

**SUMMARY**  
**OF THE**  
**“CLICK IT OR TICKET 2003”**  
**MOBILIZATION**  
**May 19 to June 1, 2003**

**Prepared by**

*The New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety*

## **Acknowledgments**

The Director of the Division of Highway Traffic Safety (DHTS) wants to express his sincere appreciation to the following organizations and individuals for the integral role that they played in making the "Click It or Ticket 2003" mobilization campaign a success:

Chief Anthony Parenti

Captain Juan Perez, NJ State Police

New Jersey State Association of Chiefs of Police

New Jersey Police Traffic Officers Association

New Jersey State Police

Clara Langley

Dan Shine

Robert Gaydosh

Sandra Jenkins

Clarisa Romero

Paulette Ayers

Lisha Jones

Lee Hibbert

Liz Valente

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Executive Summary .....	1
I. Background .....	4
II. Methodology .....	5
III. Analysis of the Data .....	8
IV. Conclusion .....	13

## **Executive Summary**

Seat belt usage is one of the most effective means of reducing traffic fatalities and serious, moderate and minor traffic injuries. The U.S. Congress created the Section 157 Innovative Grant Program in an effort to raise seat belt usage rates throughout the country. In FY2003 the New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety utilized a large portion of its Section 157 Innovative Grant funding to carry out a comprehensive seat belt program called the "Click It or Ticket" 2003 Seat Belt Mobilization. The mobilization ran from May 19<sup>th</sup> through June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2003.

Key components of the "Click It or Ticket" 2003 Seat Belt Mobilization included targeted seat belt enforcement by 267 police agencies in the state, 69 of which received "Click It or Ticket" grants from the Division through the Section 157 funding. New Jersey also received an additional \$500,000 for a paid media campaign to support the mobilization. This marked the first time that Congress authorized money for a nationwide paid media campaign relating to traffic safety. New Jersey used its \$500,000 to produce radio spots in both English and Spanish language. The spots aired on stations in New Jersey, New York City and Philadelphia.

The Kickoff of the "Click It or Ticket" campaign took place on May 12, 2003 in cooperation with the Tri-State Traffic Safety Partners (New Jersey, New York and Connecticut). The event was held at the Empire State Building in New York City. The keynote speaker was Dr. Jeffrey Runge, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) Administrator.

In addition, the “Click It or Ticket” campaign was one of the focal points of the Division's “101 Days of Summer” kickoff event held at Trenton Waterfront Park on May 21, 2003. Several hundred representatives of the state’s law enforcement community, as well as the Director of the Division of Highway Traffic Safety, attended this event. Both of these media events generated coverage of the "Click It or Ticket" campaign on radio, television, and newspapers.

Of particular note is the fact that this year the Division invited by mail not just the 69 Police Departments that received grants under the Section 157 Program, but all 460 municipal police departments in New Jersey, to participate in the mobilization. Including the grantees, 267 departments participated.

The following are highlights of “Click It or Ticket” mobilization effort:

- Letters of invitation were sent to all 460 municipal police departments in the state.
- Staff from the Division called each municipal police department to confirm receipt of the correspondence and to elicit participation in the mobilization. Only 27 departments indicated that they were not interested in taking part.
- A total of 267 police departments participated in the two-week mobilization.
- 69 municipal police departments received “Click It or Ticket” grants and participated in the two-week mobilization.
- The 2002 May Seat Belt Mobilization lasted four weeks, and 173 Departments participated.
- A pre and post-mobilization survey of belt use was conducted statewide. The 69 municipal police grantees also conducted pre and post-surveys.

- Comparisons of pre and post-surveys show that the mobilization had an impact on the usage of seat belts statewide.
- During the four-week period surrounding the mobilization, 2,745 sixty-second radio spots in support of the campaign were aired on 54 radio stations in the New Jersey, Philadelphia and New York City radio markets. The radio spots were done in English and Spanish.

In conclusion, the "Click It or Ticket" 2003 May Seat Belt Mobilization provided the Division the opportunity to partner with more police departments, engage the public through a comprehensive paid radio advertising campaign, and track and accurately tabulate the results of the program. Most importantly, survey results show that seat belt utilization rose as result of this program.

