



# SAFETY

## PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT TARGET SETTING

### COMMUNICATION PLAN AND TOOLKIT



U.S. Department of Transportation  
Federal Highway Administration



Safe Roads for a Safer Future  
*Investment in roadway safety saves lives*

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## INTRODUCTION

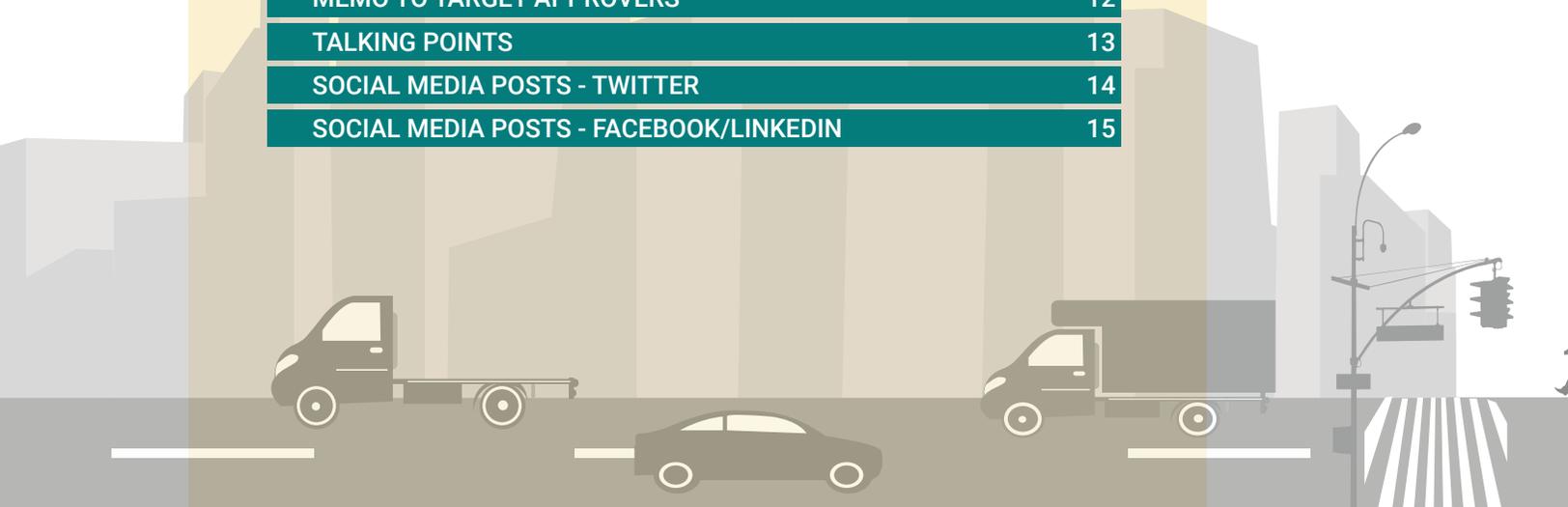
<b>SAFETY PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT PURPOSE</b>	<b>2</b>
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## SECTION 1: SAFETY PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT COMMUNICATION PLAN

<b>HOW TO USE THIS PLAN AND TOOLKIT</b>	<b>3</b>
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## SECTION 2: SAFETY PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT COMMUNICATION TOOLKIT

<b>TOOLKIT ELEMENT 1: DASHBOARD “REPORT CARD”</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>TOOLKIT ELEMENT 2: PRESENTATION SLIDES</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>TOOLKIT ELEMENT 3: PRESS RELEASES</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>TOOLKIT ELEMENT 4: MEMO TO TARGET APPROVERS</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>TOOLKIT ELEMENT 5: TALKING POINTS</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>TOOLKIT ELEMENT 6: SOCIAL MEDIA KIT</b>	<b>9</b>
TARGET DASHBOARD	10
PRESENTATION SLIDES	10
PRESS RELEASES	11
MEMO TO TARGET APPROVERS	12
TALKING POINTS	13
SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS - TWITTER	14
SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS - FACEBOOK/LINKEDIN	15



# INTRODUCTION



The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) created a performance-based Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) through the establishment of the Safety Performance Management Measures (PM) Final Rule. The Safety PM Final Rule appeared in the *Federal Register* on March 15, 2016, with an effective date of April 14, 2016. This Final Rule adds Part 490 to Title 23 of the Code of Federal Regulations to implement the performance management requirements in 23 U.S.C. 150.

