

**State of Alabama**  
**Fiscal Year 2007**  
**Annual Report**



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## **Overall Program Goal/ Accomplishments**

The overall strategic program goal (established for FY 2006 Highway Safety Plan) of the Law Enforcement Traffic Safety (LETS) Division of Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA) was to reduce the number of hotspots from a total of 976 to 897 (a reduction of 8%) over a five year period starting in FY 2006. By meeting this reduction in hotspots, the number of crashes as well as the number of fatalities across the state should decline in approximately the same proportion. The 976 baseline number of hotspots is from 2004 data.

For the FY 2007 highway safety program the focus was completely on SHARP crashes (crashes involving speed, alcohol use, or lack of restraint) due to the dangerous nature of the crashes and the possibility that the behavior of drivers involved in the crashes can be changed. The focus in FY 2008 will now shift to speeding and alcohol related hotspots only. While using restraints can save lives, the lack of restraint usage is not a cause of a traffic crash. With that in mind, the decision was made to shift focus and enforcement efforts to those crashes involving speed and alcohol use only in determining hotspots. Due to this change, our program goals were modified in the Fiscal Year 2008 Highway Safety Plan.

### **Police Traffic Service Programs**

**Total FY 2007 Expended Funds - \$1,204,982.63 - Funding Source – Section 402**

Our general implementation strategy has been to require the Community Traffic Safety Program/Law Enforcement Liaisons (CTSP/LEL) project directors to focus their plans solely on speed and alcohol hotspot crashes and the problem locations identified for their respective regions. By doing this, we have been able to focus on the biggest problem areas for traffic safety.

### Crash Summary

In Alabama in 2006, 1,208 people were killed on the highways, up from the 2005 total of 1,154 fatalities. Alcohol-related fatalities increased from 445 in 2005 to 475 in 2006. Speed-related fatalities increased from 502 in 2005 to 567 in 2006. In 2006, 30,527 injury crashes occurred representing a drop from 31,335 injury crashes in 2005. The total of all crashes for 2006 was 139,780 versus 143,993 in 2005. We experienced a nominal decrease in hotspots from 1046 to 1045 from 2005 to 2006. The total vehicle miles traveled in 2006 was 603.94 (100 million miles traveled), up from the 596.62 (100 million miles traveled) in 2005.

Although the overall number of crashes was down, the number of fatalities increased. We will take significant steps to reduce the number of fatalities in FY 2008, because we will not be satisfied with even one death on the road, and we will continue to put forth the maximum effort to make Alabama's highways the safest in the nation. Based on the preliminary reported fatalities for CY 2007, it appears there will a 4.5% reduction.

### **Community Traffic Safety Programs**

**Total FY 2007 Expended Funds - \$2,090,175.99 - Funding Source – Section 402**

There are nine Community Traffic Safety Programs (CTSP) regions in Alabama. These nine regional offices serve as the main coordination center for traffic safety programs in the State. These offices coordinate traffic safety enforcement, educational and training programs for local communities. Most of the funding received by the State Highway Safety office is given directly to these regions for disbursement to municipal, county and State law enforcement agencies.

The nine CTSP regions participated in two statewide enforcement campaigns in 2007 during the Memorial Day and Labor Day holiday periods. There were no statewide enforcement campaigns for the Thanksgiving or Christmas/New Year's holiday periods. However regional enforcement campaigns were encouraged and did take place during this time such as the 40 day campaign in the Mobile Region.

The CTSP project directors conducted regular meetings with law enforcement committees in their respective regions. These committees serve a number of vital functions that include, but are not limited to: reporting enforcement data, enlisting non-participating agencies to join the committee, and determining allocation of grant funds.

Alabama Office of Highway Safety continues to host quarterly meetings with the CTSP project directors. These meetings began in 2003 and serve a useful function as a coordination and information exchange meeting.

### **CARE Research & Development Laboratory (CRDL)**

**Total FY 2007 Expended Funds - \$283,379.79 – Funding Source Section 402**

CRDL developed and maintained the CARE program which is the search engine used for all traffic crash and safety analysis done in Alabama. In exchange for the support that CRDL receives from ADECA LETS, CRDL provided ADECA LETS with crash and traffic safety data throughout the year. This included preparing reports and grant applications as required and providing answers for data request from across the state that comes up throughout the year. CRDL also provides training for state and local deployment of e-citation.

### **Observational Survey of Occupant Protection and Child Restraint Use**

**Total FY 2007 Expended Funds - \$179,253.22 – Funding Source Section 405**

The Injury Prevention Division of the Bureau of Health Promotion and Chronic Disease, within the Alabama Department of Public Health, conducted the annual survey of vehicle seatbelt usage and child restraint usage in Alabama. The year 2007 marks the eighth year that the required National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) guidelines were followed for the survey procedure.

### Survey Design

The NHTSA sampling system incorporates a probability based, multi-staged, and stratified sampling approach. This approach provides data for rural and urban highways. This sampling system incorporates the four major metropolitan areas (Jefferson, Madison, Mobile, and Montgomery) in the survey. A total of fifteen counties comprise the survey area. In addition to the four counties listed above, eleven other counties were randomly selected from a pool of thirty-seven largest counties in Alabama. The counties included in the survey were Blount, Colbert, Escambia, Etowah, Houston, Jefferson, Lawrence, Lee, Madison, Marshall, Mobile, Montgomery, Shelby, Tuscaloosa, and Walker. Consequently, at least 85% of the state's population was represented by the study sample, so it was not necessary to survey every county in the state.

### **Occupant Restraint Observational Survey**

A total of two surveys were conducted between April and June. The first was conducted at the start of the Click It or Ticket program to establish a baseline usage rate, and the final was conducted following the Click It or Ticket program to measure the overall effectiveness of the program.

For the seatbelt usage survey, twenty-three sites in each of the fifteen counties were randomly selected based on the Average Daily Traffic (ADT) totals supplied by the Alabama Department of Transportation. In the survey, sites are placed into one of three categories: low (0-4,999), medium (5000-10,499), and high (10,500-75,000). For any county, the number of sites selected in each volume category reflected the total number of miles in that volume class. At least one site was selected from each volume category for each county in the survey sample.

