

ANNUAL REPORT

to the

LEGISLATURE

2003



New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety

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INTRODUCTION

The New Jersey Division of Highway Traffic Safety (DHTS) was established to implement the requirements of the National Highway Safety Act of 1966. The mission of the DHTS is to: (1) annually develop a comprehensive highway traffic safety plan; (2) promote traffic safety; (3) procure and administer available federal traffic safety funds; and (4) coordinate traffic safety activities of state and local agencies toward a comprehensive statewide traffic safety program.

The DHTS is located in the Department of Law and Public Safety. The Division Director is appointed by and serves at the pleasure of the Governor. The Director serves as the Governor's Representative to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and the Federal Highway Administration of the United States Department of Transportation and is chairperson of the Governor's Highway Traffic Safety Policy Advisory Council. The Director's administration of the Division is under the direction and supervision of the Governor and the Attorney General. The Governor's Representative and Director of the Division of Highway Traffic Safety is Roberto Rodriguez.

The Highway Safety Plan for federal fiscal year 2003 addressed nine priority program areas for a total of \$9.3 million. During the last eight years (1996-2003), the State's contribution has remained flat at \$338,000 a year. This represents less than 1 percent of all funds for highway traffic safety initiatives. The funds included the annual allotment of Section 402 State and Community Highway Safety funds, Section 405 Occupant Incentive funds, Section 410 Alcohol Incentive Grant Carryover funds, and Section 157 Incentive Grant funds. Funds from these programs have initiated projects in the areas of: alcohol and other drug countermeasures, police traffic services, occupant protection, pedestrian and bicycle safety, community traffic safety programs, roadway safety, traffic records, and motorcycle safety. Projects funded through the Highway Safety Plan included both state and local programs.

The Division also continues to oversee and coordinate both the State Drunk Driving Enforcement Fund and Motorcycle Safety Education Program.

The cooperation and participation of partners are critical to the overall success of the highway safety program. Many players were actively involved at all levels of government and other entities. The principal forum for the partners in traffic safety is the Highway Traffic Safety Policy Advisory Council. The Council consists of 21 members, appointed by the Governor, to assist in preparing traffic safety programs for New Jersey by reviewing and deliberating on issues and making recommendations. In addition, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and the Federal Highway Administration continue to provide leadership and technical assistance to the program. Other state agencies, such as the Division of State Police, Division of Alcoholic Beverage Control, Department of Transportation; local law enforcement agencies and schools; civic and non-profit groups, such as the New Jersey State Safety Council and the American Automobile Association; and other private sector businesses and organizations all play a key role in steering New Jersey's program down the safe road.

Continued proactive involvement in local, state, and national arenas allows New Jersey to stay in the forefront of highway safety. Expanding and enhancing partnerships should contribute to an even more successful program in the future.

SOCIETAL COST

Trauma resulting from motor vehicle crashes represents a major challenge to our health care delivery system and a significant societal burden.

Motor vehicle crashes throughout the years have been a leading cause of death in the United States. In 2002, there were a total of 42,815 motor vehicle fatalities nationwide. During the same year, there were a total of 773 traffic-related deaths in New Jersey.

In 2002, motor vehicle crashes in the nation cost society over \$160 billion.¹ In New Jersey, the societal cost was approximately \$7.9 billion. Each fatality in New Jersey resulted in an estimated cost to society of \$900,000, each severe injury \$761,000, each moderate injury \$13,800 and each minor injury \$4,982.²

The societal cost estimates represent the monetary burden on society caused by motor vehicle crashes of injury-related illness and premature death. This cost takes into account the cost incurred the year in which the injury occurred and the cost incurred in each successive year.

The economic cost has two components: direct and indirect costs. Direct cost includes the amount for personal health care, including hospital and nursing home care, overhead and administrative costs for automobile and health insurance. The indirect cost is the value of the cost output due to reduced productivity caused by injuries and disability and losses due to premature death. This estimate does not include the non-quantifiable costs associated with human suffering and trauma. If those costs were included, the cost associated with each fatality and injury would be greatly increased.

Because the cost per injury and the cost of repair resulting from a motor vehicle crash increases each year, a downward trend in highway crash rates will not by itself reduce society's economic burden. Rather, both the frequency of crashes and the severity of personal injury and property damage resulting from each crash that cannot be prevented must be reduced. Prudent investment of governmental and private sector resources in proven highway safety countermeasures is the best way to achieve this goal.