The Safety PM Final Rule requires that State departments of transportation (DOTs) and metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) establish targets for five safety performance measures. State DOTs also have the option to establish any number of urbanized area targets and one non-urbanized area target for any or all of the measures. These are the five performance measures reported annually in the State's HSIP Final Report:

- 1. Number of fatalities.**
- 2. Rate of fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles traveled (VMT).**
- 3. Number of serious injuries.**
- 4. Rate of serious injuries per 100 million VMT.**
- 5. Number of non-motorized fatalities and number of non-motorized serious injuries.**

For more information related to the Safety PM Final Rule, including guidance, Q&A, target-setting and safety data resources, visit the FHWA's Safety PM Website at <https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/hsip/spm/>.



## ■ SAFETY PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT PURPOSE

The purpose of this communication plan is to assist State DOTs and MPOs in communicating *why* safety performance targets are being established, *which* stakeholders are affected (either directly or tangentially), and *how* they can be involved in helping establish the targets or in target achievement.

Communicating to those with a role or interest in the process or outcomes throughout all stages of the safety performance target-setting process is important and impacts audiences of varying expertise. This communication plan and associated communication toolkit items are valuable tools that can:

- Encourage action towards meeting performance targets.
- Provide guidance on safety target setting with wider input from more audiences.
- Support implementation of activities that help achieve targets.
- Share the underlying rationale with the public on how targets were established and gain their cooperation in meeting safety targets.

Communicating *why* safety targets are being established and *how* we can achieve them to such a variety of audiences will have its challenges. As States and MPOs seek stakeholder input, many groups may cite challenges that cause them to be hesitant in supporting the safety targets. Some of these challenges could include:

- Lack of influence in how and where safety funds are expended.
- Differences in numerical or “philosophical” safety performance targets between State and local organizations, or even internally between State DOT offices.
- Choices (human factors) that cause fatalities no matter how safe we make the infrastructure.
- Alignment between zero death goals (long-term) and the reality of the recent climb in fatalities (short-term) and how this affects short-term targets.
- Volatility of scenario-based forecasting.
- Communicating to the public that every investment, driving decision, and business practice has an outcome that either pushes us closer to or pulls us away from target achievement.

Section 1 further describes *why* safety performance targets are established, *which* stakeholders are affected, and *how* each can be involved in helping establish the targets or in target achievement.

This Communications Plan and Toolkit is organized into two sections:

**Section 1: SAFETY PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT COMMUNICATION PLAN**  
which describes how to use the plan and outreach items.

**Section 2: SAFETY PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT COMMUNICATION TOOLKIT**  
which describes each tool, gives instructions for use, and specifies the targeted audience and forums for use.

# SECTION 1: SAFETY PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT COMMUNICATION PLAN



## ■ HOW TO USE THIS PLAN AND TOOLKIT

The Safety Performance Management Communication Plan and Toolkit describes:

1. The variety of audiences who will have a lead or supporting role in target setting and achievement or who may be interested in potential outcomes and impacts associated with implementing Safety Performance Management.
2. The communications and messages in which these groups will most likely be interested or questions they may have.
3. The elements of the Communications Toolkit that can be used to develop customized messages, including guidance on appropriate communication forums and whom the messages target.

Working with audiences of varying technical knowledge and perspectives related to safety performance management will bring out a variety of sometimes competing priorities among groups. While the goal of safety performance management is to work toward zero deaths and serious injuries on our roadways, some groups might perceive the target-setting effort as an opportunity to seek additional safety funding, whereas others might simply want their voices to be heard and to provide input that more closely aligns with other State goals (e.g., public health goals, other transportation goals). Still others require nothing, and for these groups, messaging is purely informational.

It is also important to be mindful of the relationship among those who **(1) set and make progress toward the targets, (2) have input into the target-setting process, and (3) have no role in target setting.** Safety is a shared responsibility among those who design, build, manage, and use roads and vehicles. All elements of the road system should come together in an integrated way to design and maintain a safe system that will contribute to improved transportation safety.

Audience and stakeholder parties fall into four distinct groups, and all rely upon one another. Figure 1, on page 5, illustrates the relationships among these groups, which include:



**GROUP 1:  
TECHNICAL EXPERTS**

**State DOTs, MPOs, local agencies, FHWA**

Are held accountable for target achievement and may need data, assistance with analysis, or target approval. Staff from FHWA and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) are available to provide technical assistance to this group.



**GROUP 2:  
TARGET SUPPORTERS**

**Local and Tribal road agencies, planners, enforcement, emergency medical services**

May provide economic, demographic, and other data but in return require a deeper understanding of the effort, the possible result, and why it matters to them.



**GROUP 3:  
GENERAL PUBLIC & MEDIA**

**Those who may want information or the opportunity to participate in transportation processes**

May be positively influenced to make wiser roadway safety decisions and to share safety messages with their peers.



**GROUP 4:  
TARGET APPROVERS**

**State DOT decision makers, State highway safety offices, MPO policy boards, and elected officials**

Provide the final approval before annual targets are set. This group holds an interest in achieving performance targets across a variety of topics and needs to ensure that targets complement other goals across the organization.

