

# Executive Committee for Highway Safety (ECHS)

## Hybrid Meeting Minutes

### May 10, 2024

#### **Location:**

Microsoft Team Meeting @ 10:30 a.m.  
Chief Engineer's Conference Room  
4809 Beryl Road  
Raleigh, NC 27601

**in Attendance:** Isaac Avery, Daniel Carter, Anne Dickerson, Mark Ezzell, Heather Hildebrandt, George Hoops, Joey Hopkins, Kendell Jackson, Freddy Johnson, Yolonda Jordan, Terry Lansdell, Brian Mayhew, Lydia McIntyre, Dale McKeel, Aleem Mohammed, Brian Murphy, Chris Oliver, Laura Sandt, Shawn Troy

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

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

Mr. Brian Murphy provided an update on our state's fatal and serious injury trends ([Fatal and Serious Injury Trend Update pdf](#)). Mr. Murphy noted that our 2023 statewide fatality numbers are still currently down 6.0% when compared to our 2022 numbers. Our 2024 Year to Date (January-April) overall fatality numbers are currently lower than the 2023 comparisons in most of our 2019 North Carolina Strategic Highway Safety Plan (NC SHSP) emphasis areas. With the exception of the older drivers' category, our 2024 Year to Date (January-April) overall serious injury numbers are also currently lower than the 2023 comparisons in all our 2019 NC SHSP emphasis areas. Mr. Murphy also provided data on our statewide bicycle crash trends. Additional information on our statewide fatality and serious injury trends, including the NC SHSP emphasis area comparison percent changes, are available in the presentation materials.

#### **CY 2025 Preliminary Safety Performance Measures**

Mr. Shawn Troy presented information on the preliminary targets for our state's Safety Performance Measures ([CY 2025 Preliminary Safety Performance Measures pdf](#)). The targets for our state's five performance measures are based on the 2019 and 2024 North Carolina SHSP goal of reducing all fatalities and serious injuries by half by 2035, moving towards zero by 2050. We received the results from our state's Calendar Year (CY) 2022 Safety Performance Target Assessment and once again we have not met or made significant progress toward achieving our Safety Performance Targets. Therefore, we are in the process of developing a HSIP Implementation Plan for FY 2025 and we must also use obligation authority equal to the State's FY 2021 HSIP apportionment for HSIP projects in FY 2025. Our state's CY 2025 targets were also presented, and the final performance measures will be published once the 2023 Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS), Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) and crash data have been stabilized. Additional information on our 2024 NC SHSP update was also shared.

#### **GHSP Highway Safety Plan**

Mr. Mark Ezzell provided an update on the current Governor's Highway Safety Program (GHSP) Grants and Seat Belt Usage assessment ([GHSP Updates pdf](#)). With the mission of promoting traffic safety awareness and working to reduce crashes in our state, this is accomplished through grant funding, program safety initiatives and public engagement. Mr. Ezzell discussed the timeline that GHSP uses to review the applications and obtain approval for grants each Federal Fiscal Year (FFY). After reviewing over 150 grant applications, 100 grants totaling over \$17 million dollars were

awarded for FFY 2025. Some of the grant emphasis areas for FFY 2025 include a focus on safe systems, prevention, work zone messaging, technology grants, toxicology and expanding enforcement activities to underserved areas. Our state's 2023 seat belt survey has also been completed and the NC State University Institute for Transportation Research and Education (ITRE) has reported a 92.20% combined usage rate.

### **Highway Safety Trailers with Blue Lights Initiative**

Colonel Freddy Johnson and First Sergeant Kendell Jackson provided an overview on the Highway Safety Trailers with Blue Lights Initiative ([Highway Safety Trailers Project pdf](#)). Coordinated with other special enforcement projects, this message board initiative can broadcast safety and enforcement messages directly to high-risk drivers traveling along high commercial motor vehicle crash corridors. The current inventory of 50 boards are deployed along various interstate work zones and high crash corridors throughout our state. With various modes, the highway safety trailers can automatically change messages based on vehicle travel speeds. Additional information can be found in the presentation materials.

### **Work Zone Safe Driver Training**

Mr. Tom Robins presented information on the Work Zone Safe Training Initiative ([Work Zone Safe pdf](#)). Partnering with the Oklahoma Department of Transportation, Mr. Robins led the effort to provide training for teen drivers traveling through work zones. With the mission for every new teen driver to know about the faces and families behind the flags, cones, and flashing lights as they learn to confidently navigate work zones and share the road with first responders, this award-winning effort has quickly expanded to include other states throughout the country. Additional information can be found in the presentation materials.

### **State Toxicology Meeting Update**

Mr. Mark Ezzell provided an update on the State Toxicology Meeting. Coordinated by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), a meeting for all Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA) officers was held to discuss the toxicology issues seen throughout the country. Based on these discussions, quarterly Toxicology Task Force meetings are being planned.

### **Potential Legislative Items**

Mr. Mark Ezzell provided a brief update on some of the legislative items/bills filed during the current General Assembly's 2023-2024 Session. Some of the bills discussed by the ECHS did not make the last session's crossover deadline. A copy of the meeting handout has been emailed to the meeting participants.

### **Agency Updates**

Mr. Brian Mayhew thanked Secretary Joey Hopkins and Division Administrator Yolonda Jordan for signing the 2024 NC SHSP. In addition, Mr. Dale McKeel reminded everyone that May is National Bike Month.

### **Future Meeting Dates**

- **September 6, 2024 @ 10:00 am**
  - **January 10, 2025 @ 10:00 am (TENTATIVE)**
  - **May 2, 2025 @ 10:00 am (TENTATIVE)**
- Highway Building Room 150 (Board Room)  
1 South Wilmington Street  
Raleigh, NC 27601**

*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](#).