



HIGHLIGHTS OF NOVEMBER 17, 2010 MEETING

1. Welcome & Introductions

Larry Bucci, Highway Safety Engineer at PennDOT District 6 and RSTF co-chair, welcomed everyone. Introductions followed.

2. Approval of September 2010 Meeting Highlights

Mr. Bucci asked for a motion to approve the highlights from the September 10th, 2010 meeting. The meeting highlights were approved.

3. Update from the Enforcement Community

Sgt. Michael Rann, Traffic Safety Unit Supervisor at Cherry Hill Township Police Department, asked for updates from members of the enforcement community. Verizon and JFK Hospital recently partnered with the Cherry Hill Township Police Department on the Impaired Driver Simulated Program. This educational program started by challenging participants to attempt to navigate a low-speed vehicle through a driving course marked by cones, while wearing fatal vision goggles. It is being expanded to simulate the effects of speaking on cell phones/texting and as an educational tool for senior citizens. There was also discussion about the law coming into effect October 29th requiring drivers to clear snow and ice off their vehicles. Sgt. Rann attended the Rutgers 6th Annual Safety Forum held on October 20th and mentioned that it was well attended and received. Ray Reeve, Transportation Specialist at New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety, provided comments about Volunteers In Police Service (VIPS), which is a national volunteer program that provides support and resources for law enforcement agencies.

4. Legislative Update

Rick Remington, Director of Public and Government Affairs at the AAA Mid-Atlantic Philadelphia office, provided information about a New Jersey bill moving forward through the Senate to double fines for texting and cellphone use while driving. Mr. Remington also mentioned AAA recently partnered with the Pennsylvania Turnpike on "Text Free Turnpike" educational campaign. Violet Marrero, Manager of Special Projects, New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety, said while the New Jersey Attorney General's study is underway, there have been zero reports of the teen decals resulting in violent crime. She also mentioned a bill in the New Jersey Senate requiring teen driving adjustments including a parent and teen orientation and more mandatory driving practicing hours.

5. Panel: Increase Seat Belt Usage

Zoe Neaderland, Manager of Transportation Safety and Congestion Management at DVRPC, gave a quick review of the DVRPC Safety Action Plan (SAP) and its products, including analysis and priority strategies for the emphasis area, “Keep Vehicles on the Roadway”. In 2009, run off the road (ROR) related fatalities in the Delaware Valley declined. However, there were still 140 fatalities in which ROR was a contributing factor. Information was provided on strategies and resources for keeping vehicles on the road. As discussed at the September RSTF meeting, which focused on “Increase Seat Belt Use”, a pop quiz was given to see how many Task Force organizations had a workplace policy requiring seat belt use for work-related travel. The majority of the members in attendance had such a workplace policy. There were offers of model policies and assistance for participants whose agencies do not have such a policy. Also everyone can take a role in making such policies known to their co-workers. This quiz will be conducted annually to track change.

Keynote Speaker

Joseph Cheung, Transportation Specialist, Roadway Departure Team, Federal Highway Administration, provided information on various strategies and technologies for preventing roadway departure crashes. In 2008, over 50 percent of fatal crashes in the nation involved vehicles leaving the roadway. Fifty-four percent of these crashes occurred on local and collector roadways located in rural areas. Typical strategies used in keeping vehicles on the roadway include improving curve geometry, adding signage and delineation, and providing rumble strips. Mr. Cheung said there are nine proven crash countermeasures used in preventing roadway departure crashes. He highlighted the following three: rumble strips and rumble stripes, median barriers, and safety edge. Safety edge is a low cost paving technique where the interface between the roadway and graded shoulder is paved at a 30 degree angle to eliminate vertical drop-off. FHWA has provided equipment loans to Pennsylvania and other states to assist with implementing the safety edge treatment. Other technologies Mr. Cheung mentioned include skid resistance pavement treatments and the retro-reflectivity of signs and pavement markings used to improve driver’s ability to see at night. FHWA is currently researching different types of lighting (headlights and streetlights) and is working on a roadside safety clearinghouse website as a “go to” place for all things roadside-safety related.

Guest Panelists

Matthew Razakus, Detective, New Jersey State Police – Fatal Accident Investigation Unit, spoke about identifying and enforcing at locations where crashes are common on New Jersey roadways. Detective Razakus mentioned the *Fatal Motor Vehicle Crash Comparative Data Report for the State of New Jersey* and Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) database as valuable resources in helping officers to place tactical units. Fatigue, improper vehicle maintenance, and distractions were common causes of crashes. Detective Razakus said the public needs to be educated about these issues and is open to ideas about how to address them.

Gary Modi, Division Chief, PennDOT – Bureau of Highway Safety and Traffic Engineering, discussed strategies for reducing head-on and cross-median crashes and reducing roadway departure crashes. The top strategies to reduce lane departure include the following: installing centerline and edgeline/shoulder rumble strips, widening lanes on curves, enhancing signage/markings/delineation on sharp curves, eliminating high severity shoulder drop-offs and installing cable guiderails. Mr. Modi said the use of rumble strips has resulted in a 30 percent reduction in crashes. PennDOT is working closely with PECO and other utility companies to remove and relocate utility poles and annually monitors shoulder drop-offs on state roadways to reduce the severity of ROR crashes.