In conducting the survey, each site was observed for one hour, using the curbside lane as the reference position. The observer determined driver's use or non-use of seatbelts, whether there was a person in the front outboard seat of each vehicle, and whether the outboard person was wearing a seatbelt. Additional data was captured to help categorize the gender and race of observed occupants and the type of vehicle.

### **Child Restraint Observational Survey**

The child restraint survey took place at ten randomly selected sites in each of fifteen counties. The counties and sites are the same as those in the CIOT campaign. At least one site from each ADT category is surveyed in each county chosen. Each site required one hour of direct observation. The survey required a total of 166 hours of direct observation. All children age five and under were observed, in any position in the car. The survey sites selected reflect urban and rural areas and road volume. As a result, the survey results measure a proportional distribution which resembles the statewide population.

## **Occupant Restraint Survey Results**

The survey team observed a total of 106,480 front seat occupants in the fifteen selected counties representing 2.32% of Alabama's population. The survey team observed 52,203 front seat occupants during the pre-CIOT period and 54,277 during the post-CIOT period. Alabama had a seatbelt usage rate of 82.29% during the post-CIOT period. Variance and standard error were calculated and considered acceptable. Mobile County had the highest usage rate of 96.22%, and Marshall County had the lowest usage rate of 70.11%. The survey further determined that females had a higher seatbelt usage rate as compared to males. The female usage rate was 89.7% and the male rate was 78.1%. According to race, non-whites had the highest usage rate at 84%, followed by whites at 83% and Hispanics at 79.4%.

## **Child Restraint Survey Results**

The survey team observed a total of 3,133 children five and under in any position in the vehicle, of those 2,892 was restrained. Alabama was estimated to have a child restraint usage rate of 92.3%. Mobile County had the highest rate of 97.44%. Lawrence County had the lowest rate of 84.67%, which is up 10% from last year's lowest of 74.4% in Escambia County. Race and gender data were not collected.

## **Child Passenger Safety (CPS) Program**

**Total FY 2007 Expended Funds - \$76,989.11 – Funding Source – Section 405**

Alabama continued with the CPS program that begun in FY 2006. In that year, we established a single CPS coordinator augmented with four instructors from the CTSP offices and tasked them with addressing CPS from a regional perspective. This program was continued in FY 2007. The goal of the CPS program was to get CPS certified personnel into all nine CTSP regions.

### Implementation Process

There was a very active training schedule for CPS classes during FY 2007. The certification class initially started as a four day class but was pared down to three days in June 2006. This will allow for more certification classes to be taught while no longer utilizing the two week two day split class. This increased training and the thirteen current fitting stations helps to reach the long range plan of having a CPS certified professional within 50 miles of every community in the state.

In order to keep trained CPS professionals current with their skills, recertification classes were an important part of the overall plan. These classes highlighted the changes in the CPS field since the technician or instructor originally took the course and made them the local subject matter expert for their community. Additionally, technicians with expired certifications were afforded the opportunity to take these classes. Once they completed the class and performed five specific car seat installations, they were allowed to go on-line to take the written test. Upon successful completion of all the above requirements, they were re-certified.

### Public Education

The CPS website (www.cpsalabama.org) has proven beneficial for disseminating information to instructors, students, and the general population. The website has a map of Alabama and the contacts for CPS information. It identifies individuals within the area who are capable of providing instruction and identifies certification and re-certification classes and car-seat check events. This website also serves as a resource center for media materials, printed materials, and CPS event materials.

Also the nine CTSP regional offices serve as resource centers. They were given reproducible poster and brochures promoting car seat safety and booster seat safety. Some of the CTSP personnel are certified CPS professionals. This cross training allows for regional coverage of CPS professionals to be located to participate on cars seat checks and other CPS events on a regional basis.

### Future Plans

The plan for FY 2008 is to continue to build on the existing CPS infrastructure. We have achieved success in our CPS efforts as the child restraint usage rate reached 92.3%. The goal is to reach a 95% usage rate. The program will continue to teach certification and recertification classes to further the reach of Alabama's CPS program.

## **Impaired Driving Paid Media Campaign**

**Total FY 2007 Expended Funds - \$577,479.60 – Funding Source – Section 410**

### Overview

Alabama participated in the “Drunk Driving. Over the Limit. Under Arrest” campaign to discourage impaired driving. The campaign is designed to increase awareness that sobriety checkpoint, saturation patrols, undercover officers and concerned citizens will conduct massive enforcement efforts, usually involving multiple agencies that target specific areas to identify and arrest impaired driving. The paid media campaign ran from August 15-19, August 22-26, and August 29-September 2. The campaign placed 18,599 paid media ads with 7,283 bonus ads airing on broadcast television, cable television, and radio. Also 17 electronic billboards were used providing 949,160 total hits.

The objective of the campaign was accomplished principally through the following tasks:

1. Development of the “Drunk Driving” marketing approaches, based on Nielsen and Arbitron ratings targeted toward male sin the 18-34 age group primarily and slanted toward rural areas and identified hotspots;
2. Produced television and radio advertising spots, both new and updated 30-second segments for both television and radio;
3. Negotiated placements of approved, paid “Drunk Driving” program broadcast television, cable television, and radio spots, in addition to free and public service spots. (Paid advertising for the campaign was placed with 26 broadcast television stations in five major metro areas, 51 cable stations and multiple radio networks that cover 87 AM and FM radio stations across the state.);
4. Updated the ADECA “Drunk Driving. Over the Limit. Under Arrest.” webpage;

5. Management of public relations efforts, including press releases, to stimulate media coverage (as requested).
6. Review and reconciliation of invoices for the campaign.

### **Impaired Driving Paid Media Evaluation**

**Total FY 2007 Expended Funds - \$25,000.00 - Funding Source – Section 402**

#### Alabama Alcohol Target Groups Surveys

The 2007 Survey of Alcohol Targets of Opportunity was a statewide telephone survey conducted for the ADECA. The study design called for a measurement of awareness, behavior, and perceptions concerning public information and enforcement programs of drinking and driving among drivers who had at least one drink in the past year. The public education effort consisted of paid advertising and increased enforcement.

