Strategic Highway Safety Plan

Get Involved!

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world: indeed it is the only thing that ever has." (Margaret Meade)

Motor vehicle fatalities in our nation hit an all time low in 2009, a level not seen since 1950. Nevada's Director of Public Safety attributed the state's record low number of fatalities to several factors, "Foremost is the partnership of agencies conducting engineering, enforcement, education, and emergency response solutions..." Nevada's experience reflects the collaboration taking place in states across the country. Bringing a variety of agencies and organizations with unique skills to the table helps implement a comprehensive approach to safety, and you too can play a role.

The Role of Safety Stakeholders

Transportation safety is a diverse and complex field. States are implementing and periodically updating Strategic Highway Safety Plans (SHSP) in collaboration with a range of partners to ensure "emphasis areas" or countermeasure themes focus on areas with the greatest potential to reduce fatalities and serious injuries. Motor vehicle crashes generally involve multiple contributing factors, which means everyone must work together to address the multidisciplinary, multimodal issues. Generally, the 4E's of safety define the broad stakeholder communities who care about safety and are responsible for making the roads safe for all users.

- Engineering (e.g., highway design, traffic, maintenance, operations, planning);
- Enforcement (state and local law enforcement agencies);
- Education (e.g., driver education, citizen advocacy groups, educators, prevention specialists); and
- Emergency response (e.g., first responders, paramedics, fire, and rescue).

Each of these disciplines brings a unique perspective to the SHSP. Engineers approach a safety problem from the roadway and vehicle perspectives, law enforcement focuses on road user behavior, education concentrates on prevention, and emergency response personnel concentrate on post collision care. Each approach is required for the SHSP, which is an integrated, comprehensive, data-driven plan that breaks down the traditional safety silos.

But it doesn't stop there. Other public agencies, membership organizations, private companies, elected and appointed officials, and the public all have a role in transportation safety, *including you!*

What is the SHSP?

The Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) is a data-driven, comprehensive, multidisciplinary plan integrating the "4E's" of safety – engineering, education, enforcement, and emergency medical services or emergency response. It establishes statewide goals, objectives, performance measures, and emphasis areas to guide safety programs and investments. The SHSP is developed in consultation with Federal, state, local, and private safety stakeholders.

The Mission

You and your organization can participate in the SHSP process by assisting with any or all of the following tasks:

- Determine the mission, goals, and measurable objectives of the SHSP as members of Executive Committees, Steering Committees, or working groups;
- Review the data and provide recommendations on where the SHSP should focus, i.e., emphasis areas;
- Serve on emphasis area teams and select and implement strategies and action steps;
- Take responsibility for a strategy or action step and make sure it is implemented effectively;
- Participate in summits to meet and network with colleagues;
- Help design marketing and communications materials to increase awareness of the goals, objectives, and strategies; and
- Monitor progress and performance and provide feedback to SHSP organizers.

Reap the Rewards

The task of saving lives on the nation's roadways is monumental. Success is only possible when organizations and agencies combine their skills and work together toward a common mission. Teamwork means one organization does not carry all of the financial or technical burdens alone. It fosters camaraderie and trust, so individuals know where to turn with questions, problems, shared strategies, and new ideas.

Involvement in the SHSP brings the potential to leverage resources. For example, high-visibility enforcement combined with low-cost safety improvements where appropriate may improve safety more than either strategy alone. The possibilities for sharing resources through SHSP collaborations are endless.

Collaboration brings about combinations of countermeasures that more effectively improve safety than any single countermeasure approach.

"Coming together is an accomplishment, staying together is progress, working together is a success." (Henry Ford)

Step Up for Safety

Improving transportation safety is easy – all it takes is everyone! Will you join the journey? Likely candidates are:

- Passionate about saving lives and preventing injuries;
- In support of the mission, goals, and objectives of the SHSP; and
- Looking for an opportunity for their opinions and views to be heard and valued.

If you are interested in becoming involved in your SHSP:

- Review a copy of your state's current SHSP to identify opportunities for you and your organization to participate. Perhaps you can serve as a member of an emphasis area team, actively participate in an upcoming media event, or distribute information to your members and other stakeholders.
- Contact the Federal Highway Administration Division Office in your state to learn how you can help. These offices are actively involved in your state's SHSP implementation and can provide additional information and guidance.
- Become a safety ambassador and a role model – slow down, pay attention, drive sober, always buckle up and make sure your family, friends, and colleagues do the same.

SHSP programs are making a difference. Commit to participate and join this life saving process.

FHWA Division Offices
http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/field.html

FHWA Office of Safety
202-366-2288
hsip@dot.gov
http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov

HSIP Highway Safety Improvement Program *Data Driven Decisions*

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The Focus is Results

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