

## TRAFFIC SAFETY INNOVATIONS 2015

# BIKE/PEDESTRIAN SAFETY



## CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY PATROL

### Peddling Toward Safety

*The California Highway Patrol keeps pedestrians and bicyclists safe by educating citizens early and often.*

If California was known for just one thing, it would probably be its good weather, which attracts sun-loving residents and visitors in droves. Unfortunately, the steady sunshine comes with some undesirable side effects, according to the California Highway Patrol (CHP), which says the Golden State's favorable climate fuels a large pedestrian and bicycle culture, putting California at greater risk for biking- and walking-related traffic crashes. The winner of the Bike/Pedestrian Safety Special Award in the 2015 National Law Enforcement Challenge, CHP spent 2014 addressing that risk with education and enforcement targeting pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists of all ages.

#### Problem Identification

As Americans have become more interested in health, wellness, and environmental sustainability, a growing number of citizens have begun commuting on foot and bicycle instead of by car. This is especially true in California, where law enforcement has noticed an increase in the number of traffic-related pedestrian and bicyclist collisions, due to more Californians choosing to walk or bicycle during part or all of their commute.

**Agency Size:** 7,500 Sworn Officers

**Location:** California

**Community Size:** 163,696 square miles

**Community Population:** 38.8 million

"In California, around 21 percent of all fatal traffic collisions are pedestrians and bicyclists, where as the national average is 14 percent," explains CHP's Sgt. Scott Taylor, who says there were 310 bicyclists and pedestrians killed in 2013 and 3,274 injured. The number of fatal traffic collisions involving bicyclists and pedestrians increased in 2013 by 57.14 percent and 18.81 percent, respectively, compared to the previous three-year average. "That could be attributed to a few different things. One, we have a much longer riding season and a much bigger outdoor culture because of our good weather. Two, a lot of areas in California are promoting bicycling and walking as a way to save fuel and reduce carbon emissions. Because California is a sunny, clean-air state, we recognize that this is going to be a growing challenge for us in the future."

#### Planning

CHP's bicycle and pedestrian safety activities in 2014 were driven in large part by its participation in the California Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP), a data-driven process involving more than 400 safety



stakeholders from 170 public and private agencies and organizations who collaborate to identify the most pressing safety problems on all public roads in the state. Implementation of the SHSP focuses on a list of specific targeted actions designed to reduce serious injuries and fatalities. Currently, the SHSP includes two challenge areas directed at reducing bicyclist and pedestrian injuries and fatalities: Challenge Area 8, “Making Walking and Street Crossing Safer,” and Challenge area 13, “Improve Bicycling Safety.”

On top of the SHSP, CHP’s efforts were fueled by the California Pedestrian and Bicyclist Enforcement and Education Project (CPBEEP) grant, awarded by the California Office of Traffic Safety to supplement the agency’s efforts in areas of California with a disproportionate number of pedestrian and bicycle fatalities and injuries. The grant funded both education and enforcement in target areas.

Finally, planning also encompassed officer training. CHP partnered with the League of American Bicyclists, for example, to host a nine-hour “Traffic Skills 101” training class attended by 29 uniformed officers. It was only one of several similar events attended by CHP officers, who also retrieved training in the form of pre-shift briefings through CHP’s Solid, Realistic, Ongoing, Verifiable Training (SROVT) Program. In 2014, the program, which represent officers with real-life law enforcement scenarios for the purpose of discussion and education, included a total of 13 SROVT scenarios involving bicycle or pedestrian safety.

**“The younger you can teach a person safe bicycling and pedestrian habits, the more likely it is that those habits will continue throughout their life.”**

## Education

CHP used its CPBEEP grant to implement a statewide public education campaign to reduce pedestrian and bicyclist collisions, prevent injuries, and save lives. The campaign provided awareness, respect, and tolerance among all roadway users. Highlights included:

- **Bicycle helmet distribution:** CHP purchased, distributed, and properly fitted 1,024 bicycle helmets and safety equipment at events throughout California.
- **Traffic safety events:** In support of International Walk to School Day/Month, CHP hosted seven traffic safety events, impacting 3,099 people during the months of October and November. Likewise, CHP conducted eight traffic safety events, reaching 2,941 people during the months of May and June, in support of May is Bike Month and Bike to School Day. The events included “bicycle rodeos,” during which officers taught school-aged children to ride their bikes, inspected kids’ bicycles, and fitted children for bike helmets.
- **Media outreach:** A new state law, the Three Feet for Safety Act, requires California drivers to allow three feet of distance when overtaking or passing a bicyclist. CHP supported the law by offering interviews to local media throughout the state, hosting a press conference introducing the new law as part of back-to-school traffic safety.



*CHP Commissioner Joseph Farrow speaks at the IACP Highway Safety Awards Breakfast in Chicago, Illinois, where CHP was awarded the Special Award for Bike/Pedestrian Safety.*

In 2014, CHP conducted a total of 45 traffic safety events, including bicycle rodeos, reaching more than 8,000 people. On top of this, it conducted 176 pedestrian and bicyclists traffic safety and road-sharing presentations, impacting 55,988 people.

“The younger you can teach a person safe bicycling and pedestrian habits, the more likely it is that those habits will continue throughout their life,” Taylor says. “That’s why we make such an effort to reach out to school kids; we want kids to develop a level of safety that will continue into adulthood and throughout their life.”

## Enforcement

In 2014, CHP officers committed more than 43,500 hours of regular duty time toward pedestrian and bicycle enforcement, issuing 7,194 bicycle and 1,440 pedestrian citations. In addition, officers issued the following citations for placing bicyclists and pedestrians at great risk: 58,675 citations for unsafe speed in present conditions; 31,999 stop sign citations; 22,102 red light citations; 1,375 citations for failure to yield to a pedestrian within a crosswalk; 37 citations for passing a vehicle stopped at a crosswalk for a pedestrian; and 7,865 citations for passing on the right shoulder.

Enforcement was especially active in October and November in support of International Walk to School Day/Month, and in May and June in support of May is Bike Month/Bike to School Day. During the former, CHP issued 19,706 citations to bicyclists, pedestrians, and motorists. During the latter, it issued 11,769 citations.

Finally, CHP’s CPBEEP grant funded nearly 2,812 overtime hours, during which officers issued 177 citations to bicyclists, pedestrians, and motorists.

“Our enforcement isn’t just with drivers who violate pedestrians’ or bicyclists’ right of way; it’s also with bicyclists and pedestrians who ride through stop signs or jaywalk,” Taylor explains. “It’s a dual effort to get drivers and pedestrians and bicyclists to act safely together.”

## Outcomes

During the 12-month period of its CPBEEP grant, CHP observed a nine-percent decrease in the number of fatal and injured pedestrian and bicyclist victims, which in the targeted areas totaled 2,095 in 2014, compared to 2,302 in 2011. Statewide, however, there remains a great deal of work to be done.

“Anecdotally, we are actually experiencing a greater level of injuries with both pedestrians and bicyclists,” Taylor acknowledges. “We think that’s because California is experiencing a greater number of people hiking and walking to work, as well as biking and walking for pleasure.”♦

### LESSONS LEARNED

- ▶ **STUDENTS ARE THE KEY TO SUCCESS:** Educating children today will yield safer bicyclists and pedestrians tomorrow.
- ▶ **GRANTS OFFER EXTRA SUPPORT:** Grant-funded education and enforcement can help agencies increase their impact in areas of particular need.
- ▶ **BE ALL-INCLUSIVE WITH ENFORCEMENT:** Keeping pedestrians and bicyclists safe means including them in enforcement efforts, along with motorists.



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## TRAFFIC SAFETY INNOVATIONS 2015

# Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety - Municipal/Sheriff

## Henrico County Police Division



### Getting Trucks on Track

*Virginia's Henrico County Police Division addressed commercial motor vehicle (CMV) complaints by leveraging the 'Three Es' of traffic safety: engineering, education, and enforcement.*

Because of the overhead noise from planes, people generally don't like living near airports. Thanks to the convenient commerce, however, businesses, love it. That's certainly true in Henrico County, VA. Home to Richmond International Airport, it has attracted a large community of industrial businesses. Consequently, in addition to air traffic, the eastern portion of Henrico County sees a lot of truck traffic, which in 2014 created a conundrum for the Henrico County Police Division (HCPD). The winner of the Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety - Municipal/Sheriff Special Award in the 2015 National Law Enforcement Challenge, HCPD successfully resolved community concerns by taking a three-pronged approach to CMV traffic and noise, focusing on engineering, education, and enforcement.

