

# Executive Committee for Highway Safety (ECHS)

## Virtual Meeting Minutes

### September 2, 2022

#### **Location:**

Microsoft Team Meeting @ 10:00 a.m.

**In Attendance:** Isaac Avery, Angela Berry, Julia Casadonte, Anne Dickerson, Kimberly Eccles, Mark Etzbach, Mark Ezzell, Greg Ferrara, Wayne Goodwin, Heather Hildebrandt, Freddy Johnson, Elyse Keefe, Kevin Lacy, Nancy Lefler, Cheryl Leonard, Jon McCormick, Dale McKeel, Michael Messer, Becky Naumann, Chris Oliver, Kara Peach, Heidi Perry, Dale Privette, Tracy Russ, Laura Sandt, Jennifer Smith, Glorina Stallworth, John Sullivan, Shawn Troy, Billy Williams

#### **Call to Order and Introductions**

#### **Fatal and Serious Injury Trend Update**

Mr. Chris Oliver provided an update on our state's fatal and serious injury trends ([Fatal and Serious Injury Trend Update pdf](#)). Mr. Oliver noted that while the 2021 statewide fatality number is at 1,793 persons killed on our roadways, our year-to-date 2022 fatalities are currently trending downwards when compared to last year numbers. Currently our 2022 Year to Date (January-July) overall fatality numbers are lower than the 2021 comparisons in the majority of our 2019 North Carolina Strategic Highway Safety Plan (NC SHSP) emphasis areas. However, our current 2022 Year to Date (January-July) overall serious injury numbers are higher than the 2021 comparisons in the majority of our 2019 NC SHSP emphasis areas. Additional information on our statewide fatality and serious injury trends are available in the presentation materials.

#### **2019 NC Strategic Highway Safety Plan Implementation Update**

Ms. Kara Peach provided an update on the additional research that has taken place as part of the implementation for some of the 2019 NC SHSP emphasis area strategies/supporting actions ([NC SHSP Implementation Update pdf](#)). Stakeholders provided input on the evaluation categories which the project team used to finalize the list of white paper topics. The following white paper topics are currently in various stages of development: (1) explore the future of autonomous and connected vehicles in NC and identify opportunities of the State's Autonomous Vehicle Committee's efforts to inform other efforts, (2) identify successful strategies for accommodating older drivers and road users in other States and explore the application in NC, (3) what is a statewide speed management plan and can it work in NC, (4) best practices and lessons learned for automated enforcement activities in NC – Automated Speed Enforcement/Automated Red-Light Enforcement and (5) the importance of the graduated drivers' license (GDL) requirements for young drivers in NC. With additional support from the ECHS members for a couple of the white paper topics, development of the papers will continue to move forward with the final papers to be completed in 2023. Additional information on the update process is available in the presentation materials.

#### **Distracted Driving Data Collection Technology**

Mr. Mark Etzbach presented information on his company's distracted driving data collection technology. Acusensus has developed and delivered the world's first distracted driving enforcement solution. Their patent pending technology utilizes high resolution imaging and machine learning to

detect risky driving behaviors, including phone distraction and seat belt compliance. The NC State Highway Patrol recently used this technology to conduct two 3-day live enforcement pilots in June and August with favorable results for detecting risky driving behaviors. Acusensus is also currently assisting the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) with evaluating novel ways to measure driving distractions.

## **Vision Zero Update**

Ms. Elyse Keefe provided an update on NC Vision Zero activities ([NC Vision Zero Update pdf](#)). Using a Safe Systems approach to prevent traffic crashes, our state currently has sixteen Vision Zero Communities that have either been established or are starting up. The NC Vision Zero (VZ) team continues to develop resource materials for VZ communities, provide technical assistance and host statewide meetings, and evaluate VZ progress in our state. The team has also recently hosted the second annual VZ Leadership Institute in June 2022. As for next steps, the Statewide VZ Task Force is working on ranking and working through priorities to formalize the feasibility of implementing VZ strategies.

## **Agency Updates**

Ms. Nancy Lefler provided an update on some of the recent work done by the NC Traffic Records Coordinating Committee (TRCC). A statewide traffic records assessment was completed this year with the next one to be done in five years. The assessment found a lack of common performance measures across all agencies, therefore the TRCC is working on establishing the needed measures.

Mr. Jon McCormick presented information on NHTSA’s new Underride Guard Rules ([Rear Impact Guards pdf](#)). As part of the NHTSA rulemaking that was initiated in 2015, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration published a Federal Register notice that the rear impact guard must be inspected as part of the annual inspection of trailers. The final rules upgrading the requirements for rear underride guards were published in the Federal Register on July 15, 2022, and the final rule is effective on January 11, 2023, with a compliance date of July 15, 2024 (optional early compliance is permitted). The new rules amend the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards number 223 “Rear Impact Guards” and number 224 “Rear Impact Protection”. In view of the current truck underride safety improvements that are taking place the ECHS decided that a formal NC Underride resolution of support is not needed at this time, but the committee will continue to monitor truck side guard protection initiatives.

Mr. Mark Ezzell proposed and has been asked to lead the establishment of a Statewide Speed Management Task Force.

## **Future Meeting Dates**

- **January 13, 2023 @ 10:00 am (TENTATIVE)**
  - **May 5, 2023 @ 10:00 am (TENTATIVE)**
  - **September 1, 2023 @ 10:00 am (TENTATIVE)**
- Chief Engineer’s Conference Room  
4809 Beryl Road  
Raleigh, NC 27606**

*If there is a need to reschedule any meeting, we will let you know well in advance of the scheduled date.*

Meeting agendas, minutes and presentations are also available on the [ECHS website](#).