

SAFETY INCENTIVE GRANTS FOR USE OF SEAT BELTS							
Year	1997(ISTEA)	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Authorization	0	0	\$82M	\$92M	\$102M	\$112M	\$112M

Program Purpose

Section 1403 of TEA-21 established a new program of incentive grants (under Section 157 of chapter 1 of Title 23) to encourage States to increase seat belt use rates. A State may use these grant funds for any project eligible for assistance under Title 23.

Eligibility

A State is eligible for an incentive grant if:

- The State had a seat belt use rate greater than the national average for the two preceding calendar years.

If a State does not meet the criterion above, a State is eligible for an incentive grant if:

- The State's seat belt use rate in the previous calendar year was higher than the State's "base seat belt use rate." (The "base seat belt use rate" is defined as the State's highest use rate for any calendar year from 1996 through the calendar year preceding the previous calendar year.)

"State seat belt use rate" as defined in TEA-21 means the rate of use of seat belts in passenger motor vehicles in a State, as measured and submitted to the Secretary; passenger motor vehicles include passenger cars, pickup trucks, vans and sport utility vehicles. For calendar years 1996 and 1997, the Department will weigh the State-submitted use rates to insure national consistency in methods of measurement. For calendar years 1998 and beyond, States must establish their seat belt use rates in accordance with guidelines issued by the Secretary.

For purposes of this section, those jurisdictions defined as "States" in chapter 1 of Title 23 are eligible to receive Section 157 incentive funds; this includes the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.

Funding

Authorizes \$500 million over 5 years. The amount of funding each State is awarded will be based on calculations by the Secretary of the annual savings to the Federal Government in medical costs (including savings under the medicare and medicaid programs).

- A State which qualifies for a grant under the first eligibility criterion above will receive an amount equal to the Federal savings due to the amount by which the

State seat belt use rate for the previous calendar year exceeds the national average seat belt use rate for that year.

- A State which qualifies for a grant under the second eligibility criterion above will receive an amount equal to the Federal savings due to any increase in the State seat belt use rate for the previous calendar year over the base seat belt use rate.

The Federal share of projects funded with Section 157 grant funds is determined by the requirements of the programs to which the State allocates funds.

Program Administration

On September 1 of each year, the Department will determine which States meet the eligibility criteria. On October 1 of each year, the Department will allocate the incentive grant funds.

If there are any unallocated funds available in FY 1999, the excess amounts will be apportioned to the states for expenditure on the Surface Transportation Program (STP). If there are any unallocated funds available in FY 2000 through FY 2003, the Secretary is directed to allocate the funds to selected States to carry out innovative projects that promote increased seat belt use rates. States will be selected based on plans submitted to the Secretary. To the maximum extent practicable, the Secretary must ensure demographic and geographic diversity and a diversity of seat belt use rates among the States selected for allocations. The Federal share of an innovative seat belt project funded under this section is 100 percent.

This program will be administered by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.