### Problem Identification

Commercial motor vehicle traffic in Henrico County reached a tipping point in 2014, when a national company built a warehouse distribution center near Richmond International Airport in the county's eastern portion. Although the area is mostly industrial, surrounding it is rural farmland along with

**AGENCY SIZE:** 600 Sworn Officers

**LOCATION:** Henrico County, VA

**COMMUNITY SIZE:** 245 Square Miles

**COMMUNITY POPULATION:** 318,611

several pockets of residential neighborhoods. When the warehouse opened, complaints from citizens who lived in these areas began pouring in.

The complaints were two-fold, according to Sgt. Rob Netherland of HCPD's Traffic Enforcement Unit. First, residents were upset about noise. The warehouse is open 24/7, so trucks are entering and exiting the area at all hours. Drivers were also sleeping in their trucks outside the facility, leaving their vehicles idling as they rested. Second, truck drivers were getting lost on local roads, causing damage to private property along the way.

"We have two roads in the area with similar names," Netherland explains. "One of the roads, White Oak Road, is a two-lane country road that runs through the rural part of the county. The other road, White Oak Creek Drive, is a new road out by the airport, where the warehouse is. A lot of truck drivers use GPS, and it was taking them down the wrong 'White Oak.' We ended up with a lot of damaged mailboxes and torn-up yards from truck going the wrong way and turning around on this small country road."



Upset with the new influx of CMV traffic, citizens spoke, and HCPD listened.

## Planning

Stakeholder engagement was the first step toward addressing citizens' CMV complaints. HCPD therefore dispatched its community officer to meet with affected citizen groups, such as homeowners' associations, to assess their concerns. The officer also met with the business whose warehouse was generating the new influx of CMV traffic. Meanwhile, HCPD engaged the Henrico County Traffic Engineering Division, which maintains two county-owned roads in the designated problem area, and the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), which maintains two state-owned roads in the area.

"We called an emergency meeting of our board of supervisors, which passed an ordinance barring trucks from White Oak Road," explains Netherland, who says truck drivers coming from any direction now pass three to four signs clearly directing them to the correct and approved route to the area's industrial park. "We then worked with VDOT and the county to determine who owned the roads in the area and to put up signs to prevent trucks from turning onto White Oak Road."

**Truck drivers coming from any direction now pass three to four signs clearly directing them to the correct and approved route to the area's industrial park.**



*Henrico County Police Division received the Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety - Municipal/Sheriff Special Award at the IACP Highway Safety Awards Breakfast in Chicago, Illinois.*

## Education

New road signs directing truck drivers to preferred routes constituted the "engineering" portion of HCPD's strategy. They were a quick fix, but they weren't sufficient. To ensure its message was delivered to those who needed it - truck drivers - HCPD leaned heavily on education.

During the aforementioned stakeholder meetings, HCPD's community officer informed the warehouse owner of citizens' complaints and asked for help developing a mutually agreeable solution. The business subsequently agreed to address noise complaints by planting additional trees along the roadways between its facility and residences across the street, as well as creating a staging area for trucks on one side of the warehouse where there are no houses. To address the principal issue of lost truck drivers, it agreed to send an HCPD-created memo to all its distributors and truck dispatch stations informing them of the preferred route to its facility, complete with turn-by-turn directions and a map.

"Instead of going out and hammering truck drivers with tickets, we worked with the business to make sure they were sending out the correct information to all their trucks to make sure deliveries were going to the right address," Netherland says.

## Enforcement

Enforcement was the final piece of the puzzle. It was executed primarily by its Commercial Motor Vehicle Team, a part-time unit of officers who work together at least once a month to conduct strict CMV enforcement. HCPD enlisted a total of 21 officers to assist with CMV enforcement in the problem area, including two new officers added to the CMV team, bringing its composition from 10 officers to twelve.

“After probably a 60-day window of nothing but education - working with trucking companies and putting up signage - we started doing our enforcement efforts,” Netherland explains.

Officers began by issuing citations to truck drivers who did not obey the county’s new ordinance and signage.

“Drivers saw the signs, but they were following their GPS,” continues Netherland, who says HCPD issued 60 CMV citations in a six-day period working 12-hour shifts: 23 for failure to obey weight limit signage, 16 for failure to obey route signage, and 21 for overlength violations. A second enforcement effort executed by two officers near the airport lasted seven weeks; it yielded 59 summonses and 116 CMV inspections, which placed 36 vehicles and three drivers out of service. The former effort was financed in part with grant-funded overtime and the latter with regular duty time exclusively.

## Outcomes

HCPD’s efforts greatly reduced CMV traffic on targeted roadways. In 2012, HCPD observed that trucks accounted for 14 percent of traffic in the area; in 2014, trucks accounted for only 11 percent of area traffic.

Progress is most obvious, however, in citizen feedback. “Before, we were getting four or five complaints a day from citizens,” Netherland concludes. “Now we get a complaint maybe once every other week or so. And calls for service - citizens calling about damaged yards and mailboxes - have dropped to almost zero. The community is very happy with what we’ve done.”♦

## LESSONS LEARNED

- **CITIZENS MUST BE HEARD:** Agencies that listen to citizen complaints are well-positioned to address issues that matter to the local community.
- **PARTNERSHIPS ARE PARAMOUNT:** Targeting CMV problems requires forming a stakeholder coalition which includes not only law enforcement, but also, in many cases, state government and private businesses.
- **ENFORCEMENT BRINGS HOME THE MESSAGE:** Education is a critical foundation. As the last mile in a larger campaign, however, enforcement can be even more effective.



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## TRAFFIC SAFETY INNOVATIONS 2015

# Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety - State Police



## Maryland State Police

### Combatting Collisions

*Maryland State Police reduced commercial motor vehicle (CMV)-related fatalities by empowering troopers and educating drivers.*

One of the busiest and most important commercial centers in the nation is the Baltimore-Washington metropolitan area. Unfortunately, as commerce grows, so does traffic, including commercial motor vehicle traffic, in which the increase recently caused a spike in fatal crashes involving trucks on Maryland highways. Maryland State Police (MSP), winner of the Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety - State Police Special Award in the 2015 National Law Enforcement Challenge, responded with a multifaceted campaign directed at all CMV stakeholders: truckers, motorists, and even its own state troopers.

### Problem Identification

In 2012, MSP and the Maryland State Highway Motor Carrier Division (MCD) noticed a disturbing trend in Maryland's annual traffic safety statistics: after falling to a low of 43 in 2010, the number of fatal crashes involving commercial motor vehicles increased two years in a row, rising to 54 in 2011 and to 70 in 2012. Of these crashes, 27 (38.5 percent) occurred on highways in the Baltimore-Washington metro area - specifically, Baltimore, Montgomery, and Prince George's Counties - where extra congestion has resulted in less space

**AGENCY SIZE:** 1,490 Sworn Troopers

**LOCATION:** Maryland

**COMMUNITY SIZE:** 12,407 Square Miles

**COMMUNITY POPULATION:** 5.98 Million

between trucks and cars, more merging maneuvers, and an increase in aggressive driving.

“Most of these crashes are on highly-used corridors where there’s a heavy confluence of cars and trucks,” explains Capt. Norman Dofflemeyer, commander of MSP’s Commercial Motor Vehicle Enforcement Division (CVED). “The majority of them are happening because of driver error, whether that be the driver of the car or the driver of the truck.”

MSP’s response to the trend was a commitment to reverse it. In its 2014 strategic plan, MSP stated it would support the Maryland Highway Safety Plan goal of reducing, and eventually eliminating, fatalities from crashes involving commercial motor vehicles on Maryland roadways.

### Planning

MSP’s strategy was threefold, encompassing selective enforcement, focused media initiatives, and specialized unit support. The first strategy, in particular, required considerable planning in the form



of data collection. To identify the areas in greatest need of CMV enforcement, MSP partnered with Maryland-based Washington College to obtain geographic information system (GIS) data maps showing CMV crash “hot spots” in each of Maryland’s 23 counties. Armed with this information, the agency planned the following grant-funded special focus initiatives for 2014, which involved high-visibility enforcement on roadways with the greatest need:

- **Operation I-81:** Although Interstate 81 is a 12-mile stretch of the most highly-traveled road for commercial vehicles in Maryland, it has no fixed CMV inspection facility, making it a prime location for enforcement.
- **Southern Maryland Action for Safer Highways (SMASH):** SMASH was a special initiative designed to catch commercial vehicles bypassing the scales located on U.S. 301 in Charles County, MD, which feeds truck traffic into Prince George’s County.
- **Weekend Warrior:** Weekend Warrior was a special enforcement campaign on the upper eastern shore of Maryland, aimed at reducing commercial vehicle fatalities on two heavily-traveled roadways U.S. 301 and U.S. 50.
- **Operation Tailgate:** During Operation Tailgate, MSP directed all commercial vehicles off the heavily-traveled Capital Beltway to the Washington Redskins’ FedEx Field for inspections.



