



APPENDIX F

Federal Highway Safety Planning and Improvement Programs

The safety goal of the Department of Transportation is to promote public health and safety by working towards the elimination of transportation-related deaths, injuries, and property damage. The Federal Highway Administration's strategic safety objective is **to reduce by 20 percent the number of highway-related fatalities and injuries in 10 years (by 2008)**. In addition to the agency's safety goal, Secretary Slater has established a specific objective to improve large truck safety. This targets a reduction in the number of truck-involved fatalities by 50 percent over 10 years.*

The FHWA's key highway safety strategies include the following:

- **Promoting safety management processes:** Safety management processes will bring together, in a coordinated approach, the stakeholders that affect highway safety. This includes highway design, operation, and enforcement agencies; the motor carrier industry; and safety advocacy groups. FHWA will work with its partners and stakeholders to develop information and analysis systems to better identify the causes of crashes and develop crash avoidance programs to reduce or eliminate crashes.
- **Deploying lifesaving technologies on the highways:** FHWA will identify and promote the deployment of safety technology with particular emphasis on technologies that address high priority areas, including run-off-road, pedestrian and speed-related crashes. The long-term safety strategy is a technology-based systematic approach to enhance the safety of the roadway, vehicles, and users.
- **Focusing on commercial vehicle and driver safety*:** FHWA will focus on safety programs that identify and implement innovative and performance-based programs. The agency will promote safe driving practices in the vicinity of large trucks; build partnerships to improve motor carrier safety and performance of commercial motor vehicles and drivers; target enforcement on the highest-risk motor carriers; and identify new technologies to enhance the safety performance and productivity of the motor carrier industry.
- **Focusing on human behavior:** FHWA will use its resources to work on educational, outreach and enforcement activities designed to change human behavior while using the roadway environment.

*As of January 1, 2000 the responsibilities for large truck safety were transferred to the new Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA).

Motor Carrier and Highway Safety Action Plan*

In early 1999, the Office of Motor Carrier and Highway Safety developed an action plan for the next three years. The plan contains over 65 actions that are designed to focus the agency's resources and capabilities into areas of opportunity that have a high safety payoff.

The action plan directs attention to those areas of greatest concern—poor drivers, unsafe carriers, substandard vehicles, and highway hazards. The plan does not identify all planned actions—only those deemed important to reducing crashes, injuries, and fatalities.

The action plan is organized in five broad chapters:

- **Motor Carriers:** The plan describes actions and technologies that will increase targeted enforcement of high-risk carriers with the objective of bringing them into compliance or putting them out of business. It also identifies how to use penalties more effectively to sustain compliance; how to issue more efficient and understandable regulations; and methods for reaching out to industry to improve voluntary compliance.
- **Drivers and other Highway Users:** The plan describes programs, technologies and research that will reduce pedestrian involvement and vehicular crashes, injuries, and fatalities linked to driver fatigue and behavior.
- **Vehicles and Cargo:** The plan describes actions and technologies that will improve the general safety-worthiness of vehicles through streamlined, targeted, roadside inspections and new regulations.
- **Highway Construction:** The plan describes actions and technologies to identify and reduce run-off-the-road crashes; reduce speed-related crashes; improve work zones; and promote better safety management.
- **Border Crossings:** The plan describes actions that will improve motor carrier safety related to border crossings.

Highway safety investment and oversight are a shared responsibility. Renewed attention has been focused on the need for better enforcement practices, regulations, and procedures; more effective application of new technologies; better data; innovative research; and stronger outreach techniques.

The action plan serves as a turning point for the Department to review what's being done; reprioritize and change how it's being done; identify new technologies; increase the agency's knowledge of safety; and change the organizational structure to take advantage of safety opportunities. The action plan is also a commitment to working with Congress, state officials, the motor carrier industry, other safety agencies, motor vehicle manufacturers, and the public to reduce injuries and fatalities.

*As of January 1, 2000 the responsibilities for large truck safety were transferred to the new FMCSA. The new Safety Core Business Unit in FHWA will be responsible for the remaining action items pertaining to highway safety.

Rail-Highway Crossings Program and Hazard Elimination Program

There are also specific safety improvement efforts legislated under 23 U.S.C. Section 130 (Rail-Highway Crossings Program) and 23 U.S.C. Section 152 (Hazard Elimination Program). Since the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA), the Rail-Highway Crossings and Hazard Elimination Programs are no longer separately funded. The ISTEA set aside 10 percent of the funds apportioned for the Surface Transportation Program for the States to carry out Sections 130 and 152.

Since the Rail-Highway Crossings Program began in FY 1974, over \$3.47 billion has been obligated by the States. States have implemented more than 32,000 projects, primarily for the installation of signs and markings, flashing light signals, automatic gates, and crossing surface improvements.

Since the Hazard Elimination Program began in FY 1974, over \$4.81 billion has been obligated. More than 35,000 projects have been implemented under this program. These projects consist primarily of improving traffic channelization; installing and upgrading traffic signals; installing guardrail and median barriers; widening the traveled-way and/or shoulders; improving pavement skid resistance; installing impact attenuators; and placing or upgrading pavement markings.

State and Community Highway Safety Grants

The 402 program began in 1966 and is the joint responsibility of FHWA and NHTSA. (See 23 U.S.C. 402). State and Community Highway Safety grants are apportioned to the States to pay for the non-construction costs of highway safety programs aimed at the reduction of injuries, deaths, and property damage from motor vehicle accidents. These projects generally consist of developing or upgrading traffic record systems; collecting and analyzing data; conducting traffic engineering studies and analyses; developing technical guides and materials for States and local highway agencies; developing work zone safety programs; encouraging the use of safety belts and child safety seats; developing roadway safety public outreach campaigns; reducing impaired drivers; developing programs to combat drivers who speed or drive impaired; and developing programs to reduce aggressive driving.