



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Highway
Administration**

Memorandum

Subject: **ACTION:** Promoting the
Implementation of Proven Safety
Countermeasures

Date: January 12, 2012

From: Tony Furst
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Safety

In Reply Refer To:
HSST

To: Division Administrators

Over the past four years, highway fatalities have declined considerably – from 41,259 in 2007 to 32,885 in 2010. Highway safety programs across the country played a major role in that decline by analyzing where safety improvements were needed and by utilizing many of the nine safety countermeasures that we worked with your Division Offices to collectively advance. Those countermeasures are contained in the 2008 “Guidance Memorandum on the Consideration and Implementation of Proven Safety Countermeasures (<http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/policy/memo071008/>).” Our efforts in advancing those countermeasures have paid dividends.

Those highway safety programs use a data-driven approach to safety improvements with countermeasure selection based on analytical techniques. Ultimately, the consideration and application of proven countermeasures is most effective through this approach. Our partners should continue to strengthen their evidence-based decision-making processes, as highlighted in the Highway Safety Manual, and systemic planning approaches to make improved safety investment decisions. We will continue to provide guidance and technical assistance to encourage these practices. We will also continue to research, identify and advance proven safety countermeasures and to provide those countermeasures to you and our partners so they can be integrated into this approach and used to help save lives and prevent serious injuries.

This guidance provides you with a revised list of research-proven countermeasures that supersedes the 2008 guidance. Through our collective efforts, many of the nine safety countermeasures in the 2008 guidance are thoroughly integrated into the options the States consider as they address their safety issues. However, some have not reached that level of wide spread application. Accordingly, some of the countermeasures from the 2008 guidance were brought forward with the new ones we’ve added. As you so successfully did with the 2008 guidance, we encourage you to advance these safety countermeasure options with your State DOT counterparts.

The new list of proven safety countermeasures includes:

1. Safety Edge
2. Roundabouts
3. Corridor Access Management
4. Backplates with Retroreflective Borders
5. Longitudinal Rumble Strips and Stripes on 2-Lane Roads
6. Enhanced Delineation and Friction for Horizontal Curves
7. Medians and Pedestrian Crossing Islands in Urban and Suburban Areas
8. Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon
9. "Road Diets" (Roadway Reconfiguration)

We encourage you to refer your safety partners to resources such as the Crash Modification Factors Clearinghouse (<http://www.cmfclearinghouse.org>) and the FHWA web site (<http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/provencountermeasures>), to find more detailed descriptions, related research studies, and evaluations of each of these countermeasures.

In February 2012, we will begin tracking the implementation of these countermeasures and we will work with you to replace the current countermeasure index that every Division currently updates quarterly. The new performance measure is based on implementation and takes into consideration an analysis of safety data and a State's specific safety needs. We have already introduced a simplified version of this new reporting process through an online reporting tool. More information on this process will be forthcoming before we fully transition to the new measure.

In the interim, Divisions should continue to submit quarterly updates on the prior nine countermeasures through the end of the 2012 performance year. There will be two quarters of the 2012 performance year when the existing countermeasure index and a baseline for the new performance measure are tracked simultaneously.