The survey was administered to a randomly selected sample of approximately 500 drivers age 16 and older who had at least one drink in the past year. Interviews were conducted from September 11 to September 26, 2007. Schulman, Ronca and Bucuvalas, Inc. (SBRI), a national survey research organization, conducted the data collection.

The questionnaire was programmed on a computer assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) system. This system used up to five call-backs to determine if the randomly generated phone number was a household and up to eight call-backs were made to find a respondent in a household.

#### General Information

**Respondent Gender:** By observation of the interviewers, 48% of the respondents were male and 52% were females.

**Respondent Age:** Drivers were asked to indicate their age during the demographic portion of the survey. Drivers age 16-17 made up 1% of respondents; 18-34 made up 19%; 35-44 made up 18%; 45-54 made up 23%; and 55 or older made up 50% of the survey. The average age of respondents was 48.7.

**Respondent Race and Ethnicity:** Drivers were asked what racial category described them. The majority of drivers considered themselves to be white at 77%. Blacks made up 16% of the survey while American Indians or Alaska Natives were 4%. Hispanics were 2% of the survey and others were 2% as well.

**Respondent Education:** Drivers were asked for their highest educational achievement. College graduate or higher was chosen by 47%. Some college education was chosen by 24%; high school graduate was chosen by 23%; and less than high school education was chosen by 6%.



### Major Findings Among All Drivers

**Frequency of Motor Vehicle Use:** Drivers were asked how often they drive a motor vehicle. The majority of respondents (90%) said they drove almost every day while 9% drive a few days a week and 1% drive a few days a month or less.

**Type of Motor Vehicle Driven:** The majority of respondents (51%) drove cars. The next highest categories were SUVs at 20% followed by pickup trucks at 17% and vans or minivans at 9%. Only 25 of respondents answered for other vehicles.

**Frequency of Seat Belt Use:** Most drivers (91%) were their seat belts all of the time and 5% wear their seat belts most of the time. Additionally, 2% wear their seat belts some of the time while just 2% of the respondents answered rarely or never.

**Alcohol Use:** The majority of drivers (72%) answered that they had at least one drink in the past thirty days while 28% said they had not.

**Average Number of Days of Alcohol Use:** Drivers were asked how many days out of the past 30 days sis they drink any alcoholic beverages, which include, beer, wine or wine coolers. Of those driver who did have a drink the average was 7.4 days of alcohol use.

**Drove Within Two Hours of Drinking:** Drivers were asked if in the past 30 days they had driven a motor vehicle within two hours after drinking any alcoholic beverages. It was encouraging that only 18% of respondents drove within two hours of drinking while 80% did not. Of those that did drink, the average number of days in the past 30 days in which they did drink was 3.4 and the average number of drinks was 2.1.

**Driving When had Too Much to Drink:** When asked if they had driven when they thought they had too much to drink in the past 30 days, only 8% felt that they had driven when they had too much to drink whereas 90% felt they did not. A plurality of these drivers (40%) said that the number of days they drove after drinking was the same as usual, 20% of drivers felt it was higher than usual.

**Visibility of Police on Roads:** Drivers were asked if they had seen police more often, less often, or about the same over the past 30 days. The majority of drivers (55%) answered about the same and 40% of drivers answered more often than usual while 3% answered less than usual.

**Overall Likelihood of Being Stopped:** Drivers were asked what the likelihood of them being stopped after drinking was. The plurality of drivers (31%) felt they would not likely be stopped by police after drinking while 26% felt it was very likely of being stopped.

**Increase Likelihood of Being Stopped:** Nearly half of drivers (44%) said it was more likely of being stopped after drinking over the past 30 days.

**Seen or Heard Messages Encouraging People to Avoid Drinking and Driving:** The overwhelming majority of drivers (84%) had seen or heard messages encouraging people

to avoid drinking and driving only 14% said they had not. Of those who had seen a message 85% saw the message on TV, while 30% heard it on the radio. 18% of respondents saw a billboard or sign and 9% read it in the newspaper and 7% had a personal observation on the road or heard from a friend or was a police officer or judge. The majority of TV and radio messages (66%) were from commercials and 21% were public service announcements.

**Number of TV and Radio Messages Seen or Heard in Past 30 Days:** Drivers who saw or heard messages were asked if it was more message than usual to encourage people to avoid drinking and driving. Half of the drivers (50%) reported that they seen about the same number of messages while 43% said they had seen more than usual.

**Special Efforts by Police to Reduce Drunk Driving:** The majority of drivers (50%) had seen or heard of special effort by the police to reduce drinking and driving. Most respondents (66%) had seen the special effort by police on TV while 23% read it in the newspapers, and 21% heard of the efforts on the radio. Most drivers (55%) saw or heard news story about law enforcement efforts. 47% saw or heard a commercial and 14% saw or heard a public service announcement.

**Overall Seen or Heard about Police Checkpoints:** Fifty-seven percent of drivers had seen or heard about police checkpoints while 41% had not.

**Visibility of Police Checkpoints:** Over one in five drivers (22%) said they had personally driven past or through a police checkpoint.

**Name or Slogan to Prevent Drunk Driving:** Over one third-drivers (36%) said they knew the name or slogan of an enforcement program(s) that is targeted at drinking and driving.

**Unaided Awareness of Slogans:** Drivers were asked to recall a name or slogan of a program to prevent drinking and driving. Many drivers (33%) responded with "MADD/Mothers Against Drunk Driving." Only 7% responded with the current slogan of "Over the Limit. Under Arrest."

**Recall Seeing a Particular Ad:** Drivers were asked if they saw a particular ad. It shows different cars with drivers that are sitting in alcoholic beverages up to their necks as they drive down the road. The first car is full of beer, and the second one is full of martinis and the driver is eating olives. The last car is full of wine. The officer stops each car and asks the driver if they have been drinking. When they roll the window down, the alcoholic liquids start pouring out of the cars. The ad is making the point that it is obvious when you drink and drive that you will be caught. The ad then shows the officer arresting the drunken driver. The majority of respondents (63%) recall seeing the ad.

**Aided Awareness of Slogans:** Drivers were asked if they recalled hearing or seeing some slogans. "Friends Don't let Friends Drive Drunk" was recalled by 64% of respondents. The current slogan was recalled by 39% of drivers.

