

SAFE PASSAGE TASK FORCE

Meeting Minutes

October 23, 2009

New Jersey State Police, Division Headquarters

I. CALL TO ORDER

- The meeting was called to order by Lieutenant Neil Brosnan, Assistant Bureau Chief, Operations Safety Bureau.

II. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

- Lt. Brosnan welcomed everyone and thanked them for attending. He asked if anyone had any comments or concerns regarding the meeting minutes from the September 25, 2009 meeting, with negative replies. Lt. Brosnan reiterated the task force's goal - to reduce motor vehicle crashes, which will ultimately lead to the reduction of fatalities. Lt. Brosnan stated today's objective is to conduct an after action critical review of the October 10, 2009, "Put the Brakes on Fatality Day" Plan, and create an Operational Plan for next year.

III. ITEMS

- As of October 19, 2009, there were 478 fatalities and 453 fatal crashes. This years number of fatalities surpassed the 2008 numbers by 16 fatalities.
- SFC Carsten Boethig, NJSP Highway Traffic Safety Unit, reported the crash statistics from October 10, 2009, "Put the Brakes on Fatalities Day." There were 498 out of 356 law enforcement agencies who reported, or 71.5%. There were 789 crashes, 165 crashes with injuries and 2 fatalities. The number of crashes in 2009 was lower than 2008, and the number of reporting agencies increased in 2009.
- SFC Mike Brunson, Branchburg Police Department, suggested identifying police agencies who failed to report, and contacting them by telephone.
- Sgt. Rich Maxwell, Colts Neck Police Department, suggested the task force invite representatives from statewide utility agencies to join the group, in an effort to develop a working relationship, and broaden our communication base.
- Phil Sullivan, NJ Natural Gas Company Safety Administrator spoke about his companies efforts of promoting safety with their employees, fleet and customers. Their website is www.njliving.com. They have approximately 478,000 customers.
- James Polos, Middlesex County Freeholder, thanked the task force for their efforts. He discussed Middlesex County's new innovated ways to address drivers, such as MCOP, (My County On Patrol). In this program, county employees receive training, in an effort to promote awareness and report unsafe drivers and suspected terrorist activity.
- Det. I John Sandner, NJSP Analysis Unit, discussed the Halloween weekend. Motor vehicle crashes increase approximately 30% on Saturdays.

- Lt. Brosnan asked the group to provide feedback from the, “Put the Brakes on Fatalities Day” event.
- Shannon Purdy, NHTS, complimented the program, stating she received multiple emails about the event, which was a testament to how successful the program was.
- Michael Brunson suggested starting a few months earlier, to allow proclamations time for municipal government agencies with limited meeting schedules.

IV. SUB-COMMITTEE SESSIONS: Enforcement and Education/Awareness for “Put the Brakes on Fatalities Day” Event.

- Shannon Purdy highlighted the following ideas for the Enforcement Group:
 - Explore crash data for prevailing causation factors.
 - Build an electronic spread sheet reporting tool.
 - Better promote the use of Drunk Driving Enforcement Funds to motivate agency participation.
 - Create magnetic strips/signage to affix to vehicles during enforcement day events.
 - Zero tolerance enforcement from law enforcement on motor vehicle violators.
- Wendy Burk, Brain Injury Association of New Jersey, highlighted the following ideas for the Education Awareness:
 - Develop a short video to be presented at events in schools, colleges and at community events.
 - This years success included VMS, MVC website, bulk e-mail and social networking.
- Develop a time line.
 - One year prior to the event, review and access previous year participation. Identify lack of participation issues, such as political or funding. Research best practices and seek sponsorships.
 - Three months prior, develop forms, videos, palm cards and flyers for distribution. Town banners should be displayed at community fairs and events. Identify and designate responsibilities. Request proclamation partnerships from municipalities.
 - One month prior to the event contact and distribute clear guidelines to law enforcement agencies. Designate a statewide spokesperson. Request VMS boards with a general safe driving message.
- Lt. Brosnan advised the Operations Safety Bureau Office would develop a broad draft of the plan for distribution to the group. The plan will be a continual process and recommendations

will be added as necessary.

VI. OPEN FORUM

- Lt. Brosnan advised the next task force meeting will focus on a plan to reduce the number of motorcycle accidents in New Jersey.
- Violet Marrero, NJDHTS, requested motorcycle crash data and factors associated with the crashes, be available for the next meeting.
- Shannon Purdy recommended researching New York State Police's motorcycle checkpoint policy.
- John Dell'Aquilo, NJDCJ, recommended motorcycle dealers and salespeople be trained to point customers towards proper equipment.
- Michael Brunson recommended legislation to hold dealers accountable for selling novelty helmets that are not DOT certified.
- James Polos remarked that there are a large number of legitimate motorcycle clubs throughout the state committed to safety. He recommended invited some club presidents to speak before the group to learn their perspectives on motorcycle, operator safety.
- Steve Somogy, AOC, and Violet Marrero suggested inviting representation from the insurance industry to the task force.
- Captain Warren Shakespeare, NJSP, advised members of the insurance companies have been invited in the past. He commended the task force members for their passion and acknowledge the meetings are moving forward and expanding with a positive spin.
- Michael Brunson discussed new motor vehicle laws, which included removing snow from vehicles. He is working with Patt Ott, regarding VMS boards and limiting their messages to traffic related issues. Michael Brunson advised the current status of Safe Passage funding. He encouraged NJSP members join the New Jersey Police Traffic Officers Association (NJPTOA) email list, by signing onto their website.

VII. CLOSING REMARKS

- Lt. Brosnan thanked everyone for their attendance and participation.
- Task force members will be notified of the date and location of the next meeting, which will be in January 29, 2010.