Col. William Pallozzi, Superintendent of Maryland State Police, accepts the Special Award for Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety - State Police at the IACP Highway Safety Awards Breakfast in Chicago, Illinois.

**“ Drivers of passenger and commercial vehicles alike are generally responsible for fatal CMV crashes. ”**

- **Operation I-95:** Operation I-95 was directed at aggressive drivers operating around commercial vehicles on Interstate 95.
- **Baltimore Action for Safer Highways (BASH):** Bash involved adding additional enforcement around the Baltimore metropolitan area.

## Education

Because drivers of passenger and commercial vehicles alike are generally responsible for fatal CMV crashes, MSP endeavored to increase its public information and education efforts in 2014. Efforts included answering all outside inquiries to the best extent possible; conducting safety-related talks; attending meetings and conferences with motor carrier industry partners; and a continuation of outreach through print, the MCD website, and public service announcements. To that end, MSP:

- Answered 5,000 telephone inquiries about commercial motor vehicle laws, regulations, and safety from motor carriers and the general public;
- Spent \$200,000 on radio ads, bus posters, billboards, and online ads targeting aggressive driving around trucks and buses, which collectively garnered an estimated audience of 5.5 million impressions;
- Organized 67 safety seminars for CMV operators and 20 for non-CMV operators, including driving schools, companies, groups, farm bureaus, and other organizations;
- Delivered three “Teens and Trucks” safety talks to teenage drivers; and



- Distributed 15,850 “Maryland Trucker Maps” and 4,086 “Maryland Motor Carrier Handbooks” to the CMV industry, which used the materials to obtain information about CMV regulations, the availability of truck parking, and Maryland roads suitable for trucks.

Information and education also extended to MSP troopers. Although only 10 percent of MSP’s sworn troopers have been trained and certified to conduct CMV safety inspections, all of them are capable of observing and enforcing CMV violations. MSP therefore created a special DVD video, which was distributed to troopers at each of its 22 barracks. A joint project between MSP, the Baltimore County Police Department, and the Community College of Baltimore County, the video instructed non-certified patrol officers how to safely and thoroughly conduct commercial vehicle traffic stops.

“Anyone can stop a truck for traffic violations, but a lot of police officers are reluctant to do so because they’re afraid the truck driver will tell them something they don’t understand,” Dofflemyer says. “The video explains that these are just big cars and helps them be more confident and comfortable stopping them for traffic violations. It adds to the number of eyes and enforcement activities on improperly operated commercial vehicles.”

**“MSP’s CMV crash-reduction efforts have produced a sharp decline in statewide CMV-related fatalities.”**



## Enforcement

MSP CVED troopers conducted a total of 52,851 total traffic stops on commercial motor vehicles in 2014, issuing 96,448 citations and 48,862 warnings. CVED personnel also conducted more than 73,500 CMV inspections and weighed approximately 1.8 million commercial motor vehicles.

The aforementioned grant-funded, special-focus initiatives also yielded strong results:

- **Operation I-81** generated 769 CMV inspections and 411 citations, and resulted in 89 commercial vehicles being declared out of service.
- **SMASH** generated 560 CMV inspections and 405 citations, and resulted in 77 commercial vehicles being declared out of service.
- **Weekend Warrior** generated 803 CMV inspections and 767 citations, and resulted in 170 vehicles being declared out of service.
- **Operation Tailgate** resulted in 1,400 CMV inspections.
- **Operation I-95** resulted in 2,300 CMV inspections.
- **BASH** resulted in 500 CMV inspections.

Collectively, MSP’s six special-focus initiatives generated 6,332 CMV inspections and 3,403 citations, and resulted in 336 vehicles being declared out of service.





To further encourage CMV enforcement, MSP has a policy stating “outstanding performance by an employee or group of employees be officially recognized and rewarded.” Rewards and recognition include documented commendations from citizens who interact with troopers during safety days, favorable job observation reports issued by supervisors, and a commander’s Letter of Commendation, all of which are maintained in troopers’ personnel files for use during performance reviews and promotion assessments. Additionally, MSP gives out uniform award ribbons for troopers to wear in recognition of their achievements; in 2014, a “Department Trooper of the Year” award was given to the agency’s top-performing trooper, a “CVED Trooper of the Year” award to the top-performing trooper at each MSP barracks, and approximately 50 “Commander’s Award” ribbons to individual troopers for outstanding enforcement activities.

“It’s important to recognize people for above-and-beyond activities because they’re the ones who make it possible for use to meet our objectives,” Dofflemyer says.

## Outcomes

MSP’s CMV crash-reduction efforts have produced a sharp decline in statewide CMV-related fatalities. After rising to 70 in 2012, the number of fatal crashes involving a commercial motor vehicles declined to 58 in 2013 and 39 in 2014.

“We’ve seen real benefits from our program,” Dofflemyer concludes. “It’s working. We’re out there making things better.” ♦

## LESSONS LEARNED

- **CONDUCT TARGETED ENFORCEMENT:** Using GIS data to identify high-priority roadways helps agencies achieve more impact with fewer resources.
- **EDUCATE EVERYONE:** Agencies targeting fatal CMV crashes should engage drivers of both passenger and commercial vehicles in CMV education.
- **EMPOWER OFFICERS:** Officers don’t need CMV expertise to issue CMV citations; all officers should feel as empowered to enforce traffic laws among trucks as they do among cars.
- **RECOGNITION FUELS PERFORMANCE:** Recognizing and rewarding officers for superior enforcement efforts can help agencies drive more and better results.



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## DISTRACTED DRIVING

### DALTON POLICE DEPARTMENT



### A Serious Distraction

*Georgia's Dalton Police Department responded to citizen concerns by dedicating an entire month to distracted driving, training, education, and enforcement.*

The City of Dalton, in northwest Georgia, has numerous and diverse challenges. Similar to most communities its size, for instance, it struggles at times with drugs and other crime. If you ask the Dalton Police Department (DPD), however, the No. 1 public nuisance in Dalton isn't theft, narcotics, or violence; it's distracted driving, including unsafe driving behaviors such as texting, grooming, and eating behind the wheel. The winner of the Distracted Driving Special Award in the 2015 National Law Enforcement Challenge, DPD addressed the issue head-on in 2014 by focusing on specialized training, targeted education, and concentrated enforcement.

#### Problem Identification

When it wants to know what problems are plaguing its community, DPD asks those who know it best: the citizens who live there.

"We mail out a citizen survey every three years," explains Police Officer 1st Class David Saylor. "In 2014, distracted driving was the top issue citizens saw in the community, even above issues like drug use, gangs, and public drinking."

**Agency Size:** 61 Sworn Officers

**Location:** Dalton, GA

**Community Size:** 19.8 Square Miles

**Community Population:** 33,414

Overall, 68 percent of Dalton citizens named distracted driving as a top concern, up from 57 percent in DPD's previous survey, conducted in 2011.

DPD echoed citizens' concerns. A uniformed officer, for example, conducted a visual survey of 100 drivers at one of Dalton's most crash-prone intersections and found over half (55 percent) of observed motorists were engaged in some type of distracted behavior while operating their vehicles.

"We knew it was a problem based on statistical analysis of crash report," continues Saylor, who notes distracted driving was a factor in 51 percent of local crashes in 2014. "But when the citizens see it, too, you know it's a huge issue."

#### Planning

DPD's strategic plan states one of the agency's main goals is to "reduce the amount of vehicle crashes on roadways in Dalton." Because distracted driving is one of the leading causes of crashes in Dalton, DPD decided to place special emphasis on it in 2014.



“We sat down as a traffic unit to lay out some ideas, and ultimately we decided to take the month of October and do a big enforcement push,” Saylor explains.

In honor of the campaign, which was titled “Operation: Thumbs Up,” October was designated “Distractober.” The effort included not only enforcement and education, but also officer training. Prior to the initiative, officers received special pre-shift training on the hazards of distracted driving to help them identify violations both before and after crashes. In total, 30 patrol officers received this training in 2014, equal to roughly half of DPD’s 61 sworn personnel.

## Education

Through conversations with motorists, DPD determined many of them don’t perceive distracted behaviors as “distracting.” Education was therefore an important component of Operation: Thumbs Up/ Distractober.