Enforcement of Drinking and Driving Laws: Most drivers (88%) asked felt it is very important to enforce drinking and driving laws more strictly, whereas 7% felt it was fairly important, 3% felt that it was somewhat important, and 1% felt it was not that important.

### **Impaired Driving High Visibility Enforcement**

**Total FY 2007 Expended Funds - \$211,310.52 – Funding Source Section 410**

In addition to the paid media effort, Alabama conducted a High Visibility Enforcement program for a two week period from August 17 to September 3. The enforcement program consisted of members from 249 law enforcement agencies from the municipal to the state level (Municipal Agencies: 168; County Sheriffs: 49; State Police Districts: 14; Other Agencies: 18). The officers worked 20,000 total hours and conducted a total 287 checkpoints. The total number of citations issued was 23,331.

### **Occupant Protection Paid Media Campaign**

**Total FY 2007 Expended Funds - \$785,823.97 – Funding Sources Sections 405 and 157 Innovative**

#### Overview

#### “Buckle Up in your Truck” Media Campaign

May 7 through May 13

For the third consecutive year, Alabama participated in a special program aimed at increasing seatbelt usage among pickup truck drivers and passengers. The Alabama Film Office placed paid media for “Buckle Up in Your Truck” from May 7 through May 13 in markets across the state. These spots were aired in priority markets in order to target key groups of individuals and were in addition to and ran prior to the start of the regular Click It or Ticket ads. 11,448 paid and 3,484 bonus commercials were aired in television and radio markets targeted at 18 to 34 year old males who drive pickup trucks and their passengers who typically live and/or work in secondary or tertiary cities and towns.

#### “Click It or Ticket” Media Campaign

May 14 through May 27

The Click It or Ticket campaign played a critical role in the effort to keep people safe on our nation’s roads and highways. The Alabama Film Office placed 14,098 paid media and 5,339 bonus TV and radio ads for Click It or Ticket from May 14 through May 27 in media markets across the state.

Electronic billboards were used to reinforce the radio and TV commercials. Nine e-boards were used in the major media markets providing 460,350 hits.

In addition to the paid media, a website (<http://adeca.alabama.gov/clickit/>) was updated for the 2007 campaign. This site included information on past campaigns, current seatbelt usage rates, seatbelt and child passenger safety laws, and the location of checkpoints and roadblocks across the state. The site also had a Spanish section to reach Alabama’s fast growing Latino population.

For both campaigns, paid media was engaged based on parameters outlined below:

#### Network Television

The buy focused on programming in prime time (M-F, 7PM-11PM), (SU, 7PM-10PM), late fringe (M-Su, 10:30PM-1AM) and sports (various). Early fringe (M-F, 4PM-6PM) and prime time (M-F, 7PM-8PM) were also considered.

#### Cable Television

There are a number of cable networks that can be effective in building frequency among men 18-34. Networks considered were Spike TV, Comedy Central, TNT, BET, MTV, and ESPN. Of these networks Spike TV, ESPN, and Comedy Central enjoys the highest composition of men 18-34 who drive a pickup truck.

The buy focused on programming in prime time (M-F, 7PM-11PM) & (Su 7PM-10PM), late fringe (M-Su, 10:30PM-1AM) and sports (various). Early fringe (M-F, 4PM-6PM) and prime access (M-F, 7PM-8PM) were also considered.

#### Radio

The campaign targeted that same key at-risk group, 18-34 year olds, particularly males. The buy focused on the following day parts: morning drive (M-F, 7AM-9AM), midday (M-F, 11AM-1PM), afternoon (M-F, 4PM-7PM), evenings (M-F, 7PM-Midnight). Selected weekdays day parts were considered as well.

### **Occupant Protection Paid Media Evaluation**

#### **Total FY 2007 Expended Funds - \$63,749.72 – Funding Source – Section 405**

Schulman, Ronca & Bucuvalas, Inc (SRBI) conducted telephone interviews after both campaigns. SRBI is used by a number of the states participating in Click It or Ticket for the same purpose. SRBI interviewed 500 persons in Alabama after the completion of the campaigns. The survey consisted of a 41-question interview.

The most important questions dealt with the respondent's use or non-use of seatbelts. Also important in the Buckle Up in Your Truck campaign was the comparison of the use of seatbelts among those in pickup trucks versus all other types of vehicles. Information collected in the phone surveys for those who primarily drive pickup trucks can be compared to data for all drivers.

Results were good; the most frequent answer for seat belt usage was "All of the time." It was given by 88% of the respondents interviewed. There is more encouraging news here as 94% respondents reported that they used their seatbelts "all of the time" or "most of the time" at the end of the Click It or Ticket campaign.

As for gender in the 2007 SRBI phone survey, females were more likely to "buckle up" than males (90% to 87%). Also male belt use increased by 1% when comparing the 2006 post campaign results with the 2007 post-campaign results. In contrast female belt use

decreased by 1%. This indicates that the campaign is potentially becoming effective in changing the behavior of the target male population.

In the Buckle Up In Your Truck post campaign survey 90% of the time respondents said they used their belt “all of the time.” There is more encouraging news as 94% of respondents reported that they used their seatbelts “all of the time” or “most of the time” at the end of the campaign.

### **Occupant Protection High Visibility Enforcement**

**Total FY 2007 Expended Funds - \$230,423.79 – Funding Source Section 406**

In addition to the paid media effort, Alabama conducted a High Visibility Enforcement program for a three week period from May 14 to June 3. The enforcement program consisted of members from 227 law enforcement agencies from the municipal to the state level (Municipal Agencies: 161; County Sheriffs: 44; State Police Districts: 14; Other Agencies: 8). The officers worked 30,248 total hours and conducted 365 checkpoints. The total number of citations issued was 39,370.

### **Traffic Safety Resource Prosecution Program**

**Total FY 2007 Expended Funds - \$94,990.47 – Funding Source Section 402**

The Office of Prosecution Services’ goal is to increase the level of readiness and proficiency for the effective investigation, preparation, and prosecution of traffic related cases involving impaired driving from misdemeanor offenses to traffic homicide cases. The purpose of the Traffic Safety Resource Prosecutor is to serve as a liaison while providing technical assistance, training, and counsel to prosecutors and law enforcement as well as information to communities regarding the dangers of driving under the influence.