## **I. Background**

On June 9, 1998, Congress enacted the Transportation Equity Act for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (TEA-21). Section 1403 of this act contained a new incentive grant program to enhance the use of seat belts. Under this program, funds were allocated for each fiscal year from 1998 until 2003 to states that either exceed the national average seat belt usage rate or that improve their state seat belt usage rate, based on certain required determinations and findings. Beginning in fiscal year 2000, any funds that remained unallocated in a given fiscal year were made available “to states to carry out innovative projects to promote increased seat belt use rates.”

The objective of the Section 157 Grant program is to increase seat belt usage rates, for both adults and children, by supporting the implementation of innovative projects that build upon strategies known to be effective in increasing seat belt use rates.

The New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety has received Section 157 grant awards each fiscal year since 2000 to conduct a statewide program of highly visible enforcement and publicity programs to increase seat belt use. The funds received under the grant program have been used by law enforcement to involve the participation of state and local police agencies in intensified enforcement campaigns designed to provide support during nationwide seat belt mobilizations. A media initiative to support the enforcement component provided funds for radio announcements as part of a statewide publicity campaign.

## **II. Methodology**

The Division of Highway Traffic Safety requested and was granted funding from the Section 157 Innovative Grant program for 2003. This grant, also known as "Click It or Ticket," funds two major seat belt enforcement mobilizations during 2003. The first mobilization period was from May 19<sup>th</sup> to June 1<sup>st</sup>. The second will take place from November 17<sup>th</sup> through December 1<sup>st</sup>.

Planning for the 2003 May Mobilization took place at NHTSA Region II headquarters on April 2, 2003. At that meeting the Division announced that for the first time, all police departments in the state would be asked to participate in the 2003 mobilizations. This is a departure from previous years in which the only mobilization participants were the police departments, which received Section 157 Grant funding from the Division.

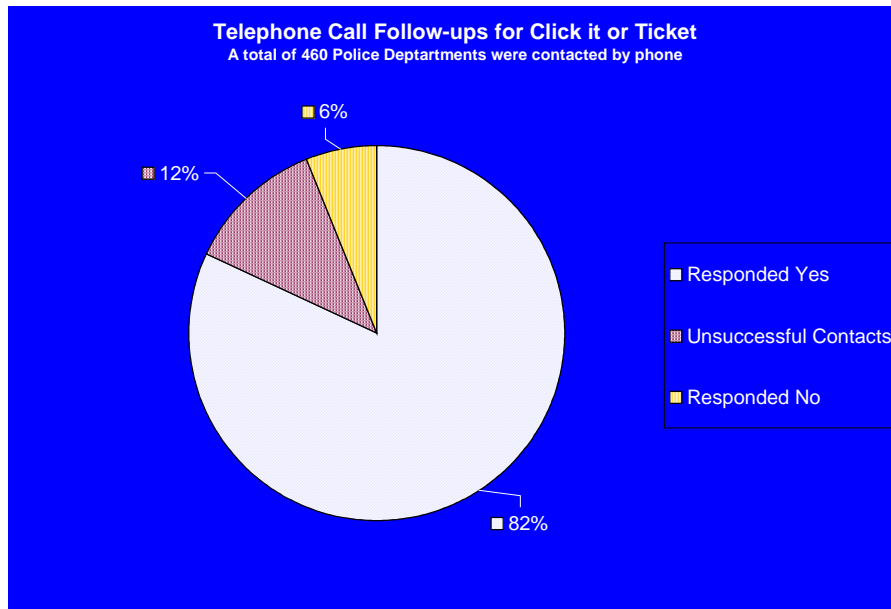
On Thursday April 17<sup>th</sup> the Division sent letters of invitation to all 460 police departments in New Jersey inviting them to participate in the 2003 May Mobilization. Along with the letter, each department received a mobilization enforcement reporting form (postcard) to be filled out and returned prior to June 6, 2003. To further increase participation, staff from the Division called each department to follow-up on the correspondence.