“Driving is like any other job. You have to train people; once you train them, they’ll do what you need them to do,” explains Saylor, who says officers turned traffic stops into classrooms. “We speak to teenagers in schools, but a lot of times the only way to reach adult drivers is out there when you’re doing enforcement. By making traffic stops and speaking to them about distracted driving, we were able to help people understand what they were doing and why it was dangerous.

DPD’s education efforts were numerous during Distractober. For example, they included handing out rubber thumb rings at events as reminders to not text and drive; publishing distracted driving articles, videos, and statistics on social media; teaching distracted driving classes to high school students; and partnering with local restaurants, several of which posted distracted driving messages on their exterior signs through October.

## Enforcement

DPD officers engaged in 74 selective traffic

enforcement details relating to distracted driving in 2014, including 24 details during Operation: Thumbs Up. Each detail typically involved an officer standing or parked in an unmarked vehicle near the roadway and calling out observed offenses to other officers in the area. Collectively, these details yielded 718 distracted driving citations and warnings in 2014, including 114 issued during Distractober alone, up substantially from 418 in 2013 and 116 in 2012.

## Outcomes

Together, training, education, and enforcement yielded significant results, according to Saylor, who says DPD observed a 23.7 percent reduction in distraction-related crashes from 2013 to 2014, as well as a 13.5 percent reduction in distraction-related injuries.

“We reached 1,958 drivers and students through Distractober and Operation: Thumbs Up,” Saylor concludes. “Through that, we noticed a big decrease in crashes related to distracted driving.”♦

## LESSONS LEARNED

- ▶ **COMMUNITY INPUT IS VALUABLE:** Citizen surveys can help agencies identify critical traffic safety issues in their community.
- ▶ **LIMITED CAMPAIGNS CAN PRODUCE LASTING RESULTS:** Organized, short-term education and enforcement campaigns can help agencies target specific traffic problems in a meaningful way.
- ▶ **ENFORCEMENT YIELDS EDUCATION:** Traffic stops at their best are an opportunity to educate drivers as well as enforce laws.

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# TRAFFIC SAFETY INNOVATIONS 2015



## IMPAIRED DRIVING

### CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY PATROL



#### Decreasing DUIs

*Grant-funded education and enforcement helped the California Highway Patrol target impaired driving across the Golden State.*

Although it's over 2,000 miles from Motor City, California is well-known for its car culture. Unfortunately, Californians don't just like to drive. A concerning number of them also like to drive under the influence of drugs and alcohol, according to the California Highway Patrol (CHP). The winner of the Impaired Driving Special Award in the 2015 National Law Enforcement Challenge, CHP devoted itself to reducing that number in 2014 through a combination of education and enforcement, both of which were enhanced by an infusion of grant-funded support.

#### Problem Identification

Impaired driving has always been a primary focus for CHP, according to Sgt. Eric Jones of CHP's Research and Planning Section. Despite an aggressive and comprehensive impaired driving program, however, CHP has continued to see a large number of collisions, injuries, and fatalities resulting from impaired driving on state highways. In 2012, the most recent year for which CHP had complete data, there were 14,460 traffic collisions caused by impaired driving, constituting 8.04 percent of all traffic collisions in CHP's jurisdiction.

**Agency Size:** 7,500 Sworn Officers

**Location:** California

**Community Size:** 163,696 square miles

**Community Population:** 38.8 million

Of those collisions, 343 caused fatalities and 6,590 caused injuries, up from 338 and 6,438 the year prior, respectively. Furthermore, data from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration showed as recently as 2010, 30 percent of all drivers killed in motor vehicle collisions in California tested positive for legal and/or illegal drugs, a percentage that has been increasing since 2006.

#### Planning

CHP's impaired driving activities in 2014 were driven in large part by its participation in the California Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP), a data-driven process involving more than 400 safety stakeholders from 170 public and private agencies and organizations who collaborate to identify the most pressing safety problems on all public roads in the state. Implementation of the SHSP focuses on a list of specific targeted actions designed to reduce serious injuries and fatalities.



“Impaired driving is a specific challenge area within the Strategic Highway Safety Plan,” explains Jones, who says CHP, through its participation in SHSP Challenge Area 1, “Reduce Impaired Driving-Related Fatalities,” focuses on proactive measures designed to reduce the incidence of driving under the influence (DUI) and increase the apprehension of DUI drivers.

On top of the SHSP, CHP’s efforts were funded by three grants the agency applied for and received in 2014 to address impaired driving. One grant involved enhanced statewide DUI enforcement and education efforts, and two others targeted specific locations with high percentages of impaired driving-related injuries and fatalities.

Officer training was an especially important piece of the planning process. “First of all, 100 percent of our officers receive Standardized Field Sobriety Test (SFST) training at the academy, which isn’t the case with some other agencies,” explains Jones, who says 220 newly-appointed CHP officers received initial SFST training in 2014.

Training also included 75 Advanced Roadside Impaired Driving Enforcement (ARIDE) classes, which taught 307 CHP officers to identify drivers under the influence of seven different types of drugs; and Drug Recognition Expert (DRE) certification, which was awarded to 110 new CHP personnel in 2014, bringing the agency’s total to 694 DRE-certified employees who have been trained to evaluate citizens who may be under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

**“CHP set a goal of conducting at least 100 local traffic safety presentations at appropriate venues; in reality, it conducted 168 such presentations.”**

## Education

In 2014, CHP applied for and received grant funding from the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) for its Alcohol Enforcement, Reduction, and Traffic Safety (ALERTS) program, which supported CHP’s DUI-related public education efforts. As part of the grant, CHP set a goal of conducting at least 100 local traffic safety presentations at appropriate venues; in reality, it conducted 168 such presentations, reaching more than 140,000 licensed and soon-to-be-licensed drivers across California.

CHP’s two other grants, also furnished by OTS, likewise included public education components. The first, the Riverside Area-Wide Impaired Driving Collision Reduction Effort grant, facilitated 46 public events to approximately 33,160 attendees in Riverside County, an urban area determined to have an unusually high number of DUI collision victims based on available Statewide Integrated Traffic Records System (SWITRS) data. The second, the Yuba-Sutter Area-Wide Impaired Driving Collision Reduction Effort grant, facilitated a regional anti-DUI public awareness campaign, during which CHP officers discussed and distributed grant-funded anti-DUI education materials throughout rural Yuba and Sutter counties. Combined, the two grants funded 88 traffic safety presentations, reaching more than 205,000 licensed and soon-to-be licensed drivers.

Beyond its grant-funded activities, CHP also administered DUI education through numerous other programs. Through its Start Smart program,



*CHP was awarded the Impaired Driving Special Award at the IACP Highway Safety Awards Breakfast in Chicago, Illinois.*

for instance, CHP conducts classes for teen drivers, educating them about the dangers and consequences of impaired driving.

“The class is unique compared to other lecture-type classes because it is really interactive and includes video presentations to keep it fun and relatable,” explains Jones, who says CHP conducted 1,067 Start Smart classes in 2014, impacting 199,408 young drivers.

Another notable program is Every 15 Minutes, which is a two-day program for teens simulating the physical, emotional, legal, and financial consequences of impaired driving. “It allows students to witness an impaired driving collision and experience the aftermath firsthand,” continues Jones, who says CHP coordinated 157 Every 15 Minutes presentations in 2014 in partnership with local law enforcement agencies, hospitals, emergency medical responders, schools, and private businesses. “It’s a pretty emotional program.”

Bolstering these and other programs were a statewide media campaign, through which CHP aired anti-DUI public service announcements on TV, garnering more than 13.4 million impressions, and social media outreach.

“We have a pretty comprehensive approach to public education, and we think that’s really important,” Jones says.



## Enforcement

In 2014, CHP officers committed 446,120 hours of regular duty time toward impaired driving enforcement, arresting 73,398 drivers and conducting 5,843 DRE evaluations. Additionally, each of its three grants included specific enforcement objectives. Specifically, CHP directed more the 57,000 grant-funded overtime hours toward the detection, apprehension, evaluation, documentation, and conviction of impaired drivers. Grant-specific highlights include:

- **ALERTS Grant:** As part of its ALERTS grant, CHP conducted 239 sobriety checkpoint operations, resulting in 484 DUI arrests; 112,429 vehicles screened; 2,544 SFSTs conducted; and 1,280 citations issued. It also conducted 177 DUI saturation patrols, resulting in 586 DUI arrests; 2,573 SFSTs conducted; and 2,555 citations issued, using over 50,000 overtime hours to conduct proactive DUI enforcement, resulting in 1,731 DUI arrests.
- **Area-Wide Regional Impaired Driving Collision Reduction Effort Grants:** CHP’s Riverside Area-Wide Impaired Driving Collision Reduction Effort grant funded 92 proactive

“**Every 15 Minutes allows students to witness an impaired driving collision and experience the aftermath firsthand.**”





enforcement patrols resulting in 381 DUI arrests, one miscellaneous arrest, 253 field sobriety tests, 39 vehicles impounded, 305 motorist assists, 1,061 verbal warnings, and 498 citations. Its Yuba-Sutter Area-Wide Impaired Driving Collision Reduction Effort grant likewise included 311 proactive enforcement patrols resulting in 59 DUI arrests, 23 miscellaneous arrests, 176 field sobriety tests, 36 vehicles impounded, 161 motorist assists, 1,258 verbal warnings, and 1,743 citations.