A 2003 NHTSA study indicated that alcohol was involved in 40% of fatal crashes and 7% of all crashes. From 1990-2004, Alabama prosecutors experienced an increase of nearly 30% in the number of traffic cases. Alcohol related fatality rates have increased 10% in the last year vis-à-vis the national fatality rates. Impaired driving cases continue to increase in litigious complexity rivaling capital cases. Compounding all of the above-listed issues is a lack of resources in the criminal justice system to address cases arising from impaired driving and other traffic safety cases. Also Alabama District Attorney Offices are drastically understaffed and have a high turnover rate. Consequently, the most inexperienced prosecutors are handling the most litigiously complex cases in DUIs.

In order to combat this problem, a seasoned prosecutor was hired in April 2006 to serve as the Traffic Resource Safety Prosecutor (TRSP). The TRSP has been located at the Office of Prosecution Services to facilitate involvement with the prosecutors and law enforcement agencies in Alabama.

The TRSP has undertaken a number of vital projects to increase the success of impaired driver prosecutions. The TRSP has implemented a “Train the Trainer” program in an

effort to enlist the assistance of other prosecutors and law enforcement officers in an effort to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of future trainings as well as grow the scope of what prosecutors are currently being taught regarding traffic fatalities involving impaired driving. The TRSP also prosecutes assigned cases.

Additionally, the TRSP has met with Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD), CTSP project directors, and Department of Public Safety personnel to facilitate statewide efforts from an educational as well as enforcement standpoint. The TRSP also has helped draft legislation to strengthen Alabama's DUI laws and networked with other regional and national TRSPs to get a broader view of how other states are dealing with impaired driving.

As a result of the work of the TRSP, the prosecutors of this state are better prepared and equipped to handle DUI cases. They are also staying current on the legal changes associated with prosecuting these cases. The TRSP continues to be a valuable part of the overall effort to increase traffic safety.

### **Motorcycle Safety Program**

**Total FY 2007 Expended Funds - \$69,931.50 – Funding Source Section 406**

Alabama has experienced a rise in registered motorcyclists and a corresponding rise in motorcycle related fatalities. Motorcycle related fatalities increased from 62 in 2005 to 105 in 2006. The Alabama Traffic Safety Center (ATSC) purchased twenty-one training motorcycles and one trailer to expand its basic motorcycle safety training program. ATSC will be able to offer one additional class at each designated training sites.

### **Drivers License Suspension Appeals Program**

**Total FY 2007 Expended Funds - \$63,048.85 – Funding Source Section 402**

The Driver License Suspension Appeals Program was designed to handle the additional workload created by federal mandates requiring administrative suspensions of driver's licenses in DUI cases. The implementation of this legislation resulted in a backlog in the number of driver license appeals. This program was designed to reduce that backlog and reduce the period of time required to handle such cases so that impaired drivers were more quickly removed from the highway as was intended by the administrative license suspensions.

The goal of this program is to ensure timely driver license suspension thus protecting drivers on Alabama's highways. The objectives to meet this goal include the hiring of an attorney who dedicates 50% of their time to this program and the hiring of an administrative support person. The program also wants to maintain an average of five months to handle driver license suspension appeals and reduce the average number of pending appeals from 1500 to 1400 at any period.

The program was able to accomplish these objectives. At the beginning of this year there were 1,327 driver license suspension cases pending in the courts of Alabama. During the year, attorneys with the program disposed of 919 cases while 726 new appeals were filed.

At the end of the year, 1,135 cases were pending. The additional personnel were responsible for the decrease in the caseload. Although the new attorney had to split time between this program and the sex offender program the decrease in pending cases was achieved. A new database has also been developed for the program to more efficiently track the caseload.

### **Traffic Records Assessment – Implementation Program**

**Total FY 2007 Expended Funds - \$654,000.00 – Funding Source Section 408**

#### Definition

The Traffic Records Assessment program is a technical assistance tool that the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA), and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) offer to state offices of highway safety to allow management to review the state's traffic records program. NHTSA, FMCSA, and FHWA have co-published a Highway Safety Program Advisory for Traffic Records which establishes criteria to guide state development and use of highway safety information resources. The Traffic Records Assessment is a process for giving the state a snapshot of its status relative to that advisory.

The assessment report documents the state's traffic records activities as compared to the provisions in the Advisory, notes the state's traffic records strengths and accomplishments, and other suggestions where improvements can be made.

Upon request by the Law Enforcement and Traffic Safety Division (Alabama Office of Highway Safety) of the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs (ADECA), NHTSA assembled a team to facilitate a traffic records assessment. Concurrently the Alabama Office of Highway Safety asked the Administrative Office of Courts (AOC) to carry out the necessary logistical and administrative steps in preparation for the onsite assessment. A team of professionals with backgrounds and expertise in the several component areas of traffic records data systems (crash, driver/vehicle, traffic engineering, enforcement and adjudication, and healthcare data systems) conducted the assessment in 2006.

The scope of this assessment covered all of the components of a traffic records system. The purpose was to determine whether Alabama's traffic records system is capable of supporting management's needs to identify the state's safety problems, to manage the countermeasures applied to reduce or eliminate those problems, and to evaluate those programs for their effectiveness. The following discusses the three key areas regarding the ability of the present traffic records system to support management of the state's highway safety programs. Those areas are E-crash, E-citation, and the NEMISS

### E-Crash

Crash reports, about 140,000 annually, are submitted by all law enforcement agencies to the Department of Public Safety (DPS) for entry into the statewide crash file. The crash file was totally paper-based at the beginning of FY 2007. The DPS performed a typical data entry process. Upon receipt, the reports are subjected to human review to determine completeness and those not deemed sufficient for entry are returned. Despite some procedural decisions that delay year-end closeout of the file, the file is relatively timely and is generally available for analysis by May of each year. The file is provided to the University of Alabama which provides analytic support to the highway safety office and conducts other highway safety related research and studies. The Critical Analysis Reporting Environment (CARE) software, provided by the University is the primary analytical tool used throughout the state. The Alabama Department of Transportation also receives a copy of the file monthly to add location and other roadway specific data.