# Collaborative Process to Set and Achieve Safety Performance Measure Targets

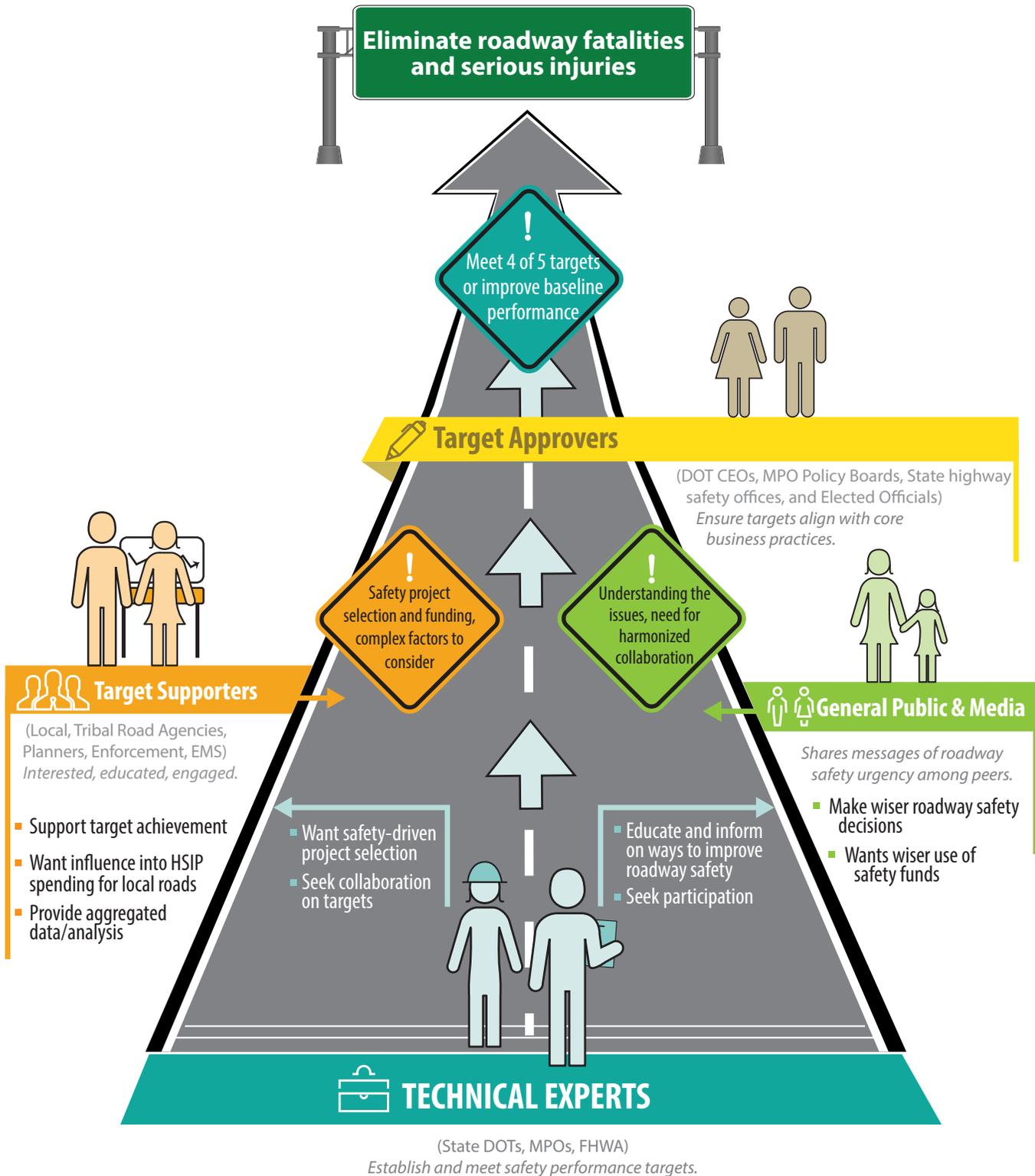


Figure 1. Collaborative Process to Set and Achieve Safety Performance Measure Targets.

# SECTION 2: SAFETY PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT COMMUNICATIONS TOOLKIT

This section describes each toolkit element, when and how to use each tool, the key messages and audiences related to each tool, and how to customize each tool to the agency’s context.

TOOLKIT ELEMENT 1: <b>DASHBOARD “REPORT CARD”</b>	TARGET AUDIENCE			
	 TECHNICAL EXPERTS	 TARGET SUPPORTER	 MEDIA & PUBLIC	 TARGET APPROVERS
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	The dashboard report card is a customizable graphic that displays progress being made on all five Safety Performance Measures and indicates whether targets are being achieved.			
<b>WHEN TO USE</b>	Agencies and MPOs should update this graphic in “real time,” or annually after progress has been evaluated. Dashboards serve as a way to share “how we’re doing” with interested audiences. The graphics for each measure can be added to websites or placed in presentations or press releases to create visibility, generate discussion, and track progress.			
<b>HOW TO USE</b>	Follow instructions within the Microsoft Excel tabs (one for each PM). Graphics will auto-populate and can be embedded into website content, used in memos and emails, or placed in other communication pieces.			