“Additionally, we place greater emphasis on enforcement during maximum enforcement periods that coincide with holiday times, when we tend to see an uptick in impaired driving-related incidents,” explains Jones. “During these maximum enforcement periods, we do everything we can to deploy the maximum number of field personnel to help us address collision-causing violations like impaired driving.”

## Outcomes

Because statewide traffic safety data isn't yet available for 2014, the outcomes of CHP's efforts aren't yet clear. Early numbers, however, indicate positive momentum, according to Jones, who says the total number of traffic collisions caused by impaired driving in 2014 decreased by 1.56 percent, compared to the previous three-year average. ♦

## LESSONS LEARNED

- ▶ **TRAINED OFFICERS ARE EFFECTIVE OFFICERS:** Training all officers to conduct Standardized Field Sobriety Tests is a differentiator for agencies targeting impaired driving.
- ▶ **COLLABORATION IS KEY:** Having public- and private-sector partners helps agencies maximize their resources and their reach.
- ▶ **GRANTS MOVE THE NEEDLE:** Grant-funded education and enforcement allow agencies to apply increased pressure and attention to reduce negative impaired-driving trends.



*The National Law Enforcement Challenge is a traffic safety recognition program supported by a cooperative agreement between the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), and it is held in partnership with the National Sheriffs' Association (NSA), the Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA), and the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA).*





## TRAFFIC SAFETY INNOVATIONS 2015

# MOTORCYCLE SAFETY

## HOLLISTER POLICE DEPARTMENT



### Rallying for Safety

*California's Hollister Police Department turned an annual biker rally into an opportunity to promote motorcycle safety.*

For most of the year, the City of Hollister is a sleepy agriculture town. Located in California's Central Valley - 50 miles south of San Jose, in San Benito County - it's surrounded by fields flush with onions, garlic, bell peppers, and sweet corn. For one weekend a year, however, Hollister isn't known for its crops; rather, it's known for its hogs - motorcycles, that is, thousands of which descend on Hollister for a world-famous motorcycle rally every Fourth of July weekend. In 2014, the Hollister Police Department (HPD) turned the rally into a living, breathing rider-education event, earning it the Motorcycle Safety Special Award in the 2015 National Law Enforcement Challenge.

### Problem Identification

Although data is a powerful policing tool, HPD didn't rely on surveys or statistics to identify motorcycle safety as an agency priority. Instead, it relied on experience, according to Lt. Eric Olson, who said Hollister's annual "Independence Day Rally" motorcycle rally dates back nearly 70 years to 1947. After being dormant for several decades, it was revived for its 50th anniversary in 1997 and has since become the largest motorcycle rally on the West Coast.

**Agency Size:** 25 Sworn Officers

**Location:** Hollister, CA

**Community Size:** 7.29 Square Miles

**Community Population:** 37,000

"Every year on the Fourth of July, motorcycle enthusiasts from all over the U.S. come to this event, which has grown to where it now takes over the entire downtown area of Hollister," Olson explains. "The numbers are estimated differently every year, but some say all the way up to 100,000 people visit our town over that weekend."

An event of this magnitude has an enormous impact on all aspects of law enforcement. From a traffic perspective, however, motorcycles are front and center.

"It's a closed event, so only motorcycles are allowed to drive in the downtown area during the rally," Olson continues. "As an agency, we work to make it as safe an event as we can for the people riding those motorcycles."

### Planning

Planning for the 2014 Hollister Independence Day Rally commenced after the completion of the 2013 rally and included six to eight months of focused coordination with multiple outside agencies that



contracted with HPD to assist them during the three-day event. Lessons learned during the 2013 rally yielded numerous improvements in 2014, including:

- Releasing a detailed schedule of street closures prior to the event, and increasing the number of street closures from the prior year to improve traffic flow and pedestrian safety;
- Procuring new steel barriers to improve traffic flow and providing additional protection for riders and passengers;
- Preparing and coordinating barrier and signage maps to improve safety and protection throughout the rally area;
- Dividing the rally into zones to assist in assigning foot patrols and to improve response to incidents;
- Installing 65 security surveillance cameras in downtown Hollister to improve incident monitoring and response times;
- Preparing several emergency evacuation plans to use if needed; and
- Using software to monitor public social media posts about the rally beginning a month prior to the event. The location-based intelligence helped HPD estimate rally turnout and identify where in town would likely require extra traffic management.

To ensure successful planning and execution, HPD invited partner agencies to monthly meetings and prepared an “Operational Overview 2014 Motorcycle Rally Plan” to serve as a master policy manual for

**“Partnerships were key to successful motorcycle enforcement during the rally.”**



*The Stafford County Sheriff's Office was awarded the Traffic Incident Management Special Award at the IACP Highway Safety Breakfast in Chicago, Illinois.*

law enforcement involved in the event, covering areas such as command management responsibility, communications planning, operations directives, medical support, personnel assignments and schedules, and demobilization directives.

## Education

To ensure the 2014 Hollister Independence Day Rally went smoothly, HPD initiated a public information and education campaign several months prior.

“The start of summer usually signifies the start of motorcycle season,” Olson says. “A lot of people like to come visit Hollister, so we have officers out in the field well before the really event who are specially trained in motorcycle enforcement and inspection.”

Although they’re trained in enforcement, these officers are highly committed to education. “They’ll stop motorcyclists and let them know what deficiencies are on their bikes,” Olson continues. “It’s not all about tickets; it’s about educating, because a lot of people, when they buy motorcycles, don’t know all the things they’re supposed to have on them, or not have on them.”

Roadside education was bolstered by online education. HPD also reached bikers via social media, including Facebook, Twitter, and Nixle, where the department shared rally-related press releases and announcements, many of which emphasized motorcycle safety.

## Enforcement

If education was a priority leading up to the rally, enforcement was a major priority during it, according to Olson, who says partnerships were the secret ingredient to successful motorcycle enforcement during the rally. More than 20 law enforcement partners - including municipal, state, and federal police agencies - assisted HPD during the event along with numerous other organizations, including Hollister Public Works and the Hollister Fire Department.

A 24/7 command center streamlined collaboration and coordination to ensure effective enforcement. “The command center had four or five teams of outside agency officers in there at any given time,” explains Olson, who says HPD conducted briefings three times a day to keep incoming officers abreast of events during shift changes. “It’s important that information keeps flowing to all our personnel, so we had direct communication at all times from the command center to officers by radio and phone.”

In the field, officers conducted two saturation enforcement patrols, as well as two motorcycle safety operations. During those, officers made 14 stops resulting in two felony arrests, six moving violation citations, one suspended license citation, and two unlicensed driver citations.

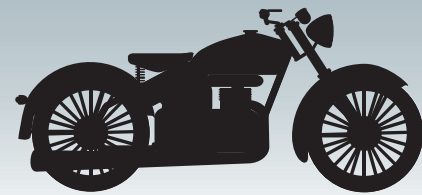
## Outcomes

With help from HPD and its partner agencies, Hollister concluded its 2014 Independence Day Rally successfully and safely, according to Olson, who says outcomes included improvements in several important metrics for 2014, compared to 2013. DUI arrests, for example, fell from 12 to 11, arrests from 30 to 28, crashes from six to four, and crime reports from 36 to 32.

“What we’ve found over the years is that the more we educate citizens and visitors - the harder we work to inform the public about how the event works and what we’re doing to keep everybody safe - the more successful the rally is,” Olson concludes. ♦

## LESSONS LEARNED

- ▶ **PLANNING IS POWERFUL:** Early planning allows law enforcement to think through every aspect of education and enforcement, secure required partners and resources, and digest lessons learned from previous efforts.
- ▶ **EDUCATION EMPOWERS:** Because citizens aren’t always familiar with motorcycle laws, public education and information are important to modify behavior.
- ▶ **PARTNERSHIP PAYS:** Leveraged as force multipliers, partners - other law enforcement agencies, for example - can make even the largest problems manageable.