¹ *National Highway Traffic Safety Administration Model, The Economic Cost of Motor Vehicle Crashes, 2001.*

² *Severe Injury - an injury which will require hospitalization.*

Moderate Injury – an injury which may debilitate for a period of time or may lead to life long disabilities but are not life threatening.

Minor Injury – an injury which can be treated on location or in a doctor's office.

PROGRAM FUNDING

FEDERAL PROGRAMS

A. Section 402 Program

The State and Community Highway Safety grant program is administered at the federal level primarily by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and partially by the Federal Highway Administration. The funds are intended to provide seed money to catalyze innovative programs and leverage other state, local and private resources. The 402 program improves enforcement of existing laws, changes public attitudes through educational programs, and builds state and local leadership in highway safety.

Listed below is the funding allocated to each of the Section 402 program areas during FFY 2003.

Planning and Administration	\$ 338,000
Alcohol & Other Drugs	\$ 508,805
Police Traffic Services	\$ 855,639
Occupant Protection	\$ 370,573
Pedestrian	\$ 631,239
Community Traffic Safety	\$ 919,963
Roadway Safety	\$ 79,851
Traffic Records	\$ 330,278
Motorcycle Safety	\$ <u>10,000</u>
Total	\$ 4,044,348

B. Section 405 Program

The Section 405 Occupant Protection Incentive Grant program provides incentive grants to encourage states to adopt and implement effective programs to reduce highway deaths and injuries resulting from individuals riding unrestrained or improperly restrained in motor vehicles. The State received \$666,439 to implement occupant protection programs.

C. Section 410 Program

The Section 410 Drunk Driving Prevention program provides incentive grants to states that increase their level of effort and implement drunk driving programs. The State did not meet the requirements of the Section 410 program and was not eligible to receive funds in FY 2003. However, carryover funds in the amount of \$115,849 were applied to support community programs that discouraged drinking and driving and provided enforcement and education programs.

D. Section 157 Program

The Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) established a new program of incentive grants to encourage States to increase seat belt use rates. Incentive grants are awarded to States

who demonstrate an increase in seat belt usage rates. Since the State was able to increase seat belt usage rates which resulted in savings in medical costs to the Federal Government, funds in the amount of \$4,437,539 were awarded for project implementation.

STATE PROGRAMS

A. Drunk Driving Enforcement Fund

The Drunk Driving Enforcement Fund establishes a \$100.00 surcharge on each drunk driving conviction. Monies in this fund are distributed in grants to municipalities and to State, county and interstate law enforcement agencies. The purpose of the grants are to increase enforcement of the drunk driving law. Each law enforcement agency whose officers make arrests leading to DWI convictions and imposition of the surcharge is entitled to grants representing its proportionate contribution to the fund.

Municipalities, the Division of State Police, interstate law enforcement agencies and county law enforcement agencies apply to the Division to use Drunk Driving Enforcement Fund monies for additional DWI enforcement patrols and any appropriate measures pertaining to other DWI activities as approved by the Director of the Division of Highway Traffic Safety.

A total of \$3.5 million was available to law enforcement agencies in an effort to reduce alcohol-related fatalities and crashes.

B. Motorcycle Safety Education Program

The motorcycle safety education program, established in 1992, continues to provide for a course of instruction and training designed to develop and instill the knowledge, skills, attitude and habits necessary for the safe operation and riding of a motorcycle. Fees collected by the Motor Vehicle Commission for each motorcycle license or endorsement issued



under N.J.S.A. 39:3-10, and any other monies which may become available for motorcycle safety education are deposited into the Motorcycle Education Fund. These monies are used exclusively by the Division of Highway Traffic Safety to defray the costs of the motorcycle safety education program.

Different levels of training continue to be available at both public and private locations throughout the State. During calendar year 2003, approximately 7,500 residents were trained in motorcycle safety.

The State provided classes at the Department of Military and Veterans' Affairs facility in Sea Girt and the Anthony Canale Fire and Police Training Academy in Egg Harbor Township. A record number of students were trained at these facilities. There were 825 students trained in the basic skills class and 95 students completed the experienced rider class for a total of 920. In addition, 13 individuals completed the State offered instructor preparation course that enabled them to become certified motorcycle education instructors.

