



MOBILIZATION REPORT

NEW JERSEY DIVISION OF HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY

SMOOTH OPERATOR • JUNE 23 - JULY 6, 2008

2008 REGION I AGGRESSIVE DRIVING PILOT PROGRAM

Aggressive driving behaviors such as speeding, tailgating, red light running, and improper passing pose a grave risk to motorists. Excessive speed, the most common cause of aggressive driving associated with traffic crashes, is a contributing factor in 31 percent of all fatal crashes nationwide, killing nearly 1,000 people every month. In New Jersey, 25 percent of all fatal crashes in 2007 involved traveling at unsafe speeds. Traffic congestion compounds stress and frustration behind the wheel, leading to an unsafe driving environment for motorists, their passengers and everyone on the road.

A regional public safety initiative, the *Smooth Operator* program was developed in 1997 by a group of law enforcement

agencies in the Washington, D.C. area to address the number one complaint of drivers in the northeastern United States, aggressive driving. Also implemented in Maryland, Virginia and most recently, Pennsylvania, the program seeks to raise awareness about the deadly consequences of aggressive driving through enforcement and education.

According to national research conducted for the *Smooth Operator* program, most drivers indicated that in the past year they have personally seen aggressive driving so dangerous that it put others on the road at risk. Additionally, 55 percent of the motorists polled feel the problem is getting worse. In New Jersey, 68 percent of

motorists polled for a 2008 survey on driver attitudes and behavior believe aggressive driving and drunk driving are the top two issues facing drivers, and they support stepped up enforcement. Research also indicates that aggressive driving is contagious and often mimicked by other motorists after they observe another driver's offensive behavior.

Recognizing that aggressive driving is a growing problem on New Jersey's roadways, the Division of Highway Traffic Safety analyzed Region I crash data to identify roadways in southern

New Jersey with a significant number of aggressive driving-related crashes. Five corridors were identified for a *Smooth Operator* pilot program:

Route 30, Black Horse Pike (Atlantic County), Route 130 from Burlington City to Pennsauken (Camden County), Route 42 (Gloucester County), Route 73 (Burlington and Camden Counties), and the Atlantic City Expressway.

Running from June 23 through July 6, the concentrated effort used highly visible law enforcement patrols and public awareness materials, including ticket jackets, posters, handouts, and an on-line quiz, to help motorists recognize aggressive driving behaviors and take steps to prevent them from occurring when they're behind the wheel. A new and unique educational tool, the 38-question quiz, accessible via the Division's web site, is designed to help motorists determine if they're



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an “aggressive driver or a *Smooth Operator*.” Questions include: “Do you maintain appropriate distance when following other vehicles, bicyclists, motorcyclists; provide appropriate distance when cutting in after passing vehicles;

yield to pedestrians; maintain speeds appropriate for conditions; yield and/or move to the right for emergency vehicles; avoid challenging other drivers; and, refrain from flashing your headlights to signal a desire to pass?”

THE RESULTS

Twenty-six municipal police departments and the New Jersey State Police participated in the pilot program. Local police agencies issued 945 speeding tickets, as well as 548 cell phone citations, 464 summonses for failure to obey traffic control devices, and 240 tickets for improper passing.

The New Jersey State Police, patrolling the Atlantic City Expressway, made more than 400 vehicle stops issuing 155 speeding tickets, and 37 seat belt and 14 cell phone citations.

During the two-week pilot, there was an eight percent increase in reported crashes on the *Smooth Operator* corridors. However, there was also a corresponding 40 percent

decrease in crash-related injuries on these corridors compared to the same time period last year.

The campaign kicked off with a press event on the Atlantic City Expressway and a news release that generated statewide and local media coverage. The media component, along with the ticket jackets and collateral posters and handouts, served to further enhance awareness about the initiative and support for the enforcement effort.

Plans are underway to roll out the *Smooth Operator* program statewide in 2009 targeting corridors with the highest percentage of aggressive driving-related crashes in the state.