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## OCCUPANT PROTECTION

### PEACHTREE CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT



### Strapped in for Success

*The Peachtree City Police Department advances occupant protection by promoting a culture of safety.*

The State of Georgia is renowned for its Southern hospitality. In the Atlanta suburb of Peachtree City, however, one thing they're not at all hospitable toward is occupant restraint violations, according to the Peachtree City Police Department (PCPD). The Occupant Protection Special Award winner in the 2015 National Law Enforcement Challenge, PCPD has increased seat belt compliance and saved lives by ingraining occupant protection into the culture of both its department and its community.

#### Problem Identification

In 2013, Peachtree City logged 821 collisions. Occupants were unrestrained in 10 (1.2 percent) of these collisions, and in four (2.4 percent) of those instances, occupants were injured because they weren't wearing a seat belt.

Although those are excellent numbers already, PCPD endeavored to improve them further in 2014. The agency's starting point was an analysis of crash data and seat belt compliance, according to Lt. Matt Myers, commander of PCPD's Community Response Team and coordinator of the Metro Atlanta Traffic Enforcement Network (MATEN).

**Agency Size:** 64 Sworn Officers

**Location:** Peachtree City, GA

**Community Size:** 24 Square Miles

**Community Population:** 35,000

"We do quarterly analyses of all crashes with unbelted occupants and plot them out to identify trends by location, day, time, and even driver demographic," Myers explains. "We also do monthly seat belt surveys, visually completed by officers, at different locations around the city. When the analysis reveals a problematic trend according to any of these factors, enforcement and education resources are deployed in a directed manner to correct it. Fortunately, with our high compliance rate, it is infrequent to find any serious trends."

In the absence of significant trends, PCPD embraced a lateral approach to occupant protection across its community, the basis for which is the department's 29-page traffic enforcement policy that specifically identifies occupant protection as an enforcement priority for all uniformed patrol officers.

"Whereas some agencies may just have their traffic officers focus on occupant protection violations, in Peachtree City, every uniformed officer out in their patrol car is enforcing occupant protection laws," Myers continues. "You have to get cultural buy-in



from officers, and having occupant protection as a policy both in writing and as a matter of practice - our chief will issue memos and stand up at shift change to personally give out awards for officers doing well in occupant protection - establishes it as a clear priority for the agency.”

The policy extends beyond the police department, too: Peachtree City has a personnel policy mandating all city employees and their passengers wear seat belts on the job, whether they’re in a city vehicle or a personal vehicle.

“There are no exceptions,” Myers says. “All our prisoners that we transport, all our officers, even the guy that cuts the grass - all these people are required to wear seat belts.”

## Education

PCPD policy mandates public information and education, in addition to enforcement. The policy states, “The Community Response Team will develop educational and enforcement programs to encourage the use of seat belts.”

In response to its mandate, PCPD executed numerous occupant protection education efforts in 2014. Among the most significant were 19 car seat inspection events across the city at daycare facilities, parks, retail parking lots, shopping centers, and elementary schools.

“People can drive up and get their car seats inspected by a certified car seat technician to make sure they’re

“  
**If we advertise 99% of people wore their seat belts last month, the 1% who didn’t will realize their behavior isn’t normal.**  
 ”

installed correctly,” explains Myers, who says PCPD had 15 certified Child Passenger Safety Technician officers in 2014, providing 24/7 coverage for car seat checks.

PCPD also executed an active “Click It or Ticket” campaign, which included messages on the department’s two mobile message trailers, press releases to local media outlets, email newsletters distributed to approximately 11,000 local residents, and social media posts to the department’s 10,000 Facebook followers, including a well-received video featuring officers discussing unrestrained injuries and seat belt enforcement.

“Another thing we do is at the entrance to the city,” Myers continues. “On two of our major highways, we have compliance rate signs showing the compliance rate from the previous month’s seat belt survey. That’s what we call a ‘social norming’ tool. The hope is that if we advertise that 99 percent of people wore their seat belts last month, the 1 percent who didn’t will realize their behavior isn’t normal, which hopefully will convince them to change it.”

## Enforcement

PCPD assigned seven officers to its traffic-focused Community Response Team in 2014. Each officer was tasked with organizing routine seat belt details involving at least two officers and a spotter, usually a motorcycle officer, in high-collision-frequency corridors of the city during peak collision times. In



*The Peachtree City Police Department was presented the Occupant Protection Special Award and the First Place Municipal 26-75 Sworn Officers Award at the IACP Highway Safety Breakfast in Chicago, Illinois.*

total, traffic officers in 2014 organized 37 team details targeted directly at seat belt violations, during which 317 enforcement actions were taken.

“Seat belt details are very effective for a number of reasons,” Myers explains. “One, it allows us to address a large number of non-compliant individuals in a very short period of time. Two, it’s high-visibility enforcement; when other people see that high-visibility enforcement, they buckle up.”

Because PCPD’s policy mandates occupant protection as a core mission of the department, the Community Response Team isn’t alone in its efforts. “As a matter of fact, about 23 percent of the citations issued by our agency in 2014 were for seat belt violations,” Myers continues. “That was the second-most commonly issued citation we had, behind only speeding.”

## Outcomes

Together, PCPD’s policies, education, and enforcement moved the needle on occupant protection in 2014. Specifically, voluntary seat belt compliance was up from 2013 and exceeded the statewide average. Crash outcomes likewise improved: in 2014, Peachtree City logged 791 collisions, down from 821 in 2013. Occupants were unrestrained in seven (0.8 percent) of those collisions, down from 10 (1.2 percent) in 2013. In three (1.9 percent) of those instances, occupants were injured because they weren’t wearing a seat belt, down from four (2.4 percent) the year prior.

“As a police agency, our mission is to increase the quality of life in our community by decreasing the likelihood of people being injured in car crashes,” Myers concludes. “The best way to do that is to make sure people are wearing their seat belts.”♦

## LESSONS LEARNED

- ▶ **SEAT BELT SURVEYS ARE CRITICAL:** Regular, ongoing seat belt compliance surveys, conducted at least monthly, help agencies create benchmarks and measure progress.
- ▶ **TREAT SOCIAL MEDIA SERIOUSLY:** Social media’s reach gives it tremendous power in terms of reaching the motoring public with occupant protection messages.
- ▶ **OCCUPANT PROTECTION IS A TEAM SPORT:** Occupant protection is most successful when it’s embedded in an agency’s policies, mission, and culture, ensuring all officers enforce seat belt laws instead of only those assigned to traffic details.



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## TRAFFIC SAFETY INNOVATIONS 2015

# SPEED AWARENESS

## ROANOKE COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT



### Getting Schooled on Speeding

*The Roanoke County Police Department leveraged data and education to put the brakes on speeding.*

Roanoke County is shaped like a donut, encircling three other jurisdictions in the Commonwealth of Virginia: the City of Salem, the City of Roanoke, and the Town of Vinton. However, there's nothing sweet about its speeding problem, according to the Roanoke County Police Department (RCPD). RCPD successfully slowed speed-related crashes, injuries, and fatalities in 2014 by taking a data-based approach to speed awareness, comprising equal parts education and enforcement. This is why it is the Speed Awareness Special Award winner in the 2015 National Law Enforcement Challenge.

#### Problem Identification

For the past decade, the number of speed-related crashes in Roanoke County has remained fairly stable. With the exception of 2008, when it peaked at 354, it has hovered between a low of 206 in 2011 and a high of 278 in 2004. The most recent three-year average was 218, constituting 18.1 percent of all crashes in Roanoke County between 2011 and 2013.

“We’ve averaged a little over 200 speed-related crashes each year,” says Sgt. Tim Wyatt of RCPD’s Special Operations Unit, who attributes most of those crashes to a handful of major arteries. “We have a

**Agency Size:** 140 Sworn Officers

**Location:** Roanoke County, VA

**Community Size:** 251 Square Miles

**Community Population:** 93,524

certain number of roadways where we have always had speeding complaints and speed-related crashes.”

In 2014, RCPD set out to unseat the county’s speed-related crashes from its usual spot in the low-to mid-200s. To do so, it targeted the aforementioned roadways, which it identified with the help of speed surveys in locations of interest chosen based on a combination of crash reports, engineering requests, and citizen complaints. Those surveys - 54 of them in 2014, up nearly 70 percent from 32 in 2013 - yielded information about which roadways were most vulnerable to speeding, at what times of day, and on what days of the week.

“Those speed surveys helped us narrowly focus our manpower and resources on the problem,” Wyatt explains. “We found it much more effective for deployment of officers. Instead of sending officers out when somebody calls in to complain about speeding on a certain street, now we can send them out during key times of the day and on key days of the week when speeding is a bigger problem.”



