

SAFE PASSAGE TASK FORCE

Meeting Minutes

April 27, 2007

Log Cabin, NJSP HQ

I. INTRODUCTION:

- A. **Lieutenant Robert Parlow**, Assistant Traffic Bureau Chief, opened meeting. He informed everyone in attendance that Captain Shakespeare was unable to make the meeting do to other obligations surrounding the Governor Corzine crash investigation. **Lieutenant Parlow** distributed the proclamation from Governor Corzine initiating a revitalized effort at high visibility enforcement in order to reduce motor vehicle crashes and resulting fatalities. Also distributed were the YTD fatal crash statistics showing that fatalities in the state are down 14.9 % as of April 21, 2007.

II. TOPICS DISCUSSED:

- A. **Trooper Steve Slimowicz** of the NJSP Fatal Accident Investigation Unit gave a presentation addressing the issues surrounding young drivers and speeding on the state's roadways. He informed the committee of a proposed Poster Campaign and Educational presentations to school age students. Overall messages to the students: Do not race on the streets, it's dangerous, and it's against the law. There is an alternative to racing and it lies at the existing motor vehicle racetracks in the state. Trooper Slimowicz requested feed back from the Task Force.

Feed back was mixed, liability concerns expressed. **Wendy Berk** of the Brain Injury Assoc., spoke about a similar program that they are running. She liked the idea and expressed that the internet has proven to be the delivery method of choice for training issues directed at young people. **Bill Margaretta** of the NJ State Safety Council spoke about a program in Colorado where the youth can actually race against a trooper (at a regulated track) and the success of their program. Funding issues are not a problem as Trooper Slimowicz advised that race tracks are all onboard. **LTC Juan Mattos** spoke about several liability issues and the need for a legal review through the Attorney General's Office before anything would be implemented. Washington Township's Chief of Police, **Bill Cicchetti**, cautioned against this program citing glamorizing racing and how many (young people) will not be able to get to a race track. **Lyle Hough** of the Municipal Prosecutor's Office of

Trenton spoke of the very small fine of \$50 for racing on the streets. **SFC Tina Arcaro** spoke about the subcommittee that she's working on with the Chiefs Association, regarding Title 39, and the reclassification of violations and fees. **LTC Mattos** spoke about **Governor Corzine's** accident and the opportunity that currently exist to capitalize on seat belts issues.

- B. Sergeant Greg Williams** of the NJSP Traffic Bureau, reported that the VMS message board partnership with NJDOT is working well. Work Zone Safety is currently the message being displayed. **Patricia Ott**, NJDOT Director of Engineering and Safety spoke about a special request she made regarding a seat belt message prior to the Click or Ticket Campaign kick-off. It's currently being reviewed.
- C. Bill Beans**, DOT explained the plans and expectations of the Crash Data Warehouse Subcommittee. Further information available through the STRCC.
- D. Sgt. Greg Williams** informed the committee that a date has been set to present Safe Passage Initiatives to the Catholic Diocese of Trenton, that covers Burlington, Mercer, Monmouth, and Ocean counties.
- E. Bob Pinizzotto**, informed the Task Force that the Municipal Prosecutor's Association Conference will be held on May 11th at Bally's Casino in Atlantic City, NJ. Advised that he still had Resource Tables available. The State Police Traffic Bureau is scheduled to send representatives.
- F.** Blood draw issue, it's still going to be a problem. Still waiting for Attorney General guidance on this issue.
- G.** Prosecutor **Bob Pinizzotto** informed that the subcommittee regarding prosecutor's access to MVC records was making great progress.
- H. Bob Pinizzotto** informed that the suggestion for a mandatory court appearance on seat belt violations was aggressively opposed by many prosecutors. He suggested that the law enforcement community should do away with giving out courtesy cards and how it hinders the prosecuting process. Trenton Prosecutor **Lyle Hough**, stated that Trenton does not acknowledge PBA cards. Bob Pinizzotto mentioned that he looking to set up a program where prosecutors would volunteer their time and visit as many schools as possible to educate kids about the law. This issue received a very positive response from the Task Force members. Bill Beans NJDOT asked if a list of available prosecutors could be provided. Bill Beans informed that he also goes out and does presentations and a list of prosecutors volunteering their time would be a great resource. Bob Pinizzotto spoke about how the Governor would be great person to promote seat belt use right now and asked if someone was going to reach out to him to see if he would be willing to help. **Dr. Carl Valenziano MD**,

Trauma Director at St. Joseph's Hospital, informed the Task Force that he speaks with Governor Corzine and he'll ask.

