders to build consensus on what direction to take in order to address aggressive driving. Mr. Chilutti described an aggressive driving curriculum being developed by COAD to help change driver behavior, which will be piloted next year.

Lieutenant Neil Brosnan, Assistant Bureau Chief of the Operations Safety Bureau of New Jersey State Police, described enforcement efforts to combat aggressive driving in New Jersey. The New Jersey program included creating target areas for enforcement and performing about 2,000 details per year, using 16 unmarked cars. While these efforts were highly successful, Lt. Brosnan pointed out the need for additional funding and resources. In particular, enforcement officials require lobbying assistance, since they are unable to lobby for their programs. In addition, help with publicizing enforcement efforts is extremely valuable. Lt. Brosnan also described a new

enforcement program, the New Jersey Turnpike Tailgating Initiative, which will use innovative technology to enforce aggressive driving on the NJ Turnpike.

Shari Willis, Assistant Professor at Rowan University, concluded the panel by discussing studies she had conducted on the aggressive driving behaviors of college students. Ms. Willis is developing an intervention program based on her findings, emphasizing stress reduction techniques that can be employed while driving.

John Ward, DVRPC, opened the floor for questions and comments. He said that Pennsylvania needs to emulate New Jersey's laws in some cases, in order to provide programs like Mr. Chilutti's the tools they need to be successful. Mr. Simon cautioned that omnibus aggressive driving legislation might not be as effective as a law allowing more use of radar for speed enforcement in Pennsylvania, for example. Janine Bauer echoed this point, saying that aggressive driving laws can present difficulties from a prosecutor's perspective. She suggested that a strong vehicular homicide law or an insurance surcharge could potentially have more impact. The panel concluded by relating the discussion to the implementation table of DVRPC's recently published Safety Action Plan. Ms. Neaderland said she would circulate a summary of doable actions that came out of the discussion.

## **5. Update on Security Planning**

Ms. Neaderland gave a brief update about ongoing work to develop an overview of regional transportation security planning efforts. The report will seek to enhance coordination among the various entities engaged in transportation security planning in the Delaware Valley and to develop a shared security planning vocabulary. Ms. Neaderland invited RSTF participants engaged in security planning to contact DVRPC if they have not done so already.

## **6. Open Forum**

An open forum was held for members to share and exchange information. Ray Reeve, NJ Division of Highway Traffic Safety, shared preliminary results of New Jersey's pedestrian decoy program, which took place between August 14 and September 14, 2009. The event involved local law enforcement efforts, coordinated with press conferences and outreach to multiple media outlets. Mr. Reeves said that results are still coming in, but that the program seems to have been successful. He said that it will hopefully be repeated in spring 2010. Kevin Murphy, DVRPC, informed the group of an upcoming Road Safety Audit in Bristol Township, Pennsylvania. John Ward reported that the numbers for seat belt use in Pennsylvania were up in 2009. Several upcoming safety events were announced.

**Attendees:**

Aguilera, Lori	Chester County COAD Group
Anderson, Gastonia	Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
Anderson, Matthew	Chester County Planning Commission
Bartels, Stacy	Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
Bauer, Janine	AARP
Brahler, Richard	Bucks County Planning Commission
Brosnan, Neil Lt.	New Jersey State Police
Bucci, Larry	Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
Buerk, Jesse	Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
Chilutti, Gary	Chester County COAD Group
Dixon, Mary Beth	AARP
Dixon, Wilbur	New Jersey Department of Transportation
Donnelly, Maureen	Safe Kids Southern New Jersey – Cooper Hospital
Feggans, Charles	New Jersey Division of Traffic Safety
Fiocco, Joe	McMahon Associates
Fullerton, Dave	PATCO
Greenly, Scott	Greater Valley Forge TMA
Hufnagle, Louis	Delaware County Planning Department
LaBove, Glenn	Gloucester Township Police – Traffic Department
Merlin, Debbie	Philadelphia Mayor's Commission for Aging
Moore, Regina	Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
Moyo, Jabulani	Philadelphia Streets Department
Murphy, Kevin	Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
Neaderland, Zoe	Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
Nuble, Patrice	Philadelphia Streets Department
Paris, Chris Sgt.	Pennsylvania State Police
Patel, Ashwin	Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
Quick, Susan	Brain Injury Association of New Jersey
Ragozine, Bill	Cross County Connection TMA
Reeve, Ray	New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety
Richardson, Jim	Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission - RCC
Rossi, Cathy	AAA Mid-Atlantic
Sandner, John	New Jersey State Police
Schmidt, Heather	Upper Makefield Township Police
Schmidt, Mark Chief	Upper Makefield Township Police
Simon, Richard	National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
Stafford, Joe	Bicycle Access Council
Stermel, William	Philadelphia Traffic Department
Walsh, Brittany	Phila. Mayor's Commission on Services to the Aging
Ward, John	Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
Whille, Tim SFC	New Jersey State Police
Willis, Sheri	Rowan University
Ziemer, Karl	Delaware River Port Authority
Zito, Joe Sgt.	Delaware River Port Authority