

Traffic Records Coordinating Committee Meeting Minutes
Wednesday December 3, 2008
In Room 161 NC DOT Building in Garner, NC

Present: Brian Mayhew, Sharon Schiro, John Stokes, Ethel Keen, Chad Lohmeier, Wanda Thomas, Joe Geigle, Greg Hayes, Scott Parrish, Greg Ferrara, Ron Hughes, Bill Hunter, and Eric Rodgman.

9:37 am Brian Mayhew welcomed the members and had everyone introduce themselves with their name, and the agency.

9:42 am John Stokes provided a quick update on the 408 money and the project activities underway. John noted that NC had been awarded an additional \$633,189. About \$328K was being used to acquire printers for the AOC eCITATION system for LE vehicles. Within NC DOT TE, money was being used to support systems improvements and the NC TRCC support from HSRC for the web page, meetings, and data access. John noted that the efforts so far should be reflected in the increase of electronic crash reports being submitted and more e-citations being issued. In addition, the support for Traffic Records workshops project to improve crash data integrity may get started in 2009. John added that there was an NHTSA regional meeting scheduled for January in Washington DC.

Brian showed the committee a copy of the new NC Resource Guide created by an NCSU student and Professor Joe Hummer. This document provides information on the data owners but not users. An electronic version will be put on the website.

Joe Geigle and Cliff Braam have been visiting select sites (such as Granite Falls, NC) looking into crash data problems and how to solve them. Some LE agents have been unhappy with TraCs and don't want to use it. Wanda added that it would be very important to bring along current users who have overcome their resistance to help tout the new system. John Stokes added that the GHSP LE network could be a great source for locating LE candidates in different parts on NC.

9:57 am Ethel Keen gave an update on the "Gap Analysis" effort. This effort involves reconciling the data differences (called gaps) occurring between the crash data, the FARS data, and the SafetyNet data. Ron Hughes added a concern that the license class for heavy trucks was not being captured. Ethel noted that it should appear in the crash data beginning in 2009.

10:05 am Wanda Thomas noted that AOC had initially purchased 750 printers for LE (425 Pentax and 325 HP). With the money saved on better pricing from the vendors, AOC purchased 250 additional printers. Total = 1000.

10:07 am Brian introduced Major Greg Hayes of the NC SHP. Major Hayes noted that NC fatalities were down significantly so far in 2008 – down 219 from this point last year. Work Zone fatalities were also down from 5 to 0 so far in 2008.

He noted that 775 troopers have been trained on the use of TraCs so far and it should reach 900 by the end of January 2009. By the end of 2009, all troopers will have been trained. At this point, Sgt Parrish is the key contact for questions, etc. So far 21,000+ electronic crash reports have been submitted.

Major Hayes added that there are plans to get the coordinates for the arrest citation.

Another major issue is the continuing increase in animal (deer) collisions in NC.

A new issue for the SHP is investigating crashes occurring in small incorporated towns who hire LE to patrol, but are not trained to do crash investigations and write up crash reports. Citizens in crashes are now asking for the reports so they can show their insurance companies that the vehicle damage from a crash is legitimate. The SHP has done about 125 complex crash investigations for DAs, etc. This task requires traffic crash investigation specialists and time. SHP is becoming more of a data user. They use the 100 MVM driven and the Traffic Crash Facts to help with their work plans.

Bill Hunter asked about the use of the TAD manual; and how LE was coding the TAD severity and TAD location on the vehicle with an outdated manual (1986 was the last revision). Major Hayed noted that the officers are taken to junk yards and given a short description. He noted that the cost damage estimate was really a guestimate and often didn't compare to actual insurance estimates / costs.

Both Brian and Ethel noted that they wanted to receive all completed crash reports even if some are not legally reportable due to the \$ or location.

Major Hayes raised the idea of having a short crash report for cases like deer collisions where it isn't necessary to do a full report. Ethel said it could be done with the new version of TraCs. Others noted that this might lead to LE not filing out the complete form for all critical cases. Ethel added that the new version should be available around March 2009.

Currently, the NC SHP has purchased 160 Aircards to help with the electronic transmission of crash data. The service cost \$200K for the next 24 months. Major Hayes noted that CGEN (the current state network will go away in 2012). It is currently inadequate for TraCs. CGEN has about 95% coverage while the Aircards have about 40% so far. It was noted that the SHP needs the NC TRCC backing to the NC Legislature to convince them that this is an important initiative and to support them financially. The NC SPH need Aircards for all their troopers.

John added that as the SHP puts new MDTs in vehicles, the old ones need to be redistributed to small local LE units who don't have any computer equipment. Major Hayes will help with this effort.

Ron Hughes raised the issue of getting the location coordinates for all heavy truck crashes to help in their area. Ethel noted that that would require extra cost to the current TraCs system. It was agreed that it was important to find a way to use the capability that was now widely available.

This would help with data location consistency for crash, citation, and inspections events. Brian recommended that a new sub-committee be formed to help address this issue. The charge would be to create a "best practices" set of guidelines to help with obtaining accurate location data. Eric Jackson from the SHP, Greg Ferrara from ITRE, and Ethel Keen will help compose this new committee.

Chad added that the new Aircards have a built-in GPS locator – need the data captured. Wanda noted that the eCITATION already allows for the location coordinates. Ethel added that she would examine the national experience and recommendations.

Ethel noted that the proposal for the new, revised crash report form has not yet been written. She hopes to get that done in early in 2009. That proposal would look to get a facilitator to oversee the process. It would be nice to implement a new revised form along with the new TraCs system. She noted that NC would still want to meet all the MUCC requirements.

11:30 am New business:

Ethel noted that DMV will be going to a new user maintenance web version beginning in early 2009. Every use will need a unique NCID in order to gain access. This way the system can track every access to the data, etc.

Ron Hughes brought up the change in restrictions for 53 foot trailers -- they have been eliminated. Ron emphasized how important it is to get the actual trailer size whenever a large truck and trailer are involved in a crash. The upcoming Traffic Records Workshops project could help address this issue.

Two dates were selected for the next 2 NC TRCC meetings: Tuesday February 17, 2009 and Tuesday April 21, 2009.

11:40 Brian and Eric adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted – Co-chair Eric Rodgman.

Important upcoming tasks /dates / deadlines:

At this time, the NC TRCC plans to have the next two NC TRCC meetings on Tuesday February 17, 2009 and Tuesday April 21, 2009. The location for these meetings will be determined later.

Eric will send out the minutes ASAP.

For the minutes, prior assessments, and other NC TRCC information, please check out our

NC TRCC web site: <http://www.hsrb.unc.edu/nctrcc/>

If you have additions, deletions, corrections, etc., please email them to eric_rodgman@unc.edu
Thx.