  
[LINK TO ELEMENT 1](#)

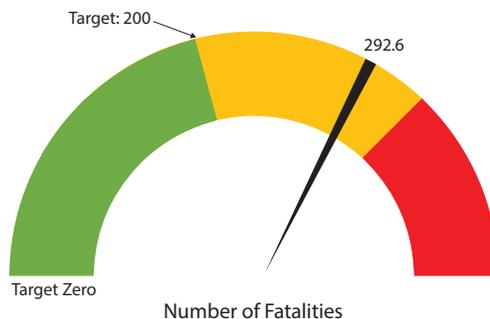


Figure 2. Example of Fatality Performance Measure graphic.

TARGET AUDIENCE



TECHNICAL EXPERTS



TARGET SUPPORTER



MEDIA & PUBLIC



TARGET APPROVERS

TOOLKIT ELEMENT 2:

PRESENTATION SLIDES

**DESCRIPTION**

These slides communicate, inform, and remind viewers of the previous year’s target-setting process and the results (if known or are being tracked in “real time”). They assist with soliciting input on:

1. Refinements to the next year’s target-setting process, including data elements used and analyses performed, stakeholders consulted, and reprioritization of program-level efforts and projects necessary to achieve the desired results.
2. Potential refinements in practices that could help yield success.
3. How these groups can affect target achievement.
4. How to communicate rising targets (if applicable).

**WHEN TO USE**

Consider using slide decks at forums where stakeholders discuss how safety visions align, but also where opportunities for improved collaboration and refined practices exist.

**HOW TO USE**

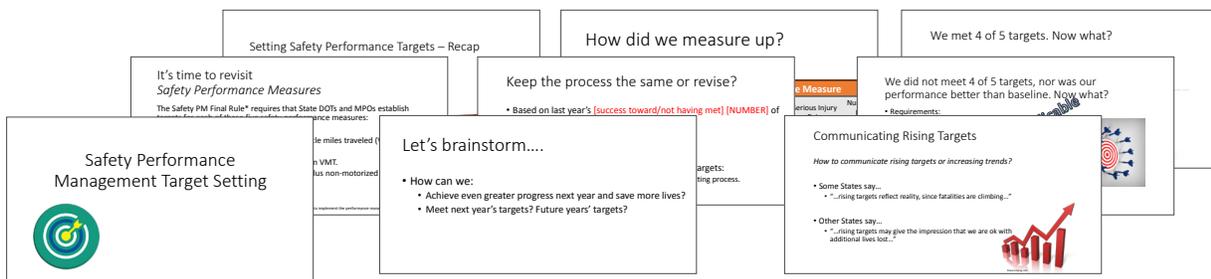
Fill in **red text** throughout slides with agency- or topic-specific speaking points.

- If the State met its targets or improved its baseline performance on 4 out of 5 performance measures, delete slide 6.
- If the State did not meet its targets or improve baseline performance on 4 out of 5 performance measures, remove slide 5.
- If the State will not have rising targets, remove slide 9.

*Note: The slides are intentionally unformatted. This allows agencies to drop slides into agency or event branding, as developed by your communications team.*



[LINK TO ELEMENT 2](#)