TRAFFIC CRASH DATA

The purpose of the New Jersey Highway Traffic Safety Program is to coordinate state and local efforts in the struggle to reduce highway deaths and injuries. Highway deaths between calendar year 2001 and 2002 increased slightly from 745 to 773. The year end fatalities for 2003 are on target to be less than the final count in 2002. As of December 8, 2003, the number of fatalities reported for the calendar year was 654. If the vehicle miles traveled increases at an anticipated rate of 1.9 percent, the fatality rate in 2003 would be estimated at 1.02 deaths per 100 million vehicle miles traveled based on an estimate of 725 fatalities for the year.

Alcohol consumption is a costly and significant risk factor for motor vehicle crashes. A total of 299 deaths or 39 percent of all highway fatalities in 2002 were related to alcohol. The alcohol fatality rate per 100 million vehicle miles traveled was .43 in 2002. The national rate for the same year was .62. The figures for calendar year 2003 are not finalized, however, improvements are anticipated.

Pedestrian crashes represent the second largest category of motor vehicle fatalities and injuries. High risk groups for pedestrian injuries and fatalities include the elderly and children. Individuals over the age of 65 and under the age of 19 account for the highest percentage of pedestrian injuries and fatalities. Pedestrian fatalities in calendar year 2003 are at a total of 146. The percentage of pedestrian fatalities represent 22 percent of all highway fatalities.

The use of seat belts by occupants of motor vehicles is one of the most effective ways of reducing traffic fatalities and injuries. The amendments to the New Jersey seat belt law came into effect in 2000 and changed the conditions of enforcement from a secondary to a primary offense. As other states have experienced, the change to primary enforcement had an important impact on seat belt usage. Seat belt usage has increased by 17.9 percentage points from 63.3 percent usage prior to the implementation of the primary seat belt law in 1999 to 81.2 percent in 2003. This is the highest seat belt usage rate ever recorded in the State.

The overall trend has been a decrease in the total number of deaths despite the increase in the number of miles driven in New Jersey. A return to the downward trend is anticipated for 2003. The growing use of seat belts and child safety seats among drivers and passengers, heightened efforts in public information and education, and increased efforts in enforcement have greatly contributed to this overall trend. However, both statewide and nationally, incidents of drunk driving have increased. Program initiatives dealing with the problems, causes and solutions relating to drinking and driving will be pursued in the next fiscal year as will those related to pedestrian deaths.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Following is a summary of the specific projects and activities implemented in 2003.

I. Alcohol and Other Drug Countermeasures

Standardized training courses in the detection, apprehension, processing, and prosecution of Driving While Intoxicated (DWI) offenders were provided to law enforcement officers. A total of 29 training courses were held at various locations throughout the state with 718 police officers trained in all aspects of DWI from apprehension to prosecution.

	Beer	Wine	Alcohol
Volume	12 oz.	5oz.	11/3
Percent Alcohol	4.5%	11%	40%
Amount Alcohol	.54 oz.	.55oz.	.53oz.

Three Drug Evaluation and Classification training programs were conducted. A total of 91 police officers completed the class and were certified as Drug Recognition Experts.

The responsibility to train breath test operators and to periodically inspect breath test instruments is assigned to the Division of State Police. The Alcohol/Drug Test Unit (A/DTU), within the Division of State Police, spearheads the continual process of training and re-certifying police officers throughout the State to recognize alcohol and/or drug indicators present in suspected offenders of the law. A total of 1,214 police officers were trained in the five day basic breath test operator course. Another 5,574 operators were re-certified in the breath test re-certification class.

The A/DTU has also been engaged in establishing an Alcotest 7110 Advanced Evidential Breath Tester Training and Implementation Program. This program consists of providing training to the law enforcement community following the conversion of the presently used breathalyzers to the Alcotest 7110 Advanced Evidential Breath Testers. The program implementing the use of the new instrument has been pilot tested in Pennsauken by the municipal police department. A New Jersey Superior Court Law Division Judge has recently ruled that the new instrument is scientifically reliable and accurate and its results may be admitted into evidence. This decision will allow the State to move forward with plans to implement the Alcotest.³