The DPS staff does not presently have adequate resources to apply the necessary quality control processes to ensure quality data. There is a lack of follow up on cases returned to law enforcement agencies for correction; there are no metrics produced to determine type of error; and no routine feedback is provided to agencies about recurring errors. Some time ago the DPS recognized the need to migrate to an electronic crash data collection and reporting environment and attempted to procure contractor assistance. The state recently completed a Traffic Safety Information System (TSIS) Strategic Plan 2007-2011. Included in that Plan is the “development of an electronic (e-crash) reporting system.” The Plan identifies the following goals:

- ∞ Assure through e-crash that all reports are 100% complete, 100% internally consistent, and are received within 48 hours.
- ∞ Generate considerable enforcement capability by reducing the time to complete the crash report form by 50%.

E-crash implementation will increase the existing level of quality in compliance with the criteria in SAFETEA-LU, especially the completeness, accuracy, and timeliness of the data, thus enhancing user confidence in the reliability of the data for data-driven decision making. This system will provide:

- ∞ Mechanisms to produce crash reports in the officer vehicle and upload the reports to a central server at the Department of Public Safety;
- ∞ Mechanisms to produce crash reports at post locations for various police agencies, as well as upload the reports to a central server at DPS;
- ∞ Mechanisms for continuing to provide paper intake of forms;
- ∞ The ability to accept electronic data transfer from commercial vendor crash reporting applications.
- ∞ Capability for GPS-based recording of crashes;
- ∞ Mechanisms for on-line viewing and purchase of completed reports;
- ∞ The ability to interface with a variety of analytical tools, including both statistical and GIS-based tools.



Currently we are in the process of fielding the e-crash system with July 2008 as the target date for completion.

#### E-Citation

The Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) coordinated the development of an e-citation application with the law enforcement agencies. The application has several features that provide for the efficient capture of citation information by officers and for uploading wirelessly to a database at AOC and subsequent uploading to the AlaCourt system which eliminates the need for hand entry by the court. The e-citation application is currently in use by DPS and many Sheriff and Police Departments. E-citation will continue to be fielded in FY 2008. The project is currently in phase four of a five phase deployment. In phase four, the system is fielded on the county and municipal law enforcement level. This phase will be ongoing through FY 2008. There has been tremendous progress made in the use of e-citation, and the system is being well received in the law enforcement community. In October 2006, there were 37,127 total citations recorded with 77% (28,588) being paper citations and 23% (8,539) being e-citations. By September 2007, the ratio had changed to 4 to 1 citations recorded as e-citations with 48,623 e-citations (80%) versus 11,833 (20%) paper citations (See Attachments I and II).

#### National Emergency Medical Services Information System (NEMSIS)

This project involves further development (refinement and beta testing) as well and subsequent implementation of new Emergency Medical Service Information System (EMSIS) software. Data presently collected by the Office of EMS and Trauma, EMSIS software, does not contain all the elements needed to meet compliance with the National Emergency Medical Service Information System (NEMSIS) data set. The new software release will be designed to include data points necessary to meet NEMSIS compliance.

The Alabama NEMSIS compliance work is getting closer to completion. Currently, we are in the midst of beta testing the new Alabama Electronic Patient Care Reporting software (ePCR). The Alabama ePCR will be available to Alabama EMS Providers, free of charge, as client (machine resident) software or as a Web-based version for on-line data entry. In mid May, we installed a beta test version of the software in Montgomery. Additionally, in June of 2007, the beta software was installed at a couple of other EMS Provider locations. The testing phase is not only being used to fine tune the ePCR layout, functionality and related documentation, but also to assist in developing specific installation procedures. Completion of the test phase will segue into launching a final ePCR version which took place at the beginning of August 2007. The Web-based product will lag behind the client-based software by about one month.

The University of South Alabama's Center for the Study of Rural Vehicular Trauma purchased GPS navigators to install in rural EMS ambulances. This project was initiated to decrease the time of rural EMS response time to crash scenes. It was found that rural EMS response time to the scene of a fatal crash were significantly longer (13.9 minutes) than rural EMS transport times from the scene of a crash back to the destination hospital (10.3 minutes). These times were found even though distances to the scenes of a rural

fatal crash (9.33 miles) and distances to the destination hospitals (9.10 miles) were not significantly different. In FY 2007, seventeen rural ambulances were equipped with GPS navigators to aid in the response to crashes. After an evaluation of this program, it will be determined if further funds will be allocated to this project.

### **E-Citation Local Deployment**

**Total FY 2007 Expended Funds - \$250,000.00 – Funding Source – Section 406**

The equipment for the deployment of the e-citation program to local law enforcement agencies was purchased for a total cost \$250,000.00 during FY 2007. The deployment to several local law enforcement agencies has begun in early Fiscal Year 2008 and schedules for total deployment is currently are currently being developed.

### **Traffic Records Coordination Committee**

Alabama has a properly constituted TRCC which provides the opportunity for its members to coordinate all traffic records projects and become informed about the component parts of and data sets within a traffic records system. The strategic implementation of the various components of the traffic records system will result in economies of scale through joint purchase power, eventual integration of new systems, and the cooperative development of data elements and data dictionaries.

Originally known as the Alabama Traffic Information Systems Council (ATISC), Alabama's TRCC has been in existence since July 1994. The ATISC was recently reorganized and renamed as the Alabama Traffic Records Coordinating Committee (ATRCC). The committee includes an executive level and a technical level. This two tiered level TRCC is critical for the state to properly develop, maintain, and track the progress of projects identified in the state's Strategic plan for Traffic Records that was required by the SAFETEA-LU legislation. The executive level establishes policies, sets strategic goals for project development, approves projects, and authorizes funding.

Technical level membership of the committee includes representation from all stakeholder agencies, and is charged with providing technical support, project implementation, and collaboration. The technical level has a chair with the responsibility for directing the implementation of the Traffic Records Strategic Plan.