**Figure 3. Presentation template and slides.**

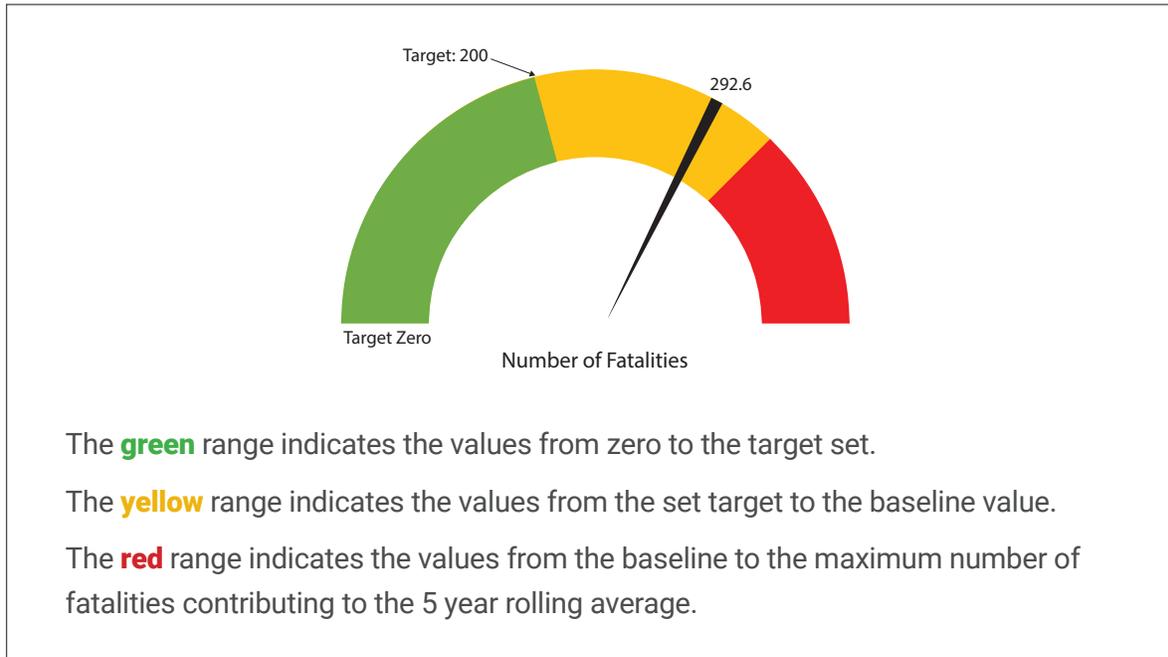


	TARGET AUDIENCE			
	TECHNICAL EXPERTS	TARGET SUPPORTER	MEDIA & PUBLIC	TARGET APPROVERS
<b>TOOLKIT ELEMENT 5:</b> <b>TALKING POINTS</b>  <a href="#">LINK TO ELEMENT 5</a>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	Talking points communicate the safety performance target setting process and achievement.		
	<b>WHEN TO USE</b>	Consider using talking points when short interactions take place with the public and target supporter groups. Their purpose is twofold: to support conversations on how each group can contribute to target achievement and to describe the performance measures themselves.		
	<b>HOW TO USE</b>	Fill in <b>red text</b> with agency- or contact-specific information.		

	TARGET AUDIENCE			
	TECHNICAL EXPERTS	TARGET SUPPORTER	MEDIA & PUBLIC	TARGET APPROVERS
<b>TOOLKIT ELEMENT 6:</b> <b>SOCIAL MEDIA KIT</b>  <a href="#">LINK TO ELEMENT 6</a>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	The social media kit communicates activities and updates during the three phases of the safety performance target-setting process (i.e., setting, performance, and achievement periods) using for example, Twitter, Facebook, or LinkedIn. Postings could also include graphics and hashtags, as appropriate.		
	<b>WHEN TO USE</b>	All stages of target setting.		
	<b>HOW TO USE</b>	Fill in <b>red text</b> with agency- or contact-specific information. Be sure to update posts with correct links each year.		

# TARGET DASHBOARD

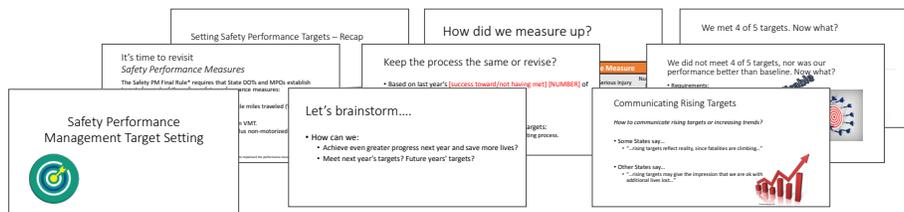
Create this dashboard gauge to visually represent how a State is performing in each safety performance measure, compared to baseline values and the established target.



Paste the graphic into any Microsoft program, or move it to a graphic program to create a jpg.

 [DOWNLOAD EXCEL WORKSHEET](#)

# PRESENTATION SLIDES



 [DOWNLOAD POWERPOINT TEMPLATE AND SLIDES](#)

# PRESS RELEASES

## FOR USE DURING TARGET-SETTING

### **[STATE DOT]** ASKS FOR PUBLIC INPUT ON SHORT-TERM ROADWAY SAFETY TARGETS

As **[State DOT]** considers how we—and you—can make a noticeable reduction in roadway deaths and injuries, we ask for your suggestions and input. **[STATE]** is beginning its annual process to evaluate past efforts and future potential to establish and achieve safety performance targets for the following measures:

1. Number of roadway fatalities.
2. Fatality rate (accounts for changes in the number of miles driven).
3. Overall number of roadway serious injuries.

4. Serious injury rate (accounts for changes in the number of miles driven).
5. The number of pedestrian, bicycle, and other non-motorized roadway fatalities and serious injuries.

Please consider joining us in finding ways to bring our families, friends, and co-workers home safely every day.