The Division of Alcoholic Beverage Control continued to administer the Cops In Shops Program. The program allows undercover law enforcement officers to join forces with local retail establishments to deter the sale of alcohol to underage individuals and to stop adults from attempting to purchase alcohol for people under the legal age. Two initiatives were conducted during the year. The first was held in the Fall and represented municipalities which had a college/university within its borders, or a school in a neighboring town. The following 20 municipalities received funding: Absecon, Deptford, Eatontown, Egg Harbor Township, Galloway Township, Glassboro, Hackensack, Long Branch, Madison, Mahwah, Morris

³State v. Arnold Foley, et al., Superior Court of New Jersey, Law Division Camden County, December 12, 2003, Docket No. A45-02

Township, New Providence, Ocean Township, Piscataway Township, Princeton Borough, Ramsey, Rutherford, South Bound Brook, South Orange Village, Summit, and Teaneck.

The Summer shore initiative was held during the summer months in the following municipalities: Absecon, Beach Haven, Egg Harbor Township, Harvey Cedars, Lakehurst, Long Branch Township, Lower Township, Margate, Manchester, North Wildwood, Ocean Township (Monmouth County), Ocean Township (Ocean County), Pt. Pleasant Beach, Pt. Pleasant Boro, Sea Isle City Seaside Park, Ship Bottom, South Belmar, Stafford Township and Wildwood.

The 20 towns in the Fall initiative produced a total of 145 arrests while the Summer initiative resulted in 317 arrests. A total of 683 separate charges were lodged against those arrested. Of the 683 offenses charged, 331 were for violations by an adult purchasing for an underage. The other 352 offenses were discovered due to an initial arrest or investigation involving the attempted purchase of alcoholic beverages by or for those underage. The majority of arrests were persons between the ages of 18 and 20 years of age.

Apprehending underage drinkers and those that serve alcohol to them was the goal of law enforcement officials in Cape May County. Attorney General Peter Harvey and Director Roberto Rodriguez, at a press conference in July, presented the Acting Prosecutor of Cape May County with a grant to fund overtime costs of participating officers. Teams consisting of local police officers, investigators from the County Prosecutors Office and

Alcohol related fatalities have remained relatively stable in New Jersey in recent years. However, the Division feels that vigilant efforts must be ongoing to educate motorists about the dangers of impaired driving. To that end, the Division undertook a concerted impaired driving campaign, to coincide with the national “You Drink and Drive...You Lose” mobilization. The Division awarded grants to ten New Jersey counties. The grants funded sobriety checkpoints and roving impaired driving patrols by municipal and county police agencies during the mobilization period. The enforcement activities were augmented by a public information campaign, which included airing of “You Drink and Drive...You Lose: radio spots on radio stations throughout the state. There were 74 checkpoint programs and 152 roving patrols conducted during the campaign. The 4,219 hours of overtime worked resulted in 24,191 vehicles stopped at a checkpoint and 2,583 summonses issued.



An event held on December 19, 2002, focused on impaired driving as part of the national “You Drink and Drive...You Lose” mobilization which combined high visibility enforcement with community education. The event was held at the Puerto Rican Association for Community Organization in Jersey City. The message of the event focused on educating the Hispanic community that DWI is a serious offense and safety issue.

The Division of State Police also provided roving patrol enforcement programs with DWI surcharge funds. These enforcement initiatives produced a total of 1,692 DWI arrests as well as 13,956 seat belt summonses.

The Alcohol and Drug Education Program (ADEP) has been fully implemented at the College of New Jersey. The primary goal is to provide educational support services to the campus community and to create an atmosphere in which alcohol use is not the central focus of all social events. The program stresses the creation of an awareness of choice, personal responsibility and the understanding of consequences in deciding to use alcohol and/or other drugs.



The Peer Institute was held on June 20-22 and over 80 students and advisors participated in the event. The event was sponsored by the Division of Highway Traffic Safety. The following colleges and universities attended the Institute: New York University, Arcadia University, Alvernia College, Rutgers University, Richard Stockton College, New Jersey City University, Kean University, Moravian College, Manor College and LaSalle University.