## Planning

Instituted by the department in 2013, the Data-Driven Approaches to Crime and Traffic Safety (DDACTS) model helped guide RCPD's speed awareness efforts in 2014. In particular, combining location-based crime and traffic crash data helped the department identify two high-risk geographic zones in which to focus its work.

The Virginia Highway Safety Plan for 2014 also informed RCPD's planning by establishing several state-driven benchmarks for programming and performance that the department endeavored to meet or exceed.

A third planning implement was RCPD's "Road of the Day" program, which uses historical crash data to identify a specific roadway for targeted speed enforcement by officers every day of the year.

Finally, officer training also was key. To assist its speed program, RCPD in 2014 acquired several vehicle-mounted radars with same-direction moving capabilities; an in-depth training presentation was delivered to all officers new to the technology.

## Education

Public information and education was key to its speed awareness success, according to RCPD, which leveraged speed trailers and social media to inform citizens about speed-related crashes and enforcement.



*The Roanoke County Police Department was presented the Speed Awareness Special Award at the IACP Highway Safety Breakfast in Chicago, Illinois.*

**“Teens respond better when officers explain the dangers of speeding scientifically.”**

“We even shared the results of our speed surveys,” Wyatt says. “That was a big plus, because instead of secretly sneaking in and running a whole bunch of covert radar, we wanted the public to know, ‘Hey, there’s a problem on this roadway, so be forewarned: we’re coming.’”

Partnership with the local school district was especially important. “We have an extensive history in Roanoke County of traffic presentations in our schools,” continues Wyatt, who says RCPD made more than 60 traffic safety presentations in middle and high schools in 2014. He cites two programs, in particular, that yielded high returns:

- **Why Math Matters:** RCPD's "Why Math Matters" program sends crash reconstructionists to math and science classes to discuss the dangers of speeding by pairing photos and videos of real crashes with lessons on the physics of speed-related crashes. Teens respond better, RCPD has found, when officers explain the dangers of speeding scientifically, rather than preaching to students, "Slow down and wear your seat belt."
- **ScanEd:** Conducted in partnership with the multi-jurisdictional Blue Ridge Transportation Safety Board, RCPD's "ScanEd" program deploys a crashed car, a crash test dummy, and crash scene "evidence" to school parking lots. After listening to a science-based traffic safety presentation, students are invited to explore a reconstructed crash scene with an iPad, using it to scan more than 40 QR codes affixed to items in the crash scene; each time a code is scanned, a relevant safety video or slideshow plays.



## Enforcement

Based on crash data and citizen complaints, RCPD focused its 2014 speed enforcement on two roads: Electric Road and Challenger Avenue. RCPD conducted nine speed studies on those two roads in 2014 and deployed officers for speed enforcement on the days and times determined to have the most speeding offenses. Officers conducted three “van days” on both roads, operating radar from an unmarked vehicle with enforcement vehicles nearby; and four “wolfpack days,” during which four or five traffic officers conducted speed enforcement on the same road. Additionally, bike officers conducted eight speed enforcement days on Electric Road, where motorists were used to looking for enforcement vehicles. According to RCPD, this generated not only citations - officers issued 550 speeding citations on Electric Road in 2014 - but also positive conversations by citizens on social media.

## Outcomes

RCPD’s efforts yielded obvious results: for the first year in over a decade, the number of speed-related crashes in Roanoke County dropped below 200 in 2014. Specifically, there were 156 speed-related crashes, compared to 208 in 2013. As a percentage of all crashes, speed-related crashes were down from 18.2 percent in 2013 to 15.5 percent in 2014. Speed-related injuries and fatalities were also down; the former dropped from 102 in 2013 to 92 in 2014, while the latter fell from four to just one.

Wyatt concludes: “What we saw in 2014 was the lowest number of speed-related crashes and the lowest number of speed-related fatalities and injuries in over 15 years.”♦

## LESSONS LEARNED

- ▶ **EDUCATION BOLSTERS ENFORCEMENT:** Enforcement is temporary - motorists slow down in the presence of officers, but then continue speeding - but education is forever.
- ▶ **TRANSPARENCY BUILDS TRUST:** Open and transparent enforcement keeps citizens engaged in a positive manner, which makes motorists more receptive to speed awareness messages.
- ▶ **DATA TALKS:** Data-driven enforcement based on speed studies generates results in more effective and efficient ways. Officers can address problems where and when they are most prevalent, and agencies can achieve greater impact with fewer resources.



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## TECHNOLOGY

### PARKER POLICE DEPARTMENT



### High-Tech Traffic Safety

*Colorado's Parker Police Department leveraged technology to simultaneously increase efficiency and safety.*

Although the Front Range of Colorado is a long way from the vineyards of Napa, the Denver suburb of Parker has a lot in common with Silicon Valley. One is home to high-tech companies such as Apple, Facebook, and Google; the other to a high-tech law enforcement agency - the Parker Police Department (PPD), which is the winner of the Technology Special Award in the 2015 National Law Enforcement Challenge, thanks to its industry-leading investments in cutting-edge traffic safety technology.

#### Problem Identification

PPD has been committed to the research and development of technological advances in policing for several years, according to Officer Chris Kozuch, who says the agency has several motivations.

"It's a combination of things," Kozuch explains. "It's about officer safety, it's about efficiency, and it's about community safety, all of which we can improve by better utilizing our resources."

In 2014, PPD identified several traffic safety issues, which it believed it could address with the assistance of technology.

**Agency Size:** 65 Sworn Officers

**Location:** Parker, CO

**Community Size:** 20.49 Square Miles

**Community Population:** 48,608

- **Traffic citations:** PPD recognized several problems with its officers' handwritten traffic citations. Firstly, courts often had trouble reading them due to poor handwriting and other issues, such as water damage sustained while writing citations in inclement weather. Secondly, the officers writing them risked injury, since they were not paying attention to the road while they were completing tickets. Thirdly, paper tickets were deemed environmentally irresponsible. Finally, handwritten tickets were inefficient, taking officers an average of 11 minutes to complete. To address all these issues, PPD decided to purchase a Brazos E-ticket system, which issues auto-populated, paperless traffic citations.
- **Speeding:** PPD was receiving an influx of speeding complaints from citizens in residential neighborhoods. Upon investigation, however, the majority of complaints were found to be unsubstantiated, resulting in officers spending considerable time in areas where their presence wasn't needed. Investing in Shield 15 Speed Reader



Boards, PPD hypothesized, would help officers identify and address speeding problems where they actually existed, as the agency could deploy the data-collecting boards in place of officers for the purpose of investigating speeding complaints.

- **Following too closely:** PPD determined the vast majority of minor crashes in Parker occurred because of vehicles following too closely. It therefore decided to purchase an LTI 20/20 Ultralyte Laser LIDAR unit with Distance Between Cars (DBC) technology. The unit calculates the times and speeds of both vehicles, which helps officers enforce the following-too-closely law. In addition, PPD purchased an LTI TruSpeed S Laser LIDAR unit, which has a 7x magnified scope, helping to address the drivers' seat belt compliance.
- **Crime:** PPD noticed the number of vehicles traveling through Parker has increased each year. In response, it purchased two Automated License Plate Recognition (ALPR) systems to assist in identifying vehicles associated with criminal activity, including stolen vehicles, warrants, and possible driver's license restraints.

“Although technology is always changing, it's the most up-to-date means of being able to address some of the issues we faced, and of being able to address multiple issues at once,” Kozuch says. “That's why we focused on technology, as opposed to other means.”

**“It's about officer safety, it's about efficiency, and it's about community safety, all of which we can improve by better utilizing our resources.”**



*The Parker Police Department was presented the Technology Special Award at the IACP Highway Safety Breakfast in Chicago, Illinois.*

## Planning

Choosing and implementing the right technology required a long and thorough vendor vetting process, according to Kozuch. For example, officers spent two months researching two different e-citations vendors, a process which included gathering facts about the vendors, contacting other law enforcement agencies who used the vendors, meeting with the vendors, and testing the vendors' demo products.

Upon selecting a vendor, traffic officers then spent eight months designing and optimizing PPD's e-citation layout, as well as working with the PPD Records Unit and the municipal court to enable record sharing. A subsequent pilot program began with two officers in May 2014 and expanded to 13 officers in July, ultimately rolling out across the agency with corrections and adjustments identified during the pilot phase. A similar process was followed for PPD's other technology acquisitions.

## Training

Because tools are only as effective as their operators, PPD made officer training a priority for each of its technology acquisitions.