### **Strategic Planning**

The TRCC submitted a Traffic Safety Information Systems Strategic Plan (June 2007-2011) and an application for a grant to the NHTSA in June 2006. Overall the strategic planning effort of the TRCC as reflected in the Traffic Safety Information System Strategic Plan is most commendable. There are some concerns noted in this assessment that we believe can be easily addressed by the TRCC. However, a crucial phase in the strategic planning process is the monitoring, progress reporting, and project management steps. There are several excellent software tools available for this phase that would allow the TRCC and in particular the Traffic Records Coordinator to pull together the necessary information for oversight by the TRCC and its executive committee.

### Implementation

This assessment is based on the NHTSA Advisory and will serve as the standard in traffic safety for the next four years. The TRCC has taken the recommendations of the Traffic Records Assessment Team to prioritize the projects within the Traffic Safety Information System.

### **FHWA Fund 163 Incentive Fund**

**Total FY 2007 Expended Funds - \$62,857.74**

These funds were used to purchase Alco Sensors for local law enforcement agencies. The Alco Sensors are being used for alcohol law enforcement activities.

### **Legislative Summary**

The Alabama Office of Highway Safety has been active with the State Safety Coordinating Committee. This committee was established by an act of the Alabama Legislature, the mission of the State Safety Coordinating Committee (SSCC) is increased safety, with particular focus on the problem of traffic accidents. This includes crash prevention, crash severity reduction and remedial actions (e.g., emergency medical services). More formally, the mission of the SSCC is to formulate, coordinate, and apply whatever SSCC resources are available to reduce crash frequency and severity (including remedial first responder services) so that there is a maximum reduction in fatalities, severe injuries, fatal and injury crashes, and property damage crashes. The SSCC is the primary liaison between the traffic safety community and the Alabama legislature, and its role in this regard is to assure that all available expertise, both within Alabama and nationally, is brought to bear to assure that the laws passed within Alabama are as effective as possible in accomplishing the SSCC mission.

The State Safety Coordinating Committee supported ten bills for the 2007 legislative session. The ten bills that SSCC supported were:

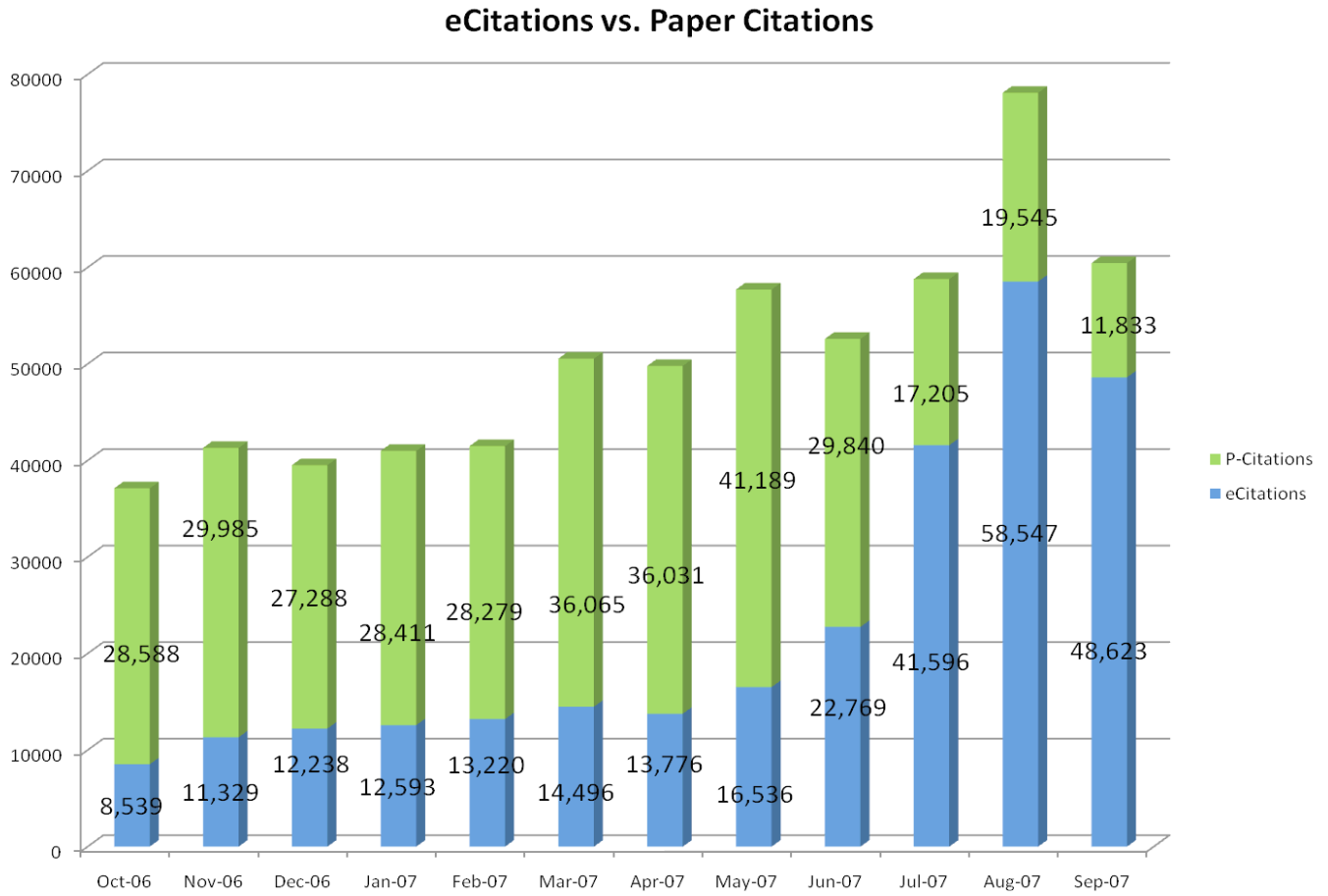
1. Aggravated DUI >.15 BAC / prior alcohol, out of state
2. No previous Drivers License
3. Attempting to allude
4. Interstate speed enforcement for cities under 19,000 in population
5. Arrest for misdemeanors not seen by law enforcement personnel
6. Seat belts for all vehicle passengers
7. Strengthen of graduated driver license
8. Restriction of use teen cell phones while driving
9. Red light cameras at intersection
10. Portable speed limits

Unfortunately none of these bills passed the Alabama Legislature in 2007. The SSCC will again support their passage in the 2008 session along with an ignition interlock bill.