Josh Schneider, Principal Planner, North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA), provided information about the High Risk Rural Roads Program in the NJTPA region. He explained funds are allocated for quick-fix, construction-ready safety projects on eligible rural county and local roads. Approximately \$1 million dollars per year is dedicated to this program in the TIP. A project is eligible if it demonstrates improvements will address a safety need, estimated cost is between \$75,000 to \$500,000, and is completed within two years of the federal authorization date. Since the start of the program (FY 2009), over \$2.2 million dollars have been spent on projects in Warren, Sussex, and Monmouth counties. Safety improvements funded include skid resistant surface treatments, rumble stripes and rumble strips, guiderails, retro-reflective signage, and bicycle grates.

Dave Cihocki, Assistant County Engineer, Burlington County Engineering Department, provided information about Burlington County's Guiderail Inventory Management System for county roadways. The goals of the system are to develop an inventory of existing guiderail and identify locations where guiderail needs to be replaced or installed. Mr. Cihocki explained the development of a priority rating system to address guiderail issues and use of a ranking system as a tool to define a Capital Program. Roadway sections with the highest priority ranking are upgraded or constructed first. Mr. Cihocki said visibility for nighttime drivers and keeping vehicles on the roadway go hand in hand. Burlington County is currently upgrading signage and painted lines through the use of retro-reflectivity and thermoplastic materials, respectively.

The discussion included the following highlights:

- There is a retro-reflectivity mandate in the 2009 Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) update.
- There was a question about standards for delineating poles. PennDOT's height standard is at least 4 feet above the roadway. The Department works with utility companies for other standards (e.g. wrapping retro-reflective tape around the pole)
- If a drop-off is more than 3 inches, safety edge treatment is recommended.
- PennDOT wants to train engineers on Highway Safety Manual (HSM). Once a date and time is confirmed, DVRPC volunteered to help spread the word.
- Since some engineering treatments factor into speeding (e.g. roadway widening), there needs to be time and money spent to address driver behavior.

6. Tracking Progress on Actionable Items

Ms. Neaderland redirected the discussion to focus on developing a short set of actionable items to help keep vehicles on the roadway in the Delaware Valley. The group voted on items building on the panel discussion and the existing implementation strategies in the SAP. These included working to publicize the importance of staying on roadways and the related need for everyone to maintain his or her vehicle, using crash data to identify ROR crash locations and trends, and developing a comprehensive program for updating and increasing consistency of advisory speed signs on horizontal curves to help prevent ROR crashes.

7. Open Forum

An open forum was held for members to share and exchange information. As part of the “Did You Know” series, Regina Moore, Transportation Engineer at DVRPC, provided information about TextZapper, a smartphone application primarily used by parents to monitor cellphone use among teen drivers. Carissa Sestito, Program Outreach Coordinator, Rutgers University, Transportation Safety Resource Center (TSRC), mentioned plans to expand the Plan4Safety crash analysis software to a national stage and asked for partners from other states to help test the current database structure.

Attendees:

Adesubokan, Yinka	Delaware County Planning Department
Amway, Lauren	Street Smarts – Delaware County
Bucci, Larry	Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
Buerk, Jesse	Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
Chelius, Tim	South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization
Cheung, Joseph	Federal Highway Administration
Cichocki, Dave	Burlington County Engineering Department
David, Jack	South Jersey Transportation Authority
Fallat, George	Mercer County Engineering Department
Feggans, Charles	New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety
Fiocco, Joe	Fiocco Engineering
Fought, Tricia	Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
Gomez, Francisco	NHTSA – Region 2
Hufnagle, Lou	Delaware County Planning Department
Lawson, Matt	Mercer County Planning Division
Marrero, Violet	New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety
Matkowski, Laurie	Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
Miller, John	Federal Highway Administration – New Jersey
Modi, Gary	Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
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
Neshatfar, Mitra	Rutgers University – TSRC
Olsen, Katherine	Street Smarts – Montgomery County
Ott, Pat	New Jersey Department of Transportation
Philbin, Officer James	Cherry Hill Township Police Department
Quick, Susan	Brain Injury Association of New Jersey
Ragozine, Bill	Cross County Connection TMA
Rann, Sgt. Michael	Cherry Hill Township Police Department
Rauanheimo, Ray	AARP – Montgomery County
Razakus, Det. Matthew	New Jersey State Police
Reeve, Ray	New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety
Remington, Rick	AAA Mid-Atlantic
Richardson, Jim	DVRPC Regional Citizens Committee
Schneider, Josh	North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority
Sestito, Carissa	Rutgers University – TSRC
Stafford, Joe	Bicycle Access Council
Story, Lauren	Public Health Management Corporation
Strumpfer, Warren	DVRPC Regional Citizens Committee
Thomas, Carol Ann	Burlington County Engineering Department
Trimbell, Shayne	Greater Valley Forge TMA
Trueman, Caroline	Federal Highway Administration – New Jersey
Strumphfer, Warren	DVRPC Regional Citizens Committee
Ward, John	Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
Ziemer, Karl	Delaware River Port Authority
Zito, Sgt. Joe	Delaware River Port Authority