

Executive Committee for Highway Safety (ECHS)

Meeting Minutes

September 18, 2015

Location:

Chief Engineer's Conference Room, Beryl Drive @ 9:00 a.m.

In Attendance: Isaac Avery, Lauren Blackburn, Billy Clayton, Joshua DeFisher, Randy Dishong, Daniel Findley, David Harkey, Brad Hibbs, Michael Holder, Terry Hopkins, Heather Jeffreys, Freddy Johnson, Kevin Lacy, Brian Mayhew, Don Nail, Chris Oliver, Timothy Peedin, Suraiya Rashid, LaRonda Scott, Harriett Southerland, John Sullivan, Nicholas Tennyson, Tony Wyatt

Task I/II – Call To Order/Introductions

Secretary Tennyson thanked everyone for coming and expressed his desire to promote the successes of the highway safety initiatives found throughout our state. Secretary Tennyson also asked Mr. Don Nail to provide a few highlights from the NC Highway Safety Symposium that was held on August 17-20, 2015. After pointing out some additional highway safety initiatives, self-introductions were made.

Task III – Fatal and Serious Injury Trend Update

Ms. Terry Hopkins gave an update on the Fatal and Serious Injury Trends (*pdf attachment Fatal and Serious Injury Trend Update Presentation*). While the statewide 2014 fatalities are still lower than the 2013 numbers, we continue to see an increase in the current year to date reported numbers and a flattening in our trend line over the past three years. Our 2014 serious injury numbers are above the 2013 numbers and we are also seeing a flattening in our trend line over the past four years. A review of the fatality rate and vehicle miles traveled trends, and year to date comparisons of fatalities and serious injuries for each emphasis area of our SHSP were also provided.

Task IV – 24/7 Sobriety Programs

Mr. Isaac Avery gave a presentation on some of the continuous alcohol monitoring programs throughout the country (*pdf attachment 24-7 Sobriety Programs Presentation*). It is estimated that only about 20% of the states within the USA currently have 24/7 Sobriety Programs. North Carolina has some work to do in order to increase the effectiveness of our sobriety program.

Task V – Vision Zero Task Force Update

Mr. Daniel Findley provided an update of the efforts of the Vision Zero Taskforce (*pdf attachment Vision Zero Taskforce Update Presentation*). The taskforce has been working to develop a slogan for Vision Zero and has provided feedback on the analytics tool. As the taskforce moves to the next phase, the ECHS will be asked to provide input on the Vision Zero website and selection of a slogan.

Task VI – Governor's Highway Safety Campaign Updates

- **Seat Belt Survey Results**

Mr. Don Nail and Mr. Joshua DeFisher gave a presentation on the 2015 NC Seat Belt Survey results (*pdf attachment Seat Belt Survey Results*). The results of 15 counties are required for the completion of our state's seat belt survey. NC achieved a 90.6% combined seat belt usage rate in 2014. However with the recent completion of our 2015 seat belt survey, our combined seat belt usage rate has declined to 89.9%. With the upcoming assessment cycle, the help of all of our safety partners is needed in order to once again achieve a 90% seat belt usage rate.

Task VII – Legislative Bicycle Safety Working Group

Ms. Lauren Blackburn gave a presentation on the efforts of the Legislative Bicycle Safety Working Group (*pdf attachment Legislative Bicycle Safety Work Group Presentation*). [House Bill 232](#) directed the Department of Transportation to study and make recommendations as to how the bicycle safety laws may be revised to better ensure the safety of bicyclists and motorists on the roadways. The working group has currently held two meetings and has future meetings scheduled in October and November. The Department has to report its findings and recommendations to the Joint Legislative Transportation Oversight Committee on or before December 31, 2015.

Task VIII – Current Safety Media Topics

- **National Safety Council “Increase in Fatalities”**
- **Wrong Way Driving**

Mr. Kevin Lacy, Mr. David Harkey and Mr. Chris Oliver gave a presentation on two recent media topics that have been in the news (*pdf attachment Current Safety Media Topics Presentation*). A recent National Safety Council (NSC) report indicated that NC’s fatalities are up 19% when comparing the first 6 months of 2014 to 2015. Mr. David Harkey and Mr. Chris Oliver noted that the NSC uses estimates instead of actual FARS numbers, which causes their trend percentages to be higher than if actual FARS numbers were used. Reports on fatalities due to wrong way crashes have also been in the news. Mr. Kevin Lacy stated that there is awareness of the countermeasures other states are using and that one of the ideas we are considering is to implement additional signage on the back side of existing posts in hopes of reducing the number of wrong way crashes on our roadways.

Task IX – Committee Members’ Responsibilities

Secretary Tennyson asked the committee members if there were any upcoming events they would like to announce and the following were provided:

- Mr. David Harkey: November 10, 2015 – “The Next 50 Years in Highway Safety” Transportation Symposium in Celebration of the UNC Highway Safety Research Center’s 50th Anniversary
- Ms. Harriett Southerland: November 20-22, 2015 – 33rd Annual SADD Conference 2015
- Ms. LaRonda Scott: December 3, 2015 – MADD National Day of Remembrance
- Ms. LaRonda Scott & Mr. Don Nail: December 5, 2015 – Annual “Tree of Life” Ceremony and Candlelight Vigil

Committee members were also requested to contact Mr. Chris Oliver if their agencies would like to share ongoing safety initiatives or any safety media topics at future ECHS meetings. All of our safety partner’s efforts towards reducing fatalities and serious injuries are much appreciated.

Task X – Confirmed Meeting Dates

The dates for upcoming meetings have been set as followed:

- **January 8, 2016 @ 9:00 am**
 - **May 13, 2016 @ 9:00 am**
 - **September 9, 2016 @ 9:00 am**
- Chief Engineer’s Conference Room
4809 Beryl Road
Raleigh, NC 27606**

If there is a need to reschedule any of the meetings listed above, we will let you know well in advance of the scheduled dates.