The Rutgers Comprehensive Alcohol and Traffic Education and Enforcement (R-CAT) Program was conducted. The program consisted of law enforcement and education initiatives. Several two-man patrols randomly traveled through the campus to provide police presence and spot “drinking and driving” violations. The teams did patrol areas where arrests routinely occurred, inclusive of the fraternity neighborhood and on the New Brunswick Campus. Sixty-two designated patrols were available during peak periods of the school year and a total of 67 arrests were made. Two DWI checkpoint programs were also held during April and June. A total of 2,334 vehicles were stopped adjacent to the campus in New Brunswick. Two DWI arrests were made and several other motor vehicle violations were issued.

The education component was also implemented to reduce alcohol and traffic safety related incidents on the Rutgers University campus by conducting awareness workshops for the students, disseminating informational brochures in the campus community and through the distribution of alcohol and drug abuse awareness information on a specialized website for those who desired to privately access the information. The educational programs were conducted on all five campuses by community police officers. Topics included drug and alcohol abuse awareness, making informed choices, dispelling binge drinking myths and other alcohol abuse related information. A videotape on Alcohol Abuse Awareness was also developed by members of the Rutgers University Police Department. This multimedia presentation was used during many of the training sessions that the University Police Department hosted for the campus community and the general public.

The R-CAT Web Page continues to provide general information about the laws on driving while intoxicated, open container ordinances, penalties for convictions and available

resources for those who are seeking help with abuse problems on campus. The web site attracted over 1,200 visitors. The popularity of the web site hopefully means that students are becoming aware of the consequences of not acting appropriately on campus. A drug and alcohol awareness fact book was produced in both English and Spanish and was used for distribution by the Rutgers University Police Department.

II. Police Traffic Services/Speed Control

Fatal Crash Units were operational in the following counties: Camden, Cape May, Essex, Hunterdon, Morris, Passaic, Salem, Sussex and Warren Counties. Importance was placed on the need to create clear policies and procedures when dealing with serious injury and death-by-auto investigations. The program has provided for the purchase of computer hardware and software programs which have proven to be indispensable tools for timely and accurate reconstruction of fatal and serious injury crashes. The program was also responsible for building a corps of fatal and serious crash investigators by funding training for police personnel in basic and advanced crash reconstruction. There continues to be favorable responses from the public as well as the municipalities about the formation of the Fatal Crash Units.



Police personnel attended various training courses directly related to highway traffic safety and crash investigation. Formal training in crash investigation, vehicle dynamics and crash reconstruction was provided throughout the year.

The basic or at-scene course, which instructs officers on the proper techniques for recognizing and properly recording damages as a result of collisions on roadways, was attended by 325 police officers. The Crash Investigation II course placed an emphasis on vehicle damage analysis and vehicle behavior during collisions. This course was attended by 325 police officers. The third course, vehicle dynamics, attended by 175 police officers, provided attendees with advanced math as it applies to collisions and vehicular behavior. Three Traffic Crash Reconstruction classes were held at the following police academies: Bergen Ocean and Somerset. A total of 171 police officers attended the course. An additional 47 police officers completed training in motorcycle crash investigation courses as well as pedestrian and bicycle crash investigation courses.

The Division of Highway Traffic Safety, in partnership with the New Jersey Department of Transportation, New Jersey Turnpike Authority and the New Jersey Highway Safety Authority announced the "Take Five...Stay Alive!" safe driving educational campaign on November 26, 2002. The campaign, launched at the outset of the heavily traveled Thanksgiving holiday weekend, was designed to promote key traffic safety issues such as avoiding driver distractions, budgeting extra driving time and buckling up on every trip.



The Division of Highway Traffic Safety strongly supports the legislation signed by the Governor in July, 2003 that will improve highway safety in New Jersey. The “Safety First” initiative authorized the New Jersey Department of Transportation to designate “Safe Corridors” in New Jersey. Commissioner of Transportation was authorized to designate segments of state highways as “Safe Corridors” based upon crash rates, fatalities, traffic volume and other highway traffic safety criteria. Fines were doubled for motor vehicle violations, such as speeding and reckless driving, committed within the corridors. Half of all “Safe Corridor” fines collected are deposited in a new Highway Safety Fund. To be used exclusively for highway safety projects and programs, funds will be made available to State Police and municipal police departments for education, enforcement and related measures that foster highway safety.



Local, county and state law enforcement agencies launched an unprecedented year-round commitment to enhancing safety on the roads. The event held at Mercer County Waterfront Park occurred at the start of the “101 Critical Days of Summer” period between Memorial Day and Labor Day and included an announcement of several upcoming cooperative traffic safety campaigns.

