



## Highlights of March 20th, 2018 RSTF Meeting

### Distracted Driving

All presentations and related meeting handouts are located on the RSTF Website:  
<https://www.dvrpc.org/Committees/RSTF/>

#### **1. Welcome and Introductions**

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 AM by RSTF Co-Chairs Peggy Schmidt, Executive Director of Partnership TMA and Bill Ragozine, Executive Director of Cross County Connection TMA. The co-chairs directed participants to information on tagging the meeting on social media and also read the RSTF goal aloud. Next, participants each introduced themselves to the group.

Ms. Schmidt requested approval from the RSTF for the November 2017 meeting highlights, and they were approved without comment.

#### **2. Distracted Driving – Presentations**

Two featured speakers addressed the meeting on distracted driving. Prior to the speakers Kevin Murphy, Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC), introduced the topic. Mr. Murphy presented on overall crash trends noting that in 2016 fatalities and severe injuries (KSI) from crashes reached a seven-year high in the region. Nationwide data suggests that distracted driving has remained level or declined slightly, but this number belies the serious data collection issues for this emphasis area. Within the DVRPC region, New Jersey and Pennsylvania have vastly different rates of distracted driving, a result of different laws and reporting practices around distracted driving. Mr. Murphy also showed data from the overlapping emphasis area analysis, which found intersection, young driver, older driver, alcohol-related, and unbelted crashes all coincide frequently with distracted driving crashes. Mr. Ragozine then introduced the first featured speaker: Julian Hoffman, National Safety Council (NSC).

Mr. Hoffman opened his presentation by discussing NSC, a congressionally-chartered nonprofit created to end preventable deaths. Preventable deaths are the top cause of death for people age 45 and younger. NSC tracks traffic deaths, but unlike NHTSA, they include any fatality traceable to a crash if it occurred within 12 months of the crash event (a much longer timeframe than the 30-day window used by NHTSA). This leads to a higher total number of deaths, although the trend is very much the same. NSC has developed a focus on distracted driving. A recent report issued by NSC found a severe lack of uniformity between states in how several increasingly common factors in crashes, including distracted driving, are reported on crash forms. Next, Mr. Hoffman discussed the role that new in-vehicle technologies play in both helping and hindering efforts to combat distracted driving. For instance, technologies like front crash prevention, lane departure warning systems, and adaptive headlights have been shown to significantly reduce the risk of crashes. Unfortunately, they are only available in 8% of the current fleet due to a slow turnover rate. Infotainment technologies, on the other hand, contribute to distract drivers. Some manufacturers incorporate features to lock out users when the vehicle is in motion, but this is not universal. Mr. Hoffman also noted that April is Distracted Driving Awareness Month and the Road to Zero Coalition will release their report on reaching zero traffic deaths on April 22.

Questions/Comments:

- Mr. Ragozine noted that in-vehicle technology can be distracting, including those intended to reduce crash risk. Mr. Hoffman emphasized the need to educate drivers on how these technologies are intended to work.
- Gus Scheerbaum, City of Philadelphia, asked about the potential to hold automobile manufacturers liable for introducing distractions. Mr. Hoffman noted that most government regulation of automobile manufacturers right now is focused on autonomous vehicles. The federal government is not leading on this issue. Picking up on this topic, Bill Beans, MBO Engineering, noted that Uber had temporarily suspended testing of autonomous vehicles after a pedestrian was killed in Arizona.
- Akshay Malik, City of Philadelphia, asked about the possibility of getting better data on travel behaviors directly from the smart features that are increasingly common in new vehicles. Mr. Hoffman noted that ZenDrive, Uber, and Lyft all monitor cell phone use by drivers, but this information is generally kept private. Cell phone companies have generally stayed away from this area.

Ms. Schmidt introduced the second speaker: Shannon Trice, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). Mr. Trice discussed the need for a cultural shift in how Americans view distracted driving and noted the role of enforcement in encouraging this shift. Enforcement played a key role in the cultural shift around seatbelt use in the 1980's and 1990's. Mr. Trice cited the use of high visibility enforcement (HVE) and creating "dissatisfied customers," i.e. ticketing aggressively. In Syracuse, Mr. Trice led a HVE program targeting distracted driving. One in 76 drivers in Syracuse received a ticket for distracted driving or another offense leading to a substantial decline in cell phone use while driving. Mr. Trice finished his presentation by pointing out the importance of enforcement to address road safety issues—it's not possible to only use better engineering to solve every safety issue.