- I. **Lt. Parlow** informed that the Safe Passage Task Force Website is now accessible at <http://www.nj.gov/safepassage>. The site is still under construction.
- J. **Don Borowski**, NJMVC, spoke about the current points system used by MVC and the need for an overhaul. He proposed that a subcommittee be formed to address and reform the system. An email will be sent out to all members seeking assistance in this reform process which is likely to be lengthy.
- K. **Bill Margaretta** addressed the great success of the "Alive at 25" program. He recently trained 14 troopers from the NJSP Community Outreach Unit along with several other municipal officers. Bill spoke about the Alive at 25 Kick-off in Howell Township which was presented on Monday, April 23rd. The feedback from the participants was positive. Many in attendance felt that the program should be mandatory throughout the state. Bill informed of upcoming training dates scheduled for May 8th & 9th in the Randolph Municipal Building and advised that training is open to everyone. He advised that information could be found on the www.frhsd.com website.
- L. **Lt. Parlow** spoke about the push to employ an electronic data transfer system of crash reports in the State Police. The Division is currently soliciting private vendors to come in and design a system that meets our needs. Once approved we are going to seek funding through STRCC. E- ticket addressed briefly. Lt. Parlow stated that we're not there yet but we're getting close. **John Podeszwa**, AOC, stated cautiously that he believes that by the end of the year this will be done.
- M. **Lt. Parlow** spoke about the provisional driver program that the State Police are currently utilizing. In addition, **SFC John Murphy** of Troop B Traffic Office, spoke about sending out letters to cited GDL driver's parents and how the program is working really well. He has received call backs from parents thanking them about the notifications.
- N. **Pat Ott**, NJDOT, informed that the Comprehensive Strategic Highway Safety Plan went out to the Safety Management Task Force and she is awaiting any comments and thoughts. There are 135 action strategies in the plan. The report will be out shortly and DOT is looking at what we should focus on first. Pat spoke on the strategy with the breakdown being 39% Education, 31% Planning & Leadership, 15% Engineering and 10% Enforcement. We have already started some initiatives and there is a lot to get done. All agencies should coordinate their activities with the DHTS.
- O. Driver Medical Records - **Don Borowski**, **SFC Murphy** and **Sgt. Williams**

commented on the Older Drivers Course where instruction was given on the referral process. **Dr. Valenziano** stated the health care community doesn't know what should be reported and what not to report. **Dr. Valenziano** suggested that we put together some type of training for the health care community. **Don Borowski** spoke about how it's been hard to get an audience with the health care community. **Lt. Parlow** directed **Sgt. Williams** to get information from MVC to put together a presentation for the health care community.

- P.** **Lt. Parlow** spoke about how he recently attended the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission meeting and observed a demonstration on the red light enforcement program within the City of Philadelphia. A representative from AAA Mid-atlantic commented that there was currently very little support for automated enforcement within the New Jersey Legislative Branch at this time. No word on the GDL bill, which was sponsored by Senator Singer. It appears that it will be held up until the study on teen drivers is completed.

III Open Forum

Trenton Municipal Prosecutor **Lyle Hough** spoke about getting a universal statewide procedure to legally bring someone in for identification purposes on motor vehicle violations. He spoke about this being a major problem in the city of Trenton. Suggested that we come up with a solution to deal with drivers having multiple drivers license numbers. There was extensive conversation on this subject back and forth. **Lt. Parlow** advised that he was going to check on the State Police policy on this issue. **SFC Ken Gyongyosi** of the State Police Fatal Accident Unit expressed that he believed it was determined by individual courts. It was mentioned that certain courts make it mandatory to bring a person into the court and have them bonded. Bob Pinizzotto stated that we'll have to check into this because there appears to be some conflicting legal issues.

VI Closing Remarks

Lt. Parlow informed that the minutes from this meeting will be sent out.

Lt. Parlow informed that there are some subcommittees that we will be looking to form and information will be sent out to all the members. Thanked everyone for coming.

The next Safe Passage Task Force meeting is scheduled for Friday, June 1, 2007 at 10:00 AM and will be held at the Log Cabin, NJSP Division Headquarters.