The Division of Highway Traffic Safety, along with representatives from the Division of State Police, Department of Transportation and the Highway Authority held a pre-holiday weekend press conference on July 3, 2003 at the Molly Pitcher Service Area of the New Jersey Turnpike to unveil a series of new measures to enhance safety for holiday travelers.

Funds were provided to assist in fully implementing the Incident Command Center in Hamilton Township. In a joint effort to provide better service throughout New Jersey’s highways, the Division of State Police, Department of Transportation and Department of Environmental Protection joined forces by centralizing dispatch functions at the Troop “C” headquarters. The Division assisted in this endeavor by providing \$3.2 million to purchase communication equipment for the new headquarters.

III. Occupant Protection

An unprecedented number of local police departments participated in the Division’s May, 2003 “Click It or Ticket” seat belt mobilization. Two-hundred sixty eight police agencies in New Jersey conducted targeted enforcement of the state primary seat belt law during the two week enforcement mobilization. Sixty-nine of the participating departments received grant funding from the Division for their enforcement efforts. The other departments participated at their own expense. In all, more than 22,900 seat belt summonses were issued to motorists who were not buckled up.

In addition to the enforcement component, the State utilized \$500,000 in additional funding to conduct a “Click It or Ticket” radio advertising campaign. During a four-week period, which included the two-week enforcement mobilization, the Division was able to air 2,745 sixty-second radio spots on 54 radio stations in New Jersey, New York City and Philadelphia. The spots were produced in both English and Spanish.

Dr. Jeffrey Runge, Administrator of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Colonel Fuentes, Superintendent of State Police and other heads of police from New York, Connecticut and the New York Police Department, joined together at a press conference in May at the Empire State Building to announce plans for the “Click It or Ticket” safety belt campaign. Following the press conference, targeted seat belt enforcement programs were conducted in Elizabeth and Jersey City as well as other locations in the Tri-State area.

Seat belt usage surveys conducted following the May mobilization demonstrated that the program was a success. The seat belt usage rate in New Jersey rose to an all time high of 81.2 percent.

The Division demonstrated its commitment to child passenger safety by hosting a Child Passenger Safety Technician Conference in September. The event brought together more than 400 child passenger safety advocates from New Jersey, New York, Puerto Rico, Pennsylvania, Delaware and Connecticut. Conference highlights included workshops and expert speakers on issues such as transporting children with special needs, balancing education and enforcement, enhancing child passenger safety within inner city populations and hosting a successful child seat check event.



Funding was provided to the Sheriff's Office in Burlington, Camden, Cumberland, Monmouth and Union counties. In addition, 27 municipal police departments received funds to conduct child safety seat checkpoints and educational programs and provide materials to reduce the misuse, non-use and misinformation in the area of child passenger safety and seat belt use. Over 400 child safety seat checkpoints were conducted and approximately 50 educational programs were presented to representatives at hospitals, parent-teacher meetings and civic events.

IV. Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety

Nineteen comprehensive pedestrian safety grants were awarded during the year. These comprehensive grants funded pedestrian safety efforts relating to enforcement and education. The enforcement component paid for overtime so that police officers could patrol targeted high pedestrian crash locations to issue summonses to motor vehicle violators who's action put pedestrians at risk. The educational component provided funding to purchase pedestrian safety educational materials for delivery to high risk segments of the pedestrian population including children, the elderly and non-English speaking residents. These comprehensive pedestrian safety grants have helped to increase awareness of pedestrian safety.



A comprehensive Walk Safely Children's education curriculum and video has been produced. The program will target children in grades K-4. The program will be distributed primarily through the New Jersey School Nurses Association. A palm card as well as a poster will be made available. Approximately 400 copies of the kit will be distributed in the new year.