#### Questions/Comments:

- Mr. Malik asked how long the behavior change seen in Syracuse lasted. Mr. Trice explained that the change lasted about six months. Longer term strategies are being tested in Connecticut and other states; overall, NHTSA has found that enforcement must be sustained to be effective over the long term.
- Orla Pease, AECOM, noted the role of generational cultural shifts in changing attitudes on seatbelt use. Children learn to hold their parents accountable for changing norms around road safety.
- Charlotte Castle, City of Philadelphia, asked if NHTSA has considered how to approach low-income neighborhoods in its enforcement recommendations. Mr. Trice agreed that this is an important area to consider and that NHTSA is developing programs to help police reengage with low-income communities. Transparency and education are critical in implementing HVE programs, as well as repairing the relationship between law enforcement and low-income communities in general.

Pat Ott, MBO Engineering, gave a short presentation on an early study of the handheld cell phone ban in New Jersey. The study considered crash data from 2006-2011, finding that crashes declined right after the ban went into effect in 2009, but rose again soon after. In addition, citations peaked after the ban, but subsequently leveled off. A survey of New Jersey drivers found that 88% agreed with implementing

a ban on handheld phone use, but over 50% continued to use a phone in the car. Ms. Ott concluded by noting that it may be time to engage a new study on cell phone use among New Jersey drivers.

Mark Rudiger, Westtown-Goshen Rotary, presented on the Stop Distracted Driving Campaign. Mr. Rudiger noted the need for more visibility of the danger of distracted driving. Children around the age of 12 are primed to build values, so the Westtown-Goshen Rotary developed a program targeted at 8<sup>th</sup> graders to teach them about distracted driving. The program enlists high school students and law enforcement to turn children into advocates. They also seek parent buy-in prior to introducing the program at a new school.

### **3. Developing Action Items**

The co-chairs then transitioned from the emphasis area discussion into the next agenda item, developing action items. RSTF members divided themselves into four groups to continue the discussion and work on ways to combat distracted driving in the region.

**Education Group:** Ms. Schmidt—lead, Karen Whitaker, DVRPC—assist

The education group developed several action items. Donna Ferraro, Public Health Management Corporation, will share information on a “Distracted Mat” game, which her agency has used successfully to show people how distraction impacts their ability to drive. Mr. Rudiger offered to share the Stop Distracted Driving campaign PowerPoint. In addition, the group discussed the importance of shifting the culture around distracted driving and developing better messaging strategies and incentive programs that discourage cell phone use while driving. Marco Gorini, DVRPC, was not a part of the education group, but volunteered under this topic to disseminate information from the National Safety Council on Distracted Driving Awareness Month in April, which members can share via social media feeds.

**Engineering Group:** Mr. Ragozine—lead, Michael Boyer, DVRPC—assist

The engineering group discussed how variable message signs can be used to educate drivers, and how data on distracted driving crashes may help to identify hot spots where these signs would reach the most distracted drivers. The group identified a municipal handbook on solutions to addressing distracted driving as a useful product for the region. In addition, they identified the need to increase awareness of the “Do Not Disturb” while driving function now available on many phones. Roundabouts are one road design tool that could help to address crashes at intersections, where many distracted driving crashes have been shown to occur.

**Enforcement Group:** Mr. Gorini—lead, Heike Jacob, DVRPC—assist

The enforcement group discussed some of the issues around police citing distracted driving, including hesitation over the severity of the fine. The group identified that an educational program should be tied to a first offense instead of or in addition to a fine. The group also discussed New Jersey’s Safe Corridors program, which can be effective through increasing fines. Police could use more resources from NHTSA for consistent enforcement over a longer period of time. To address these issues, three action items were developed. First, Mr. Gorini will investigate programs that tie education to a first offense (Nassau County in New York may have one such program). In addition, Ms. Ott will bring up the possibility of expanding the Safe Corridors meeting with relevant stakeholders. Finally, Mr. Trice volunteered to investigate NHTSA’s capacity to spread anti-distracted driving campaign funds over longer periods of time.