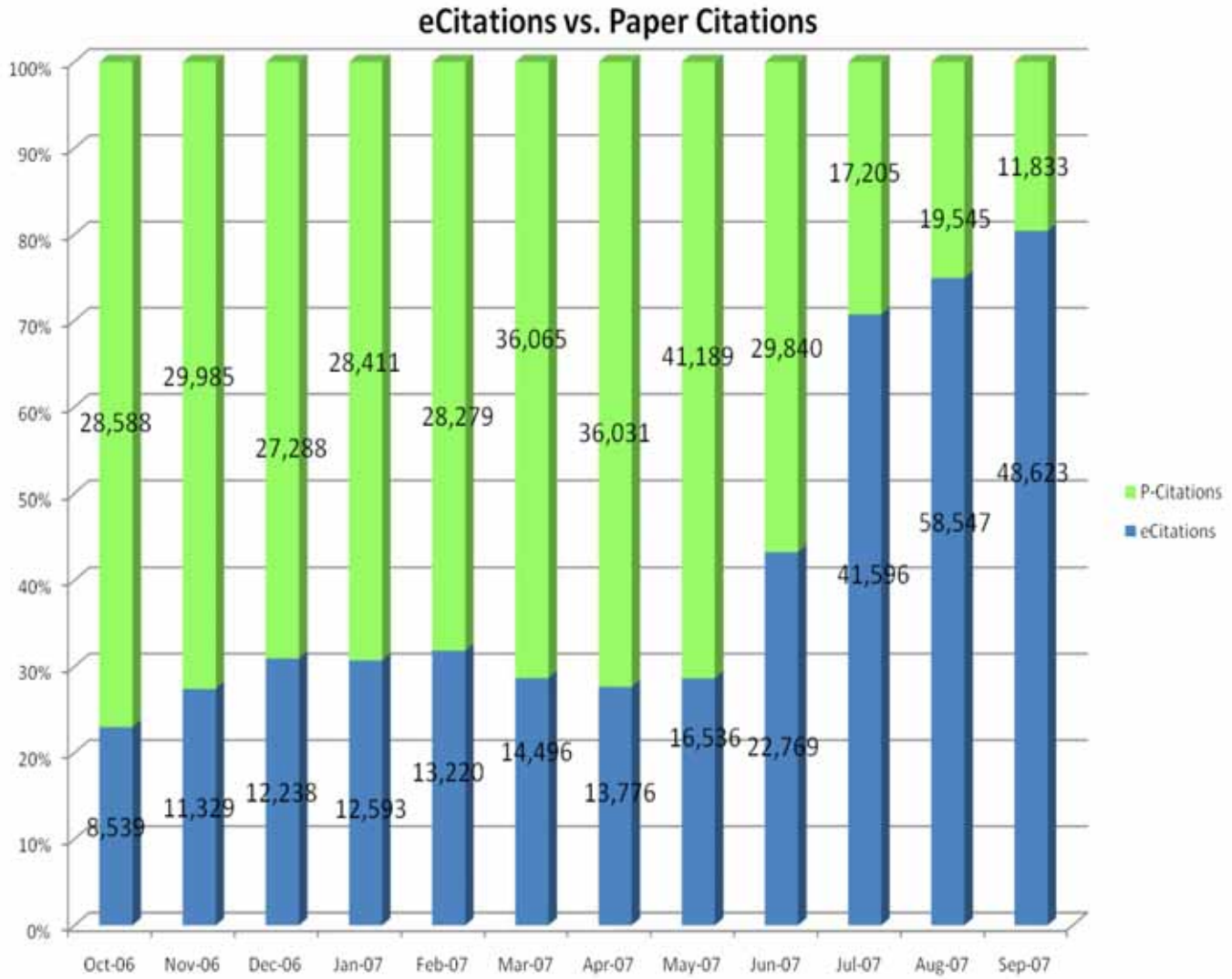
## **Looking to the Future**

The Alabama Office of Highway Safety will continue to serve as the lead agency for all highway safety issues in Alabama. Our vision remains to create the safest surface transportation system in the southeast by means of a cooperative effort that involves all organizations and individuals within the state who have traffic safety interests.

Attachment I – Total E-citations vs. Paper Citations



Attachment II – Percentage of E-citations vs. Paper Citations



Attachment III

Expenditures for Program Year 2007

Program Area	Section <u>402</u>	Section <u>405 (1)</u>	Section <u>405</u>	Section <u>406</u>	Section <u>408</u>	Section <u>410</u>	Section <u>157<sup>(2)</sup></u>	Section <u>163</u>	Federal <u>Expended</u>	State <u>Expended</u>	TOTAL <u>Expended</u>	
Planning and Administration <sup>(3)</sup>		110,645.97						3,534.52	(7,781.24)	106,399.25	167,838.76	27
Alcohol - Prosecution		158,039.32							70,638.98	228,678.30		22
Police - Traffic Services <sup>(4)</sup>		1,204,982.63			230,423.79		211,310.52			1,646,716.94	300,020.00	1,94
Traffic Records <sup>(4)</sup>		308,379.79			250,000.00	654,000.00				1,212,379.79	288,550.00	1,50
Community Traffic Safety Programs		2,090,175.99								2,090,175.99	1,225,647.54	3,31
Occupant Protection - Paid Media <sup>(4)</sup>			28,667.30		731,579.25			25,577.42		785,823.97	86,004.00	87
Occupant Protection <sup>(4)</sup>				319,992.05						319,992.05	361,793.10	68
Motorcycle Safety					69,931.50					69,931.50		6
Alcohol - Paid Media <sup>(4)</sup>							577,479.60			577,479.60	199,980.00	77
Unassigned State Match <sup>(4)</sup>											825,440.00	82
<b>Total:</b>		3,872,223.70	28,667.30	319,992.05	1,281,934.54	654,000.00	788,790.12	29,111.94	62,857.74	7,037,577.39	3,455,273.40	10,492

(1) - 405 J-2

(2) - 157 Innovative

(3) - State amount expended includes the matching Trust Fund Admin

(4) - \$2,000,000 in state expenditures were set aside by the Alabama Department of Public Safety as match for Highway Traffic Safety programs.