For more information on **[STATE DOT'S]** safety performance progress or results, go to **[LINK]** or contact **[NAME EMAIL PHONE]**.

 [DOWNLOAD WORD TEMPLATE](#)

## FOR USE AFTER TARGETS ARE ESTABLISHED

### MOVING TOWARDS SAFER ROADWAYS

**[STATE DOT]** has set its **[YEAR]** annual safety performance targets as part of its long-term goal of reducing fatalities and serious injuries on our roadways. Safety performance targets are focused on making short-term progress toward the ultimate goal of zero roadway deaths, which means families, friends, and co-workers making it home safely every day.

Last year, **[STATE DOT]** **[achieved/did not achieve]** the established targets. As a result, **[enter actions here]**.

For the upcoming year, **[STATE DOT]** has established the following targets through collaboration with statewide safety partners:

1. **["Reduce overall" or "Limit the overall rise in the"]** number of roadway fatalities from **XXX** to **XXX**.
2. **["Reduce the" or "Limit the overall rise in the"]** fatality rate (accounts for changes in the number of miles driven) from **XXX** to **XXX**.
3. **["Reduce overall" or "Limit the overall rise in the"]** overall number of roadway serious injuries from **XXX** to **XXX**.

4. **["Reduce the" or "Limit the overall rise in the"]** serious injury rate (accounts for changes in the number of miles driven) from **XXX** to **XXX**.
5. **["Reduce" or "Limit the overall rise in"]** the number of pedestrian, bicycle, and other non-motorized roadway fatalities and serious injuries from **XXX** to **XXX**.

Working together, we will meet these targets. One of the most important things you can do is consider safety while driving, walking, and biking. Making conscious decisions to obey speed limits; wearing seatbelts; avoiding distracted driving, biking, and walking; and driving sober are crucial to achieving these goals. You also can get involved by **[INSERT HERE]**.

For more information on **[STATE DOT'S]** safety performance progress or results, go to **[LINK]** or contact **[NAME EMAIL PHONE]**. Your voice matters. Find out how you can be involved.

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# MEMO TO TARGET APPROVERS

TO: **[STATE DOT TARGET APPROVER(S)] such as DOT Director, Commissioner, or Chief Engineer**

FROM:

DATE:

SUBJECT: **APPROVAL OF SAFETY PERFORMANCE TARGETS FOR HIGHWAY SAFETY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM ANNUAL REPORT**

Each year, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) requires States to establish safety performance targets, as mandated by the Safety Performance Management Measures (Safety PM) Final Rule.<sup>1</sup> These targets can be used to measure the performance of safety improvements implemented through the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP). The overall goal is to significantly reduce fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads by creating a data-driven, performance-based HSIP. The targets, reported in the State’s annual HSIP report, are due August 31 of each year. Your approval is requested to help ensure **[STATE]** sets reasonable and achievable targets for the upcoming year.

Safety performance targets relate to the following five areas: (1) number of fatalities, (2) rate of fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles traveled (VMT), (3) number of serious injuries, (4) rate of serious injuries per 100 million VMT, and (5) number of non-motorized fatalities plus non-motorized serious injuries.

**[DEPARTMENT or CONTACT NAME and TITLE]** is requesting your approval regarding these targets for their inclusion into this year’s HSIP report. As a **[WHY WOULD THEY HAVE INTEREST]**, you hold interest in the **[SETTING/OUTCOME]** of these targets, and **[DEPARTMENT NAME]** wants to consider all scenarios before finalizing targets.

Currently, these are **[STATE’s]** rolling 5-year averages for each performance target:

PERFORMANCE MEASURE	5-YEAR ROLLING AVERAGES		TARGET RATIONALE
	<b>[20XX – 20XX] BASELINE PERFORMANCE</b>	<b>[20XX – 20XX] PROPOSED TARGET</b>	
Number of fatalities (per year)	XX	XX	
Rate of fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles traveled	XX	XX	
Number of serious injuries (per year)	XX	XX	
Rate of serious injuries per 100 million vehicle miles traveled	XX	XX	
Number of non-motorized fatalities and non-motorized serious injuries	XX	XX	

If **[STATE]** is unable to meet at least four of the five targets, or if the performance outcome is not better than the baseline performance, **[STATE]** will be required to use obligation authority equal to the HSIP apportionment for HSIP projects only and submit an HSIP Implementation Plan.

Your input and approval is requested by **[DUE DATE AND TIME]** to **[DEPARTMENT OR CONTACT NAME]**.

Any questions can be sent to **[CONTACT FOR QUESTIONS]**.

<sup>1</sup> The Safety PM Final Rule adds part 490 to Title 23 of the Code of Federal Regulations to implement the performance management requirements in 23 U.S.C. 150.