**Policy Group:** Kevin Murphy, DVRPC—lead

The policy group developed three action items to address distracted driving in the region. Mr. Scheerbaum and Justin Neff, DVRPC, both volunteered to research how car manufacturers abroad are incorporating better technology into their vehicles that don't allow drivers to become distracted as easily. Mr. Scheerbaum will research examples in Germany while Mr. Neff will focus on examples from the United Kingdom. Ms. Castle volunteered to research examples of sliding scale fines in traffic enforcement, which may help to address some of the equity concerns associated with strategies like HVE. Bill Beans, MBO Engineering, offered to research cellphone applications that alert people trying to reach you while you are driving to let them know you are unavailable.

#### **4. Member Updates and Open Forum**

Paul Carafides, Office of Transportation Operations Management at DVRPC, gave an update on the Incident Management Task Forces' (IMTF) activities – the full update was included in the meeting folder. DVRPC will host the 3<sup>rd</sup> Regional Traffic Incident Management Conference at Citizens Bank Park on May 16, an event which will include informational presentations and live demonstrations.

At this point, RSTF members were invited to provide any updates that they wished to share with the group. Kelvin MacKavanagh, DVRPC Goods Movement Task Force, noted that Mr. Murphy and representatives from the other two MPOs in New Jersey are organizing a Vision Zero-focused panel for the TransAction conference.

#### **5. Additional Updates and Conclusion**

Mr. Gorini provided a brief update on action items accomplished since the November 2017 RSTF meeting on pedestrian and bicyclist safety. Details on action item updates were provided in the meeting folder. Mr. Gorini also presented the draft RSTF logo, which DVRPC will use to rebrand RSTF-related materials. RSTF members were encouraged to provide comments via email.

Mr. Murphy updated the RSTF on the speed study, which will be delivered in final form as a Municipal Implementation Tool pamphlet. Graphics and data from the draft study will also be used to promote the next RSTF meeting. The next RSTF meeting will be on Thursday, June 7, 2018 and the topic will be Aggressive Driving.

#### **March 20<sup>TH</sup>, 2018 RSTF MEETING ATTENDEES LIST**

Jae	Barr	AutoBase
William	Beans	MBO Engineering
Michael	Boyer	DVRPC
Richard	Brahler	Bucks County Planning Commission
Charlotte	Castle	City of Philadelphia
Michael	Clemmons	Safety Engineering Consultant

Loresa	Daniel	New Jersey State Police
Donna	Ferraro	Public Health Management Corporation
Lisa	Glodowski	New Jersey State Police
Marco	Gorini	DVPRC
Lolita	Griffin	Dept of Behavioral Health & Intellectual disAbility Services
Julian	Hoffman	National Safety Council
Heike	Jacob	DVRPC
David	Kanthor	City of Philadelphia
Michael	Lynch	Burlington Co. Sheriff's Dept
Kelvin	MacKavanagh	DVRPC Goods Movement Task Force
Sharang	Malaviya	Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
Akshay	Malik	City of Philadelphia
Justin	Marshall	PCPC
Kevin	Murphy	DVRPC
Bryan	Norcross	Burlington Co. Sheriff's Dept.
Patricia	Ott	MBO Engineering, LLC
Orla	Pease	AECOM
Bill	Ragozine	Cross County Connection TMA
Christian	Regosch	Bucks County Planning Commission
Mark	Rudiger	Westtown-Goshen Rotary
Peggy	Schmidt	The Partnership TMA of Montgomery County
Nicholas	Schock	Gloucester County Prosecutor's Office
Samuel	Spino	Camden County Office of Emergency Management
Jessica	Stokes	Camden County Office of Emergency Management
Daniel	Swartley-McArdle	DVRPC
Andrew	Thompson	Urban Engineers

Shannon	Trice	NHTSA
Karen	Whitaker	DVRPC
Ayanna	Williams	Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
Darrell	Merritt	Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
Philbin	Jim	Atlas Flasher
Warren	Strumpfer	Traffic Safety Advocate
Justin	Neff	DVRPC
Paul	Carafides	DVRPC
Gus	Scheerbaum	City of Philadelphia
William	Carter	Greenman-Pedersen Inc.
Dave	Kuhn	Greenman-Pedersen Inc.
Barry	Seymour	DVRPC
John	Ward	DVRPC