For the follow-up calls, a form was developed on which staff members recorded which departments received the invitation, which did not, which departments were willing to participate in the May Mobilization, and which departments could not be reached. For many departments, several phone calls were made to ensure that we communicated our desire for them to participate

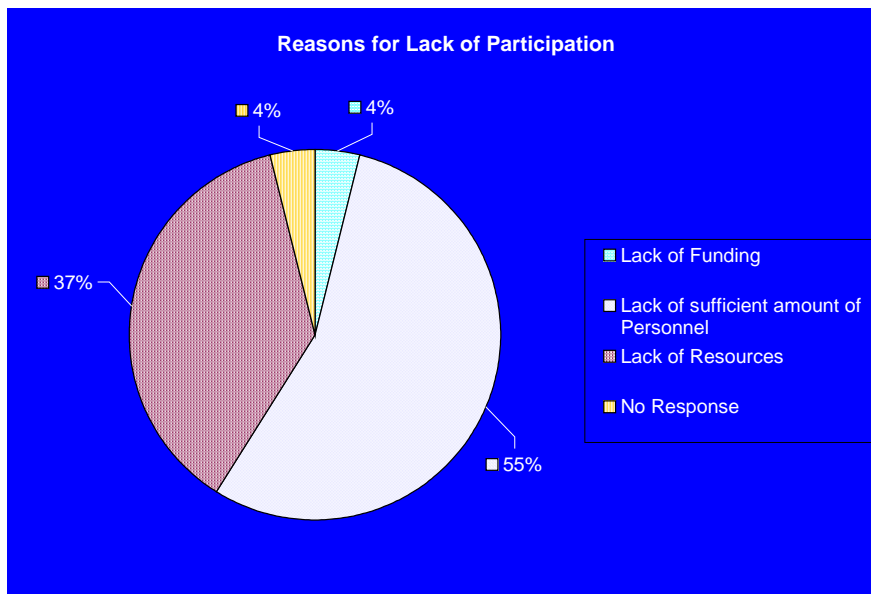


in the campaign. A summary of the follow-up calls (Refer to Graph 1 below) is as follows: 383 departments said they would cooperate, 27 declined to participate, and 50 could not be reached even after several calls. Graph 2 shows the reasons given by the 27 departments that chose not to participate. As the graph shows, most cited a lack of personnel as their reason for not participating in this campaign.

Graph 1.



Graph 2.



As the result of this concerted effort to elicit participation from the local departments, the response to the mobilization effort was more extensive than ever before. A total of 267 police departments participated. This represents 58 percent of the total local police departments in the state. Most of the participating departments reported their results on a timely basis. Only 17 percent of the 267 police departments responded after the June 6 deadline.

Sixty-nine municipal police agencies received grant funding for the “Click It or Ticket 2003” mobilization. The grant paid for 40 hours of overtime patrols during the two-week period of May 19 through June 1. Officers on these overtime patrols were charged with enforcing existing motor vehicle codes, with particular emphasis on the occupant protection statutes relating to seat belts and child safety seats.

Two sets of observational surveys on seat belt usage by motor vehicle drivers and occupants were done to capture the effect of the mobilization. One was done statewide and the other was done by the 69 grantees. Each set of surveys was conducted before and after the mobilization.

The pre and post-mobilization statewide observational surveys were conducted by Division staff members from May 5 to May 16, 2003 and from June 9 to June 20, 2003. The location of the surveys consisted of a random sampling of the survey locations used in the Division’s annual seat belt survey. The counties selected for the surveys were divided into highly urban or less urban, according to population. The actual survey sites were grouped in three categories: high

volume roads, average daily travel roads, and other roads. The aforementioned methodology of site selection tries to adjust to the changes in the number of sites and traffic patterns.

The annual survey involves the following nine counties: Atlantic, Bergen, Burlington, Cumberland, Mercer, Middlesex, Ocean, Somerset, and Union. For the 2003 pre-mobilization survey, Bergen and Cumberland counties were not included because of lack of manpower. For the post-mobilization survey, Union County was not included for the same reason.