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# TALKING POINTS



## MEDIA & PUBLIC



## TARGET SUPPORTER

Every year, approximately **[Number]** roadway deaths occur in **[State]**; the goal, however, is zero. Establishing and achieving safety performance targets is a way for us to monitor progress toward saving lives.

.....

- If we do not achieve targets or make significant progress towards achievement, we must:
  - Double-down on efforts to achieve next year’s targets.
  - Redirect funds toward safety-focused projects.

.....

- You can help! Here is how:
  - **[Add ways for the public to get involved.]**  
**Examples: Get involved in SHSP emphasis area teams, roadway safety advocacy groups, MPOs, local groups, outreach activities, etc.**

.....

EVERYONE has a role in getting fatalities to zero by making sound decisions as drivers, pedestrians, and bicyclists. Our individual actions affect other road users and impact our ability to achieve zero!

The goal is zero roadway fatalities. Establishing safety performance targets is a way for us to benchmark annual performance as we work to achieve the goal.

.....

- States and MPOs are required to establish safety performance targets annually for:
  1. Number of fatalities.
  2. Rate of fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles traveled (VMT).
  3. Number of serious injuries.
  4. Rate of serious injuries per 100 million VMT.
  5. Number of non-motorized fatalities and non-motorized serious injuries.

.....

- Safety performance management is a way to:
  - Address roadway safety issues systematically using a data-driven, repeatable process.
  - Provide key information to help decision makers understand the consequences of investment decisions across transportation assets or modes.
  - Improve communications between decision makers, stakeholders, and the traveling public.
  - Ensure targets are developed in cooperative partnerships and are based on data and objective information.

.....

- How you and your agency consider and act on roadway safety topics matters! You can help by:
  - Implementing cost-effective safety infrastructure and behavioral projects.
  - Supporting roadway safety related projects (e.g., data improvements, education, etc.).

.....

You can contribute to establishing statewide safety performance targets by contacting **[State or MPO Contact Name]**.



# SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS



## TWITTER

### ■ TARGET SETTING PHASE – BEGINNING OF THE YEAR THROUGH AUGUST

- Your State is making New Year’s resolutions by setting safety performance targets for this year. Learn more: [LINK](#)
- Give [STATE’S] safety goals a road map. Choose your course at: [LINK](#)
- Set performance targets and make [STATE’S] roadway safety goals a reality. Set your goals at: [LINK](#)

### ■ PERFORMANCE PHASE – THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

- How many lives will you save in 20XX? Set a goal, make it a reality. Set your safety performance targets here: [LINK](#)
- Write your friends a commendation dated 20XX. How many lives will you have saved? See how our safety performance targets measure up here: [LINK](#)
- Do you drive with safety in mind? [STATE] is working to lower fatality and injury numbers – and your decisions make a difference! [LINK](#)
- Keys, wallet, cape... Be a superhero behind the wheel! Learn how to help [STATE] save XX lives and prevent XXX injuries this year: [LINK](#)
- Be the change you want to see in that other driver. Learn how to help [STATE] save XX lives and prevent XXX injuries this year: [LINK](#)

### ■ ACHIEVEMENT PHASE – AFTER DETERMINATIONS ARE FINALIZED

- What gets measured gets done. We reached our lifesaving targets on [STATE’S] roadways this year! See for yourself: [LINK](#)
- The results are in. [STATE] [DID/DID NOT] achieve last year’s safety performance targets. [LINK](#)

*(Attach image of Toolkit Element 1 Dashboard)*



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# SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS



## FACEBOOK / LINKEDIN

### ■ TARGET SETTING PHASE – BEGINNING OF THE YEAR THROUGH AUGUST

- **[STATE]** has joined the nation in moving toward zero injuries & fatalities on our roadways. See our safety performance targets & join the lifesaving effort! [LINK](#)
- We know how to move towards zero deaths on **[STATE]** roadways! Learn how you can help us lower fatalities and serious injuries – and how we’re watching out for you! [LINK](#)
- Make roadways safer for your neighbors. See **[STATE’S]** safety performance targets and pledge to become a lifesaver today! [LINK](#)