# Survey Results

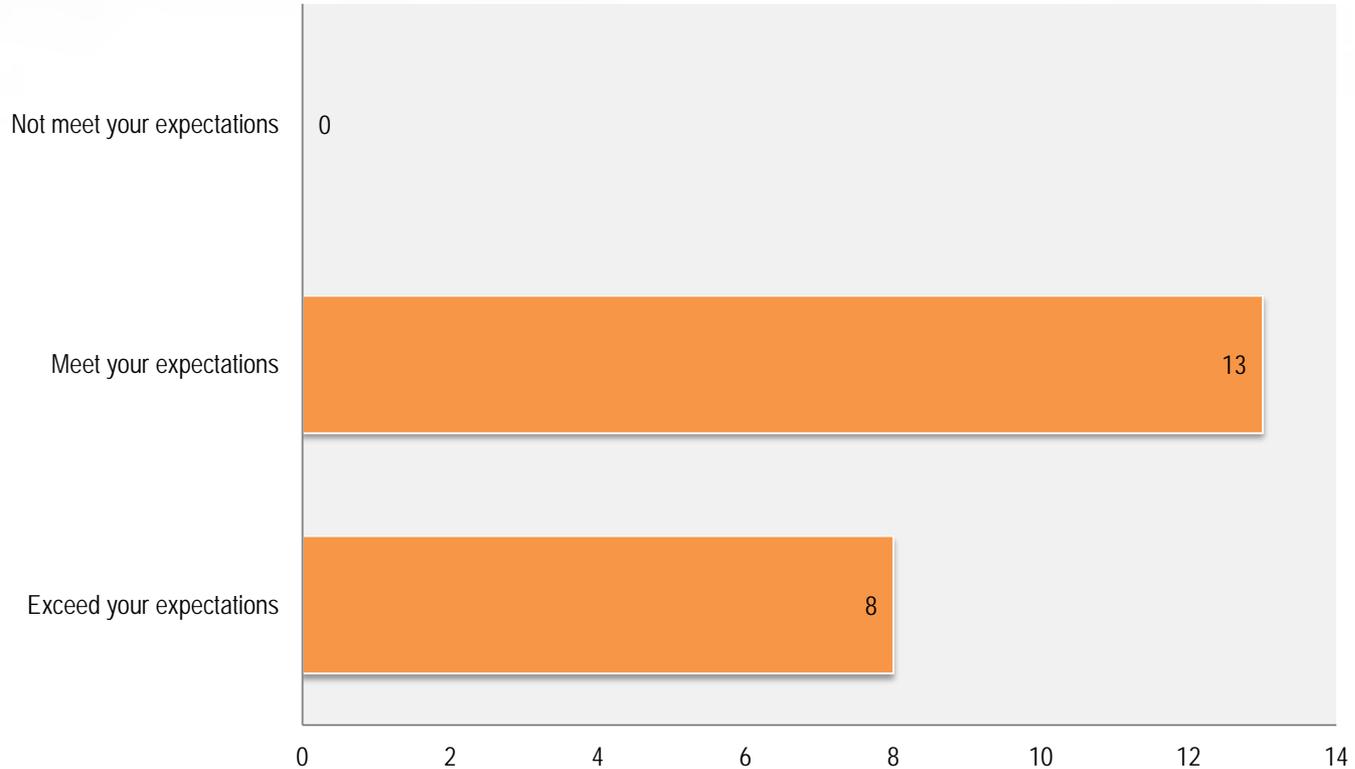
March 20, 2018 RSTF Meeting:

Distracted Driving

# Overall Survey Results

- 21 out of 45 meeting attendees responded
  - 47% response rate
- Everyone found that the event either met or exceeded their expectations
- Some write-in comments offered potential areas for improvement

# Question 1: Did this meeting...



# Question 2: What exceeded or didn't meet expectations?

Presentations and breakout sessions were stimulating

Lack of attention to equity in presentations (**didn't meet**)

The inclusion of all participants into breakout groups

Collaborative approach to discussions (especially breakout sessions)

I liked the new selection process for group breakout

The meeting was timely, informative, and relevant

# Question 3: How else can RSTF raise awareness/take action on this topic?

Provide ongoing social media toolkit for members

Draft language for adding distracted driving to contract language for fleets, starting with county, city, DVRPC, and PennDOT

Educate, educate, educate

Reach out to municipalities

Bring in more participation from technology sector

Provide updates to the PPTF

Invite policymakers to the meeting

# Additional Comments?

Glad to see new members (and ideas) at the table

No conversation about distracted pedestrians or bicyclists

More discussion about legalizing marijuana in NJ

Allowing participants to pick breakout group of interest was a good change



For more information, please contact:

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