



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

BEVERLY EAVES PERDUE  
GOVERNOR

EUGENE A. CONTI, JR.  
SECRETARY

November 2, 2010

**To:** Jon Nance, P.E., Chief Engineer – Operations  
Debbie M. Barbour, P.E., Director of Preconstruction  
Lacy D. Love, P.E., Director of Asset Management

**From:** Terry M. Hopkins, P.E., State Traffic Safety Engineer

Handwritten signature of Terry M. Hopkins in black ink.

**Subject:** Changes to the Fatal Crash Program

The Traffic Safety Unit will no longer analyze and investigate every fatal crash on the State Highway System. This change is due to an ever increasing demand to manage resources and prioritize work, and will become effective on January 1, 2011. It is appropriate to say that we will review every fatal crash we are notified of, and will determine which of those crashes we will analyze and investigate.

A recent benefit/cost review of the fatal crash program led by Bucky Galloway, and with membership from both the Transportation Mobility and Safety Division and the Highway Divisions, indicated that several specific types of fatal crashes rarely resulted in recommendations or projects that would increase the safety of highway system users. These specific fatal crash types will be excluded from routine/automatic analyses and investigations, and are attached for your information. There may be some specific fatal crashes normally recommended for exclusion that may still be analyzed and/or investigated due to engineering judgment or other reasons.

A systematic administrative review of fatal crashes recommended for exclusion will be developed to monitor this process change, and to make future recommendations of other fatal crash type exclusions. If you have questions regarding a particular fatal crash, please contact your local Regional Traffic Engineer or me. Please inform your staff of this change and please let me know if you have any questions.

TMH/rjj

cc: Terry R. Gibson, P.E., State Highway Administrator  
J. Kevin Lacy, P.E., State Traffic Engineer  
Division Engineers  
Greer Beaty, Director of Communications  
Division Traffic Engineers  
Regional Traffic Engineers  
Bob Hargett, Special Deputy Attorney General

<b>FATAL CRASH EXCLUSION LIST</b>		
	<b>CRASH TYPE</b>	<b>NOTE</b>
1.	Crashes on freeways	Consider requesting crash analyses and investigating the crash if safety concerns are raised by the Division, Media, Government Official or citizen
2.	Crashes on private property (driveways, trails, non-public system streets)	
3.	Crashes in PVA's	
4.	Crashes on Municipal owned streets	Omit unless asked specifically by the Municipality to investigate the crash
5.	Crashes involving motorists eluding police	
6.	Crashes involving vehicles that are illegal for highway use (ATV's, Dirt bikes, lawn mowers, golf carts, etc.)	Omit all golf cart crashes unless the crash occurred in a municipality or resort community where golf carts are allowed to use state maintained roadways by statute
7.	Crashes involving competitive racing, playing chicken, etc.	Consider investigating if a citizen or public official raises safety concerns
8.	Crashes involving trees falling on vehicles or in roadway	
9.	Crashes involving objects that fall from other vehicles or enter from travel lane	
10.	Crashes involving broken down vehicles in travel lane	
11.	Crashes involving passengers that fall from a vehicle or bed of a truck without a vehicular crash occurring	
12.	Crashes involving pedestrians (over 16 years of age) struck at night on a rural road	Consider investigating if a citizen or public official raises safety concerns
13.	Crashes involving pedestrians (over 16 years of age) lying in the road	
14.	Crashes involving pedestrians (over 16 years of age) running into the roadway	Consider investigating if a citizen or public official raises safety concerns
15.	Crashes involving animal hits	Request a crash analysis for wild animal hits. If a pattern exists, consider investigating the need for crossing signs.