



U.S. Department  
of Transportation

**Federal Highway  
Administration**

# Memorandum

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Subject: **INFORMATION**: Focused Approach to  
Safety-2015 changes to selection criteria  
and Focus State/Focus City selections for  
2015

Date: July 29, 2015

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In Reply Refer To:  
HSST

To: Division Administrators  
Safety Field

Since 2004, the Focused Approach to Safety (FAS) has allowed FHWA to identify areas of opportunity and to focus its resources to drive down fatalities and serious injuries on the Nation's highways. We have periodically adjusted the FAS based on current data and feedback on its implementation. We last made changes to the FAS in 2011; this memo outlines changes we made in 2015 and lists the Focus States and Focus Cities.

In this adjustment, we used the most recent three years of available fatality data from the Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS), 2011-2013; applied the 2014 definitions<sup>1</sup> for the FHWA focus areas, which includes adding bicyclists to the Pedestrian focus area; and changed the selection criteria as described below.

## **New Selection Process**

### ***Intersection and Roadway Departures Focus States***

In the previous iteration of the FAS, the Intersection and Roadway Departure focus areas included in their selection criteria the comparison of the fatality data in a State to the national average fatality number. This resulted in a bias toward larger States, so we removed the comparison of a State's data to the national average to remove this bias. The new process calculates the expected fatalities in a State for three measures of exposure - vehicle miles of travel (VMT), population, and center line miles of roadway - by comparing the State's urban and rural data to the national data. We then compare those expected values with that State's actual fatalities. Those States with a ratio (actual/expected) greater than 1.0 for all three measures of exposure (VMT, population, and center line miles) were designated as Focus States.

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<sup>1</sup> The recent update to the FHWA focus area definitions are documented in a July 29, 2014 memorandum available at the Internet Web Site: [www.safety.fhwa.dot.gov/fas/docs/focus\\_area\\_data\\_mem.pdf](http://www.safety.fhwa.dot.gov/fas/docs/focus_area_data_mem.pdf)

The 2015 Focus States for Intersections are:

INTERSECTION FOCUS STATES		
Arizona	Nevada*	South Carolina*
Florida	New Jersey	Tennessee*
Louisiana*	New York	Texas
* Indicates new Focus State		

The 2015 Focus States for Roadway Departures are:

ROADWAY DEPARTURE FOCUS STATES			
Alabama	Hawaii*	Mississippi*	Texas
Arizona	Kentucky	South Carolina	West Virginia*
Florida	Louisiana	Tennessee	
* Indicates new Focus State			

### ***Pedestrian/Bicyclist Focus Cities***

In the previous iteration of the FAS, this focus area was based solely on pedestrians and one of the selection criteria required the city to be among the top 50 cities in pedestrian fatalities. In 2015, this focus area continues to concentrate on cities, but we adjusted this focus area to include bicyclist fatalities and changed the selection criteria to include the 20 cities with the largest number of pedestrian/bicyclist fatalities and any city that had a fatality rate per population higher than the average of the top 50 cities. Every State that has at least one Focus City is designated a Focus State.

The current Pedestrian/Bicyclist Focus Cities and Focus States are:

PEDESTRIAN/BICYCLE FOCUS STATES AND CITIES			
Arizona	Phoenix	Indiana*	Indianapolis*
	Tucson		Baton Rouge*
California	Bakersfield*	Louisiana	New Orleans
	Fresno*	Michigan	Detroit
	Los Angeles	Missouri	St. Louis
	San Diego	New Jersey	Newark
	San Francisco	New Mexico	Albuquerque
	San Jose*	New York	New York City
	Santa Ana*	North Carolina*	Charlotte*
	Florida	Fort Lauderdale	Pennsylvania
Jacksonville		Tennessee*	Memphis*
Miami-Dade		Texas	Austin
Orlando			Dallas
St. Petersburg			Fort Worth
Tampa			Houston
Georgia		San Antonio	
Illinois	Chicago	Puerto Rico	San Juan
* Indicates new focus cities and states			

**Tailored Technical Assistance and Monitoring**

Eligible Focus States or Focus Cities that participate in the Focused Approach to Safety will have access to assistance in several different formats. They can receive technical assistance such as:

- Data analysis and action plan development from initiation to implementation
- Training with appropriate materials in a variety of formats, including classroom-based workshops and online webinars
- Support for a wide range of analysis tools and countermeasures.

Technical specialists in the three focus areas will work through our FHWA Division Offices to discuss the type of technical assistance each state or city would find useful to reducing fatalities in the specific focus area. Self-assessments to help tailor the technical assistance for each focus state or city are available and are helpful when considering the desired assistance and in monitoring progress.

Further information on the Focused Approach to Safety is available on the Office of Safety Web Site: <http://www.safety.fhwa.dot.gov/fas/>. If you have questions regarding the Focused Approach to Safety, please contact Cathy Satterfield, Office of Safety, at [cathy.satterfield@dot.gov](mailto:cathy.satterfield@dot.gov) or (708) 283-3552.