For more information about the 2008 *Smooth Operator* pilot program, including a detailed breakdown of citations by participating police agencies, please [continue to the next page](#). For other questions or comments, contact Ed O'Connor at (609) 633-9048 or Edward.O'Connor@lps.state.nj.us



NJ Office of the Attorney General
New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety



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ATLANTIC COUNTY	Speeding	Reckless Driver	Careless Driver	Improper Passing	Hand-Held Cell Phone	Failure to Obey Traffic Control Signal	Unlicensed Driver	Suspended License	Uninsured Driver	Other Violations
Absecon	6	1	10	3	0	10	2	8	1	97
Egg Harbor	19	0	7	7	41	17	10	4	9	161
Galloway	63	0	4	2	5	16	2	5	1	70
Hammonton	92	0	3	0	20	2	14	3	11	105
Mullica	104	0	9	25	1	9	18	3	13	134
ATLANTIC COUNTY TOTALS	284	1	33	37	67	54	46	23	35	567
BURLINGTON COUNTY	Speeding	Reckless Driver	Careless Driver	Improper Passing	Hand-Held Cell Phone	Failure to Obey Traffic Control Signal	Unlicensed Driver	Suspended License	Uninsured Driver	Other Violations
Burlington	10	0	11	2	20	34	3	11	5	128
Burlington Twp	89	0	4	2	27	16	8	10	0	128
Cinnaminson	13		11	1	27	40		4		35
Delran	38	0	21	6	22	14	2	3	1	84
Edgewater Park	6	0	1	1	7	8	7	5	1	57
Evesham	25	0	2	59	48	19	1	2	2	51
Maple Shade	18	0	5	15	20	47	3	4	0	48
Mount Laurel	7	0	9	9	19	16	2	7	4	89
Palmyra	73	1	2	9	30	0	4	15	2	46
Willingboro	82	1	1	3	11	9	4	8	1	67
BURLINGTON COUNTY TOTALS	361	2	67	107	231	203	34	69	16	733
CAMDEN COUNTY	Speeding	Reckless Driver	Careless Driver	Improper Passing	Hand-Held Cell Phone	Failure to Obey Traffic Control Signal	Unlicensed Driver	Suspended License	Uninsured Driver	Other Violations
Berlin Twp	10	0	15	6	34	34	6	6	3	90
Gloucester	1	0	3	6	37	3	10	17	4	109
Pennsauken	26	2	49	3	34	43	88	83	87	747
Runnemede	16	1	13	5	0	21	6	11	3	143
Voorhees	40	0	35	5	73	18	14	17	14	213
Waterford	10	0	11	2	20	34	3	11	5	128
CAMDEN COUNTY TOTALS	103	3	126	27	198	153	127	145	116	1,430

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GLOUCESTER COUNTY										
	Speeding	Reckless Driver	Careless Driver	Improper Passing	Hand-Held Cell Phone	Failure to Obey Traffic Control Signal	Unlicensed Driver	Suspended License	Uninsured Driver	Other Violations
Deptford	97	0	1	0	1	18	4	4	7	98
Monroe	61	3	20	4	15	16	7	8	6	165
Washington	39	1	3	65	36	20	2	5	5	158
GLOUCESTER COUNTY TOTALS	197	4	24	69	52	54	13	17	18	421

ALL PARTICIPATING MUNICIPAL POLICE DEPARTMENTS										
	Speeding	Reckless Driver	Careless Driver	Improper Passing	Hand-Held Cell Phone	Failure to Obey Traffic Control Signal	Unlicensed Driver	Suspended License	Uninsured Driver	Other Violations
PARTICIPATING MUNICIPAL POLICE TOTALS	945	10	250	240	548	464	220	254	185	3,151

NEW JERSEY STATE POLICE				
	Speeding	Seat Belt	Child Restraint	Hand-Held Cell Phone
NEW JERSEY STATE POLICE TOTALS	421	238	8	36