



The NHTSA Traffic Records Team
Traffic Safety Information Systems Newsletter



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Section 408 Reauthorization FAQ page

The "Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users," better known as SAFETEA-LU, was signed by President Bush on August 10, 2005. The DOT TRCC is aware that there could be many questions regarding the administrative rules that govern "Section 408, State Traffic Safety System Improvements." In order to respond to those questions, a "Frequently Asked Questions" section has been developed on the US DOT TRCC web site (www.dottrcc.gov). Here you may ask the DOT TRCC Committee members questions regarding the State Data System Improvement Program and view an assortment of questions and answers. **Please visit this page, as it has been recently been populated with answers.**

TRB Conference - Data Requirements in Transportation Reauthorization Legislation

**December 8-9, 2005
Washington, DC**

This meeting will identify and refine the data issues associated with the program proposals in the legislation reauthorizing funds for surface transportation. The conference is designed for federal, state, and local officials and practitioners who manage data systems or who must assure the availability of high-quality data for their programs. Presentations will focus on the new and expanded requirements, including the new responsibilities that the data communities in state and metropolitan planning organizations are likely to face. The meeting also will offer an opportunity to examine the requirements across programs and to suggest efficient data strategies for transportation organizations. For more information about the conference, including registration fees and hotel reservations, go to <http://www.TRB.org/Conferences/ReauthoizationData>.

*The **Traffic Safety Information Systems Newsletter** is published by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, National Center for Statistics and Analysis, Traffic Records Team, as a resource for the traffic safety data community. The newsletter is published at least quarterly at the NHTSA Traffic Records web site and is also distributed electronically to those that subscribe on line at www.nhtsa-tsis.net/newsletter. Contributions to the newsletter or comments on its content should be sent to newsletter@nhtsa-tsis.net, but must contain contact information for the submitter: name, postal and email address, in order to be considered for publication.*

Just Talking With One Another Can Lead to Improving Safety Data Systems

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While a statement in a recent technology newsletter that, “¹four people meeting to make a decision is three too many” seems good for a laugh, as the message continued, there may be some truth in the remark. Often managers struggle to agree on issues because they are focusing on the different needs of their agencies. Number one on a ²list of rules offered in the article to encourage coordination ... Communication.

Last December, highway safety officials from West Virginia, Delaware, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Maryland, and Washington, D.C., came together in Greenbelt, Maryland for a Transportation Safety Forum. The focus of this two-day workshop was “Improving Data, Reaching Goals, Saving Lives.”

State participants included Management Analysts, Directors of IT, Traffic Records (TR) Coordinators, Safety Management Engineers, Crash Records Managers, Department of Transportation Representatives, Assistant Professors of Transportation Safety, Program Managers, Department of Motor Vehicles Deputy Directors, Highway Safety Office Directors, Trauma and EMS Researchers, and Traffic Records Coordinating Committee (TRCC) Chairs.

Concluding the highly successful workshop, next steps were discussed, including a suggestion for a scaled-back follow-up workshop next year. It is important as this workshop pointed out for states to share ideas and learn from one another as they move forward to improve their safety data systems. As the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) pointed out last year in their ³IPT Data Report, “State TRCCs should discourage reinventing the wheel”, instead focusing on proven technologies and methods. We can learn from our neighbors.

Another way for State Safety Data representatives to collaborate with their counterparts in neighboring states is to contact them directly, possibly even getting together on a periodic basis. NHTSA’s ⁴Traffic Records Web Inventory provides an excellent means for facilitating interstate collaboration. A Crash Records Manager, for example, can learn more about his or her counterparts in neighboring states, in addition to their contact information. Communication between other similar TR stakeholders can occur as well.

For a TR Coordinator or TRCC Chair, the TR Inventory provides a benchmark against which a State can measure its progress in seeking safety data improvements in relation to it’s neighbors, just as we see State comparisons on a National level as States strive to increase their occupant restraint usage rates, while decreasing their mileage death rates.

¹ Government Computer News, Sam Mok, Labor Department CFO, 6-6-05

² List of rules: Communication, Understand Roles, Don’t Cut Each Other Off, Titles Don’t Matter, Exercise Professional Judgment, Have Confidence in People to Get the Job Done, Find Common Interests

³ U.S. Department of Transportation, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, “Integrated Project Team (IPT) Data Report” (July 2004), 25.

⁴ <http://www.nhtsa-tsis.net/trsystems/>

2005 Traffic Records Forum

Another great Traffic Records Forum has come and gone, and we hope that you made it. If not, and you would like to know what happened you may review speaker biographies, abstracts, and presentations by visiting the ATSIP website at www.atsip.org, and select "2005 Forum". For those of you who attended, a CD Rom of all available presentations will be mailed to you in October. If you would like to obtain a CD and did not attend, you may contact Nicole Pappas at pappasn@nsc.org. A limited number of CD's will be available.

Palm Desert, California has been selected to be the location of the 2006 Traffic Records Forum and planning is underway. Further information will be available at the ATSIP website.

Traffic Records Strategic Planning Guide

NHTSA, FHWA, FMCSA and RITA have been working to develop a guideline and associated training to assist State Traffic Records Coordinating Committees in developing a State Safety Data Improvement Program Strategic Plan. This guideline and training will assist states to meet requirements for Section 408 funding, while also providing the State TRCC with a road map for their state safety data systems. When available, the guideline and training will be made available to the States through the NHTSA Region Offices.

Traffic Records 101 an On-Line Training Program

The NHTSA Traffic Records Team is aggressively working on providing guidance and technical assistance to the States by means of an on-line training program. A demonstration of this training was showcased at the 2005 Traffic Records Forum and featured at the Governors Highway Safety Association conference in Norfolk, VA. Access to the training will be available sometime in October and by visiting www.trafficrecords101.net. As the field of Traffic Records continues to transform through new technology and information, the curriculum will grow with additional modules and advanced levels. In order to stay up date, this information will be highlighted in the TSIS Newsletter and e-mailed to all registered subscribers.