“We've spent countless hours on training,” explains Kozuch, who says the two traffic officers who originally piloted its e-citation system received 16 hours of training from the vendor. Those officers now provide the same training to their colleagues. Additionally, 11 supervisors have been trained to approve e-citations

issued by officers, along with two court clerks, who view the citations using the court's companion software.

Traffic officers likewise received vendor-provided training on PPD's Shield 15s, LIDAR units, and ALPR systems, while crime analysts and traffic engineers were trained in data analysis so PPD could utilize systems' reporting functions.

## Education

Transparency and public buy-in are important to the success of policing technology, according to PPD, which has taken great care to inform the community about its various technology investments.

"Our police department is a very community-oriented agency, so when we started using some of the new equipment, we did social media releases to inform the public of the new products and how we were going to utilize them," Kozuch explains. "In addition to that, once a year, we host a Police Citizen's Academy class. During that class, we talk very openly about all the technology we have and what it's used for."

## Outcomes

PPD's technology investments have already yielded benefits in the form of increased efficiency, enforcement, and officer safety. Using its e-citation system, for instance, PPD officers issued 722 citations in 2014. Meanwhile, the average duration of a traffic stop during which a citation is written has been lowered by approximately three minutes.

"Another example is our Shield 15s," Kozuch says. "Sixty-seve percent of online speeding complaints that were filed in 2014 were deactivated without traffic officers being present. That's a significant help and a significantly better use of resources, allowing us to deploy traffic officers to problem areas where enforcement is actually necessary."♦

## LESSONS LEARNED

- ▶ **UNDERSTAND THE VALUE OF TECHNOLOGY:** Technology can help law enforcement agencies increase efficiency, sustainability, and safety.
- ▶ **DO YOUR DUE DILIGENCE:** To get maximum benefit from technology, agencies must invest adequate time and energy into researching, vetting, and testing products, and into training officers and other relevant personnel.
- ▶ **TRANSPARENCY BUILDS TRUST:** Because community buy-in is crucial, agencies must share with citizens what technology they are acquiring and for what purposes.



*The National Law Enforcement Challenge is a traffic safety recognition program supported by a cooperative agreement between the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), and it is held in partnership with the National Sheriffs' Association (NSA), the Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA), and the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA).*



# TRAFFIC SAFETY INNOVATIONS 2015



## TRAFFIC INCIDENT MANAGEMENT

### STAFFORD COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE



### Rapid Response

*Virginia's Stafford County Sheriff's Office leveraged training and teamwork to unclog area roads.*

Because of their proximity to Washington, D.C., commuters in Northern Virginia are used to traffic; however, this doesn't mean they like it. On the contrary - like commuters all over the world, they loathe it, especially when there's an incident, such as a collision or a turned-over truck, which can instantly turn a long commute into an insufferable one. This is especially true in Stafford County, through which thousands of people commute every day on their way to and from nearby Fredericksburg, VA. The Stafford County Sheriff's Office, winner of the Traffic Incident Management Special Award in the 2015 National Law Enforcement Challenge, found a way to finally ease the congestion and clear crashes faster with increased planning, practice, and partnership.

### Problem Identification

In 2011, the Virginia Department of Transportation published a report analyzing congestion on Virginia roadways. Titled "Primary and Secondary Incident Management: Predicting Durations in Real Time," it concluded traffic incidents are a major source of congestion on the Commonwealth's roadways, and the longer incidents last on the roads, the more likely they are to create other congestion-causing incidents. Based

**Agency Size:** 249 Employees

**Location:** Stafford County, VA

**Community Size:** 280 Square Miles

**Community Population:** 134,352

on its findings, including data showing a 10-minute increase in primary incident duration is associated with 15 percent higher odds of secondary incidents, it published a four-year strategic plan in 2012: the "Virginia 2012-2016 Strategic Highway Safety Plan," which explicitly called on state law enforcement agencies "to develop an effective, consistent, and coordinated incident response program ... to ensure timely responses and clearances of incidents to reduce secondary crashes."

In response to state goals, the Stafford County Sheriff's Office looked at traffic incident management locally and recognized an immediate need.

### Planning

The Stafford County Sheriff's Office spent a year researching traffic incident management regionally and nationally in pursuit of best practices. The agency subsequently outlined four priorities for 2014, with its first full year engaging in traffic incident management practices:



- **Train all patrol deputies:** Stafford County Sheriff Charles Jett mandated all deputies assigned to the patrol division receive federal Strategic Highway Research Program 2 (SHRP 2) training. The four-hour class teaches first responders - including police, fire, EMS, towing and recovery, etc. - best practices for safe traffic incident management.

“Our sheriff sent three of us to take the training, then we came back and opened up a two-week training academy,” says Forman, who trained 18 of his own deputies, plus officers, firefighters, and other first responders from the area. The collective training, he points out, reduced barriers between law enforcement and other disciplines by creating shared goals and understanding. “We taught the class twice a day for two weeks and ran almost 400 people through it. Before, we’d show up to a wreck and fight with the firefighters because they’d blocked all lanes of traffic; now we understand why they did that and can work with them to open up the lanes again as quickly as possible after they’ve done their job.”

The Stafford County Sheriff’s Office built upon SHRP 2 with its own protocols and tools. It began initiating lane designation, using level notifications and scene size-ups when arriving on the scene of incidents, for example; establishing a paging system to page traffic units to keep in their patrol car as a quick reference for items such as lane designation, common terminology, fatal auto crash checklists, vehicle bomb standoff charts, and HAZMAT notes.



*The Stafford County Sheriff’s Office was awarded the Traffic Incident Management Special Award at the IACP Highway Safety Breakfast in Chicago, Illinois.*

“**The collective training reduced barriers between law enforcement and other disciplines by creating shared goals and understanding.**”

- **Form a regional traffic incident management team:** Called the Fredericksburg Regional Traffic Incident Management Committee, this team was initially comprised of the Stafford County Sheriff’s Office, the Stafford County Fire and Rescue Department, Virginia State Police, and the Virginia Department of Transportation. It quickly grew with the addition of other regional law enforcement, transportation, and fire and rescue agencies. The committee meets quarterly to share regional traffic intelligence, lessons learned, and performance metrics, among other things.

“We got our entire region on board,” explains Forman, who says the committee was designed to incorporate as many jurisdictions and disciplines as possible in order to break down siloes. “Everybody understood that the only way to get traffic moving around here was for all of us to buy in and become significant stakeholders.”

- **Write a traffic incident management plan:** Among the committee’s early contributions was a series of traffic incident management plans establishing detour routes for possible incidents within the region, focusing on primary roadways. The plans, including a county-specific plan developed for Stafford County by the Stafford County Sheriff’s Office, address how law enforcement will re-route traffic for minor incidents affecting roadways for more than 30 minutes, such as crashes and traffic

light outages; as well as major incidents, such as a mass evacuation of Washington, D.C., due to terrorism, or of the Eastern seaboard due to a hurricane.

- **Design a vehicle for quick detours:** During an incident in which traffic would need to be quickly rerouted, the Stafford County Sheriff's Office realized it needed a vehicle to support its traffic incident management plan. The agency therefore repurposed an unassigned vehicle and stocked it with necessary traffic incident management resources, such as cones, signs, stands, tools, and crash investigation equipment, including tape, paint, and lights. The "Traffic Incident Support Truck" ran 74 calls for service in 2014.

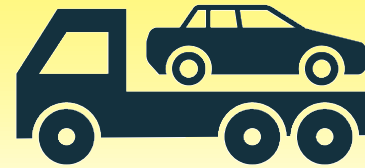
## Outcomes

The Stafford County Sheriff's Office has witnessed a steep reduction in the duration of incidents since initiating its traffic incident management system. The percentage of incidents in the Fredericksburg region, which previously took between 60 to 90 minutes to clear, fell from 50 percent in July 2012 to 14 percent in July 2014; additionally, the percentage which took less than 30 minutes to clear rose from zero to 28 percent during the same two-year period.

Forman concludes, "When you get quick clearance of incidents out of the roadway, you're reducing secondary incidents. And when you're reducing secondary incidents, you're reducing the number of crashes, including the number of serious crashes that sometimes result in fatalities. That's the great part. When you unclog the roadways, you're not just positively affecting traffic; you're saving lives."♦

## LESSONS LEARNED

- ▶ **LEADERS LEAD THE WAY:** Traffic incident management requires a culture change, and culture change is most effective when it's driven from the top.
- ▶ **COLLABORATION IS CRUCIAL:** Collaboration across jurisdictions and disciplines is a prerequisite for successful traffic incident management.
- ▶ **TRAINING WORKS:** Traffic incident management is science, not art; officers and deputies who learn proper tools, tactics, and techniques are best equipped to drive results.



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