A statewide educational campaign designed to promote bicycle helmet use by cyclists continued to be carried out in partnership with the Brain Injury Association of New Jersey. The Brain Injury Association developed and carried out a new helmet program called the Brainy Bunch. The Brainy Bunch program now has a presence in 13 New Jersey counties: Camden, Passaic, Bergen, Hudson, Morris, Essex, Middlesex, Union, Ocean, Monmouth, Mercer, Somerset and Hunterdon. Six billboards were displayed for the first time from April 14 - July 15. The billboards featured a photo of the Governor and First Lady and were displayed in the following counties: Burlington, Essex, Middlesex, Monmouth, Morris and Passaic. The Association partnered with major hospitals as well as local cycling shops to distribute Brainy Bunch materials. The program was also supported by an interactive website that was developed, as well as extensive outreach through the media. In addition, a radio public service announcement was produced in both English and Spanish and distributed through the Division's contract with the New Jersey Broadcasters Association.

V. Community Traffic Safety Programs



Community Traffic Safety Programs were implemented in the following seven counties: Atlantic, Bergen, Camden, Cumberland, Morris, Ocean and Union. Funds were provided to support counties in their efforts to develop and implement programs to inform and educate the public of the dangers associated with traffic in their areas. Programs were administered through an established unit in the community and provided for public and private input and participation in an action plan to solve one or more of the county's traffic safety problems.

Highlights of the public information and education program included the ongoing partnership with the New Jersey Broadcasters Association. A DHTS contract with the

Broadcasters Association once again allowed the highway safety message to reach millions of New Jersey residents through radio public service announcements. In addition, various messages were also aired by Shadow/Metro Traffic. Topics that were addressed by the radio public service announcements included bicycle helmet use, work zone safety, school bus safety, Take Five Stay Alive campaign, Hero Campaign (Designated Driver Campaign), driver fatigue, child passenger safety, drinking and driving and cell phones. For the period October 2002 through September 2003, the Division received a total of 23764 spots (average of 1,980 per month) with a value of \$1,410,459, for an investment of \$155,000. The return on the investment was approximately 9:1.

The “Safety Cruiser” was successful in providing information to the citizens of the state and was displayed at various events throughout the year. The traffic safety bus was used in cooperation with the Community Policing Unit of the Division of State Police. The bus provided citizens with access to information and materials on all areas of traffic safety. The bus is equipped with radar and breathalyzer equipment, video and driver simulator equipment, child car seats and other materials. The cruiser was present at 25 events during the year. Approximately 4,000 individuals took the opportunity to tour and experience the various traffic safety equipment located on the bus.



A primary goal of the Division was to educate all residents of the state about traffic safety. To that end, the Division initiated an innovative program to begin bringing important traffic safety information to the State’s diverse population. The goal of the new outreach program was simple: To educate and encourage leaders of the diverse community to work with the Division in reducing property damage, injuries and fatalities and to ensure that the traffic safety message gets to every

community in the state. Overall, the Division distributed approximately 80,000 pieces of literature on traffic safety programs.

A series of meetings were held with leadership of three key diverse population: African Americans, Hispanics and Asian-Indians. The meetings were held to introduce community leaders to the Division and its programs and to discuss traffic safety issues facing the diverse communities. To culminate the outreach efforts, a Traffic Safety Summit was convened in June, 2003 to bring all of the leaders together for an open dialogue with traffic safety officials, the law enforcement community and other public officials. As a result of this initiative, strategic partnerships have been formed with the leadership of the diverse communities that will form the basis for targeted traffic safety programs at the local level in the months ahead. Other successes of the initiative included the active involvement and pledges of the following individuals and community leaders to promote the division’s mission and goal: Attorney General Peter Harvey; Seema Singh, Public Advocate Delegate; Secretary of State Regena Thomas; Shelly Mau, Advocate to the New Jersey Chinese Cultural Studies Foundation; Reverend Reginald Jackson,

Executive Director of the Black Ministers Council of New Jersey; leaders from the Pakistani community and other leaders from the Hispanic, African American, Asian Pacific/East Indian and representatives from the business community.

The Task Force on Driver Distraction and Highway Safety was created by Joint Resolution No.9 on January 15, 2002. Task Force members were appointed by the Governor and meetings were held throughout the federal fiscal year. The Division of Highway Traffic Safety served as the host of Task Force meetings and provided support as members deliberate and develop recommendations concerning the issue of highway safety and driver distraction, including communications technology and other non-technological distractions.