### **III. Analysis of the Data**

The success of any effort to increase seat belt use depends greatly on highly visible enforcement of the state's Primary Seat Belt Law. These enforcement efforts include the issuance of citations to motorists that do not wear a seat belt and to drivers who do not properly restrain their children. Results from the two statewide observational surveys conducted just before and immediately after the mobilization show an increase of 2.3 percentage points in the statewide seat belt usage rate, from 78.9 to 81.2 percent. Table 1 that follows summarizes the results of the campaign.

During the two-week "Click It or Ticket" May Mobilization the 267 participating police departments issued 22,941 seat belt citations, 470 child restraint citations, 23,096 other citations and 3,070 written warnings. In addition, the 69 grant receiving police departments arrested 669 people during the mobilization period.

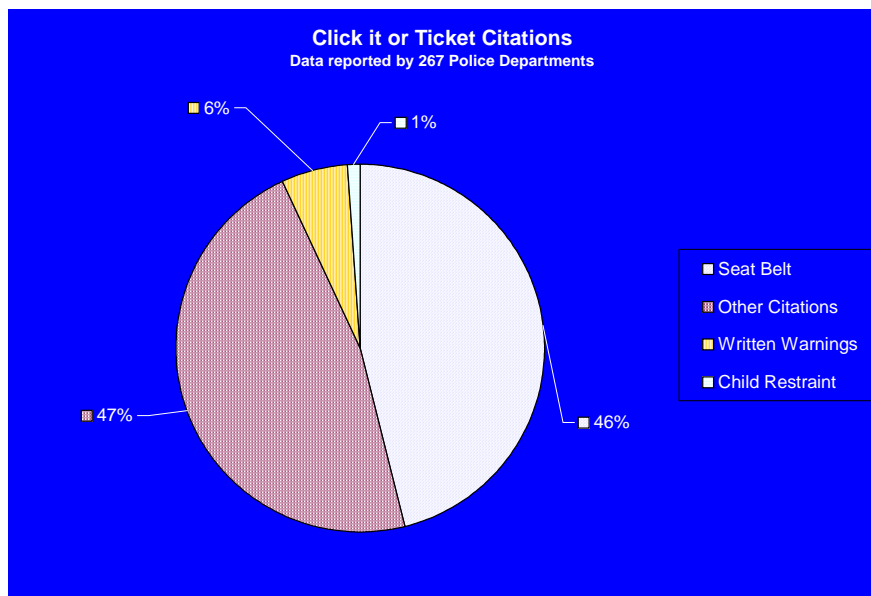
Table 1.

**Results of the Mobilization 2003**

Police Departments	Seat Belt Citations	Child Restraint Citations	Other Citations	Written Warnings	Other Arrests
266 Local Police	21,236	439	23,096	3,070	669
State Police	1,705	31	----	----	---
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>22,941</b>	<b>470</b>	<b>23,096</b>	<b>3,070</b>	<b>669</b>

The distribution of citations is further illustrated in Graph 3. 46 percent of the citations issued were for seat belt violations, child seat restraint citations accounted for 1 percent, other citations represented 47 percent, and written warnings accounted for 6 percent.

Graph 3.



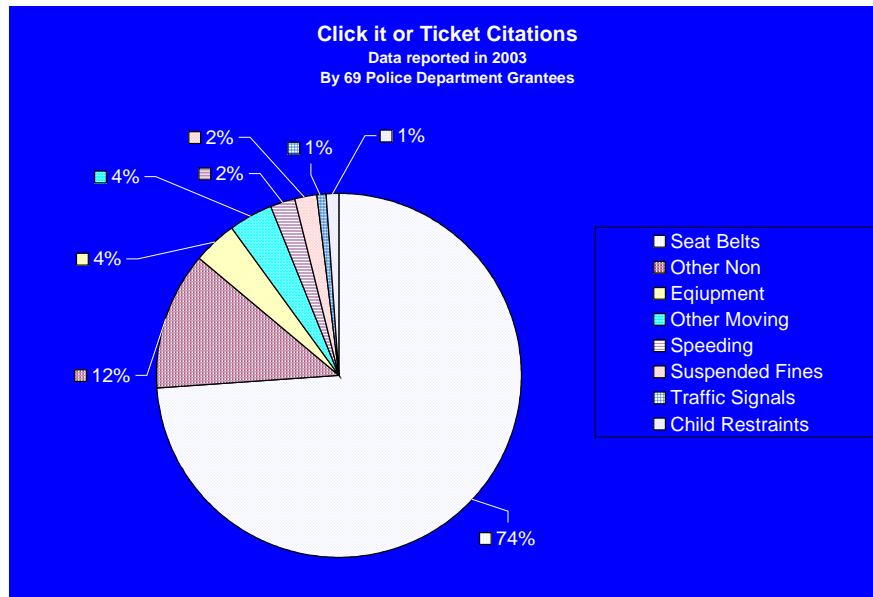
The 69 grant receiving departments issued 10,800 summonses during the two-week campaign, broken down as follows: 7,990 seat belt violations, 206 speeding summonses, 71 traffic signal infractions, 468 for faulty equipment, 122 child safety seat violations, 489 other moving violations, 1,262 non-moving violations and 193 suspended drivers were cited.