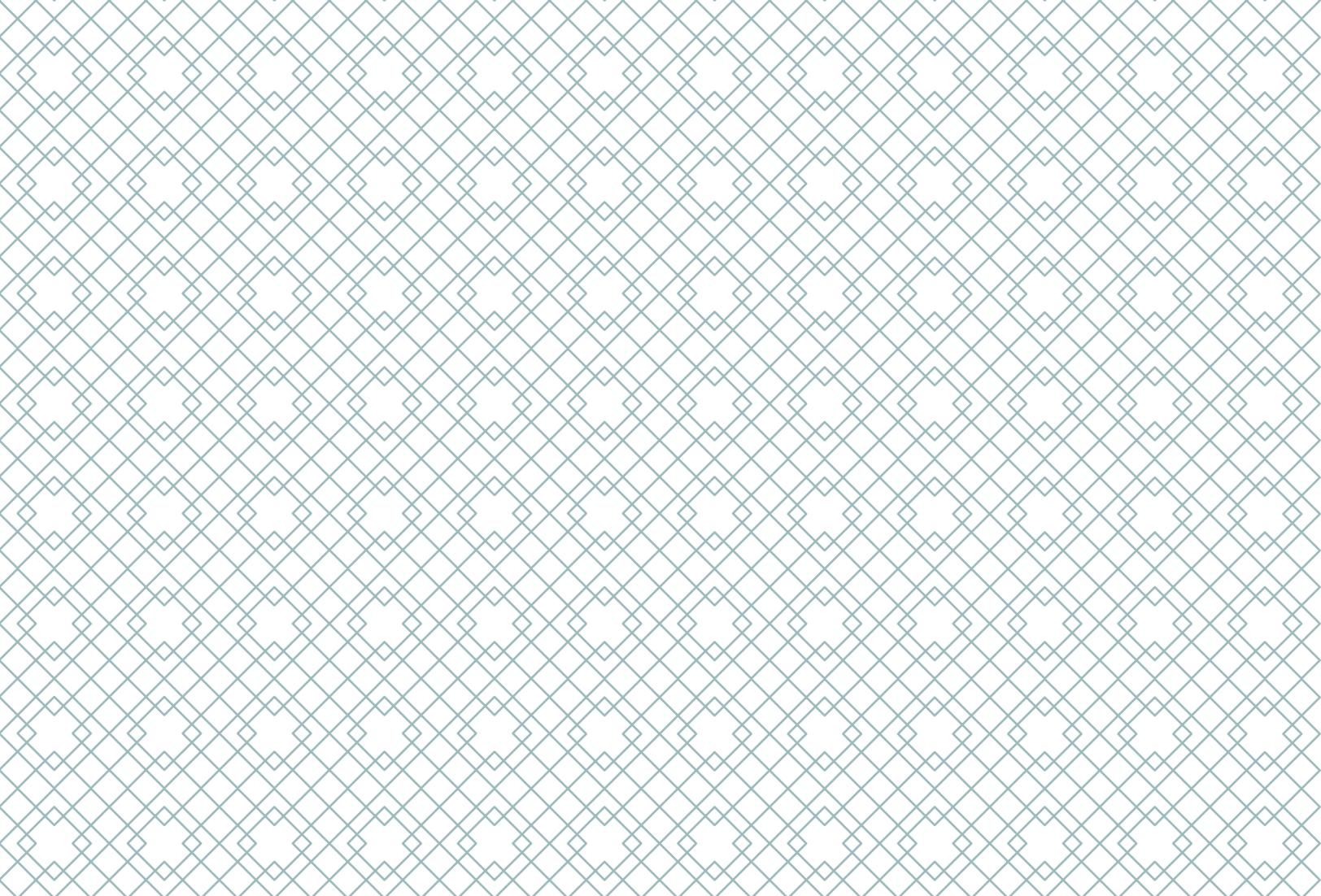
### ■ PERFORMANCE PHASE – THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

- **[STATE’S]** first set of roadway safety performance targets was set for 2018. See how we stack up against the rest of the nation! [LINK](#)
- Do you drive with safety in mind? Making safer decisions on roadways helps lower **[STATE’S]** fatality and serious injury rates. [LINK](#)
- Five things you can you do today to help achieve safety performance targets in **[STATE]**:
  1. Wear a seatbelt.
  2. Drive the speed limit.
  3. Be mindful of pedestrians and bicycles.
  4. Don’t get behind the wheel if you are exhausted or impaired.
  5. Pay full attention to the driving task.
- Who knew being a superhero was so easy? See how your decisions help us save lives and prevent injuries here: [LINK](#)

### ■ ACHIEVEMENT PHASE – AFTER DETERMINATIONS ARE FINALIZED

- How are we improving **[STATE’S]** roads this **[SEASON]**? We’re working towards zero roadway deaths and fewer injuries. **[STATE AGENCY NAME] [MADE/DID NOT MAKE]** progress on its annual safety performance targets. See where we stand, how we did last year, and where we want to be next year. [LINK](#)
- The results are in! **[STATE] [DID/DID NOT]** make progress toward reducing fatalities and serious injuries on our roadways this year compared to last. [LINK](#)
- News you can use: **[STATE]** is tracking roadway fatalities and serious injuries for all vehicles, bikes, and pedestrians. **[STATE AGENCY] [DID/DID NOT]** achieve last year’s safety performance targets. How can you help? [LINK](#)

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**Safe Roads for a Safer Future**  
*Investment in roadway safety saves lives*

February 2017

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