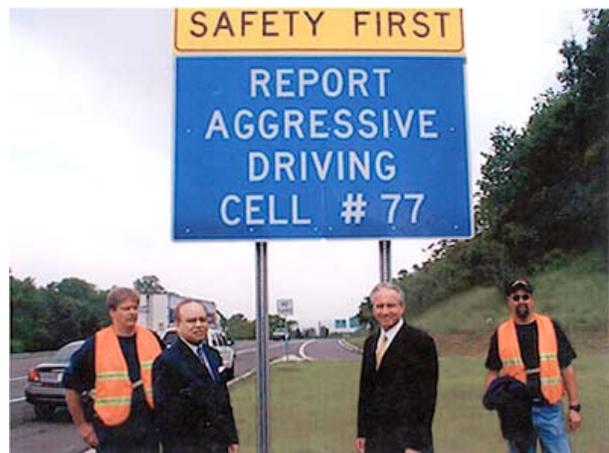
VI. Roadway Safety

Traffic interns were hired during the Summer months in Sussex County to assist the county traffic engineer to video log all the county roads. The video log is a record of road signals, pavement marking road surface conditions, intersection traffic, traffic signals, sight distance, vegetation encroachment on roadways and other safety issues. The video log is valuable to committees when discussing site plans or sub-division reviews.

Various types of audible pedestrian signals were made available for testing purposes. The different technologies available for signaling visually impaired pedestrians have been installed and demonstrated to various organizations including: The Association of the Blind, The Seeing Eye Institute, The University of Wisconsin-Madison, various mobility specialists from other areas of the country, and other traffic engineers and engineering consulting firms. The signaling devices will be reviewed and a final determination will be made on which device is most suitable in New Jersey.

The Roadway Safety Work Force Training and Resource project at Rutgers University effectively met the goal of a clearinghouse agency with the distribution of 8,754 technical resources to members of the transportation community. Work Zone Safety Kits and Flagging Kits were also disseminated to municipal road workers and law enforcement personnel. A total of 96 workshops were held during the period for 4,556 participants from the transportation community. The Utilities Industry attended the Intermediate Work Zone Safety Program and have tentatively scheduled the Advanced sessions for their employees in the Spring of 2004.

The Fourth Annual Work Zone Safety Conference was held on April 2-3. The goal of the conference was to raise awareness of the dangers that exist in highway work zones to both construction workers and the motoring public. Over 500 people attended the two-day conference.



In addition, the Division supported the State Police under the Governor's "Safety First" initiative and the use of digital highway safety signage (#77) to report aggressive drivers.

LEGISLATION

The following are legislative enactments during the past year that impacted highway safety in the State.

P.L. 2003, c. 55

Approved on April 23, 2003, this legislation upgrades the penalties for leaving the scene of a motor vehicle crash. The fines for persons who are prosecuted for “hit and run” offenses under the motor vehicle code were increased. Under the previous statute, a person who knowingly leaves the scene of a crash which involves a death or injury was subject to a fine of not less than \$1,000 or more than \$2,000 for a subsequent offense. The new law eliminates the two tiers and directs that the fine be not less than \$2,500 or more than \$5,000 for any offense. The law does not change the other penalties. The court is still authorized to impose a 180 day term of imprisonment and the violator is subject to a mandatory drivers’ license suspension.

P.L. 2003, c. 131

Approved on July 15, 2003, this legislation improves highway safety in New Jersey. The “Safety First” initiative authorized the New Jersey Department of Transportation to designate “Safe Corridors” in New Jersey. The legislation outlines a program involving new transportation policy initiatives, education, enforcement and significantly stricter regulation of commercial carriers.

P.L. 2003, c. 143

Approved on August 5, 2003, this legislation amends the State’s vehicular homicide statute to address “fatigued” driving. Vehicular homicide is committed when a person causes the death of another by driving recklessly. The vehicular homicide statute now provides that proof the defendant was driving after having been without sleep for a period in excess of 24 consecutive hours may give rise to an inference the defendant was driving recklessly. Vehicular homicide may be a crime of the first or second degree. The legislation is known as “Maggie’s Law.”

P.L. 2003, c. 164

Approved on August 27, 2003, this legislation permits municipalities to enact an ordinance providing that a person who is arrested for drunk driving shall not be released from custody until the person is no longer under the influence of alcoholic beverages, any chemical substance or any controlled dangerous substance. For purposes of the ordinance, a person is deemed to not be under the influence if the person’s blood alcohol content has been determined to be less than 0.07 percent or if eight hours have elapsed from the time the person was arrested.