Graph 4 shows the percentage of each category of citations. Seat belt citations accounted for 74 percent of the citations while lack of child restraint accounted for 1 percent. In addition, officers working enforcement overtime arrested a total of 108 individuals. During the campaign, officers contacted 11,409 vehicles and logged 2,673 hours of available grant funded enforcement overtime out of a total of 2,760 that was available, a difference of 87 hours.

Seat belt summonses accounted for 74% of all violations. Other non-moving violations accounted for 12% of the total. Other moving and equipment violations accounted for 4% each, followed by speeding and suspended driving violations accounting for 2% each of the total. Lastly, traffic signals and child restraints accounted for 1% each.

The grant receiving departments were asked during three regional meetings to report their enforcement results and to return their “Click It or Ticket” postcard prior to June 6, 2003. Fifty-one of the 69 grantees met the reporting request deadline, with the remaining eighteen agencies responding after June 6.

Graph 4.



The statewide seat belt usage rate increased by 2.3 percentage points from 78.9 pre-mobilization to 81.2 post-mobilization. For the pre-mobilization survey, Division staff went to 56 sites and observed 12,171 motor vehicle drivers and passengers. For the post-mobilization survey, we went to 83 sites and observed 21,679 drivers and passengers. Table 2 that follows presents the results of the pre and post-mobilization surveys. A higher usage rate in every county but one was noted in the post- survey. The counties with the largest increase in usage were Middlesex and Somerset counties. They reported increases of 8.3 and 6.4 percent respectively.

Table 2.

**Estimated Safety Belt Usage Rates  
In New Jersey by County  
Pre and Post Mobilization**

<b>County</b>	<b>Pre Mobilization Seat Belt Usage Rate</b>	<b>Post Mobilization Seat Belt Usage Rate</b>
Atlantic	71.4	75.0
Bergen	-	81.8
Burlington	80.3	82.9
Cumberland	-	67.1
Mercer	88.0	86.3
Middlesex	75.8	84.1
Ocean	80.0	81.3
Somerset	78.0	84.4
Union	80.6	-
<b>STATE</b>	<b>78.9</b>	<b>81.2</b>

## **IV. Conclusion**

It is clear from the results of the May 2003 “Click It or Ticket” Seat Belt Mobilization that the local law enforcement community in the state is willing to participate in important statewide traffic safety mobilizations such as this. A large number of local departments in the state embraced the May Mobilization and through the dedicated work of these local officers a very strong message was sent to motor vehicle drivers and passengers in our state about the importance of seat belt usage.

The large number of occupant protection-related summonses that were issued during the campaign and the resulting increase in the statewide seat belt usage rates proves once again that high visibility enforcement campaigns have a very positive effect on enhancing traffic safety.

The State of New Jersey has come a long way with regards to usage of seat belts. In fact, the state’s seat belt usage rate has risen 20 percentage points in the last seven years. It is anticipated that the partnerships between the Division and the local law enforcement community that were developed during the May 2003 Mobilization will continue to be broadened and strengthened in the years ahead to further deliver the seat belt message and to further increase the usage rate in the state of New Jersey.