

## SPECIAL MANAGEMENT REVIEW Summary Fiscal Year 2010

### **Background**

In April 2003, the U. S. General Accounting Office (the name was changed a year later to Government Accountability Office) issued a Report to Congress titled, “*Better Guidance Could Improve Oversight of State Highway Safety Programs*” (GAO-03-474). In April 2004, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) gave Regional Administrators an oversight process. One component of the process was the Special Management Review (SMR). The SMR is conducted in a State that consistently demonstrates performance worse than the national average and progress less than half of that recorded by the Nation as a whole. The SMR is one component of NHTSA’s oversight and quality assurance program conducted by its Office of Regional Operations and Program Delivery (ROPD). It was codified in the 2005 Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU).

SMRs look at State performance in NHTSA’s two highest priority areas, seat belts and impaired driving. Each review looks at management and operational practices and examines four critical areas of State performance including leadership, program management, planning, and evaluation. A Performance Enhancement Plan (PEP), developed collaboratively with the State, then defines strategies that will be used to implement recommendations or required actions that result from the SMR.

### **Summary**

During FY2010, the sixth year that SMRs were conducted, 18 States triggered SMR reviews, 12 for seat belts and 6 for impaired driving. Appendix A describes details about the process; information about specific States is listed in Appendix B. Of these 18 States, 8 States were exempted (seat belt SMR), two States were exempted (impaired driving SMR), two States had the seat belt SMR deferred until 2011, and two States had renegotiated PEPs. Two additional SMRs were conducted in States that were deferred from FY2009 (one for impaired driving, one for seat belts). Of the remaining SMRs, one was conducted for seat belts, and four for impaired driving. For one State, this was the second SMR in the same program area. Appendix B has a current listing of all FY 2010 SMR candidate States with status.

Similar to previous years, the number and type of specific strengths, program management considerations, and recommended actions reflected the uniqueness of each State. In sum, there were 12 strengths, 42 management considerations, 59 recommended actions and 3 findings (one finding was closed prior to the issuance of the final report). The detailed breakdown is listed in the following tables.

**Table 1. Summary of Program Strengths**

	Seat Belt (1 State)	Impaired Driving (4 States)	Total
Leadership	0	2	2
Management	0	5	5
Planning	0	5	5
Evaluation	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>

**Table 2. Summary of Program Management Considerations**

	Seat Belt (1 State)	Impaired Driving (4 States)	Total
Leadership	1	6	7
Management	3	13	16
Planning	1	12	13
Evaluation	0	6	6
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>42</b>

**Table 3. Summary of Recommended Actions**

	Seat Belt (1 State)	Impaired Driving (4 States)	Total
Leadership	2	8	10
Management	4	19	23
Planning	1	14	15
Evaluation	0	11	11
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>59</b>

**Table 4. Summary of Findings**

	Seat Belt (1 State)	Impaired Driving (4 States)	Total
Leadership	0	0	0
Management	0	3	3
Planning	0	0	0
Evaluation	0	0	0
TOTAL	0	3*	3

\* One finding was closed prior to the final report.

### **Highlights of Program Management Considerations and Findings**

The majority of program management considerations and recommended actions were in the management and planning areas. The most frequently identified issues were related to law enforcement, training, strategic planning, data-centered problem identification, and establishment of objectives and goals.

Under leadership management considerations, the need for strong statewide coordination was called for in two States and a Cabinet level champion in another. One Standard Field Sobriety Testing assessment was recommended.

The three findings were in the program management area. Two findings were related to an indirect cost issue with one State and resulted in the reimbursement of \$3,240 to NHTSA. The third finding was due to a lack of required documents to authorize the expenditure of Federal funds and was resolved by the State before the NHTSA Office of Regional Operations and Program Delivery submitted the final SMR report.

### **Evaluations**

States have the opportunity to express concerns and issues about the SMR process by completing an evaluation form after the review. For FY 2010, no States submitted SMR evaluations.

### **Discussion**

Since there are only five reports and recommended actions are State-specific, it is hard to make broad or general recommendations. Recommended actions mutually agreed upon by NHTSA and State are addressed in the PEP and monitored at least every six month by the NHTSA Office of Regional Operations and Program Delivery per the SMR guidelines. NHTSA is currently examining improvement opportunities regarding the SMR and oversight processes.

## Appendix A

### *Examples of topics covered under each focus area:*

#### **Leadership**

- Governor's support
- Governor's Highway Safety Representative/ State Highway Safety Office Director leadership (seat belt/impaired driving programs)
- Support of National campaigns, existing laws, policies and legislative efforts
- High-Visibility enforcement

#### **Program Management**

- Program coordination
- Staff training
- Resource utilization (e.g., funds other than Federal, as well as other types of resources)
- Allocation and use of Federal funds
- Program implementation
- Technical assistance
- Monitoring

#### **Planning**

- Data-driven problem identification
- Strategic planning with goals and performance measures
- Inclusion of partners in planning
- Planning sufficient programs
- Project selection process
- Use of proven countermeasures and best practices
- Enforcement
- Marketing
- Use of earned and paid media plans
- Outreach, including diverse communities

#### **Evaluation**

- Use of State and National data systems
- Behavioral and attitudinal surveys includes seat belt observation surveys
- Reporting
- Measuring and tracking performance
- Conducting and implementing recommendations of program area assessments

**Appendix B**

**FY 2010**

**Status of States Identified for Special Management Reviews, by Region**

<b>Region</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Program Area</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Summary- Reason for Exemption</b>
1	Rhode Island	Seat belt	exempt	SMR 2007
2	<b>Pennsylvania</b>	<b>Impaired driving</b>	<b>conducted</b>	
3	West Virginia	Impaired driving	renegotiated PEP	
4	Tennessee	Seat belt	deferred	Deferred until 2011 - New GR and possible new SHSO staff, Alcohol Assessment in 2010
5	Wisconsin	Impaired driving	renegotiated PEP	
6	Louisiana	Seat belt	exempt	SMR 2007
	Louisiana	Impaired driving	exempt	SMR 2008
	Mississippi	Seat belt	exempt	State is showing increased seat belt usage and decreased fatalities
	Oklahoma	Seat belt	exempt	SMR 2009
	<b>Texas</b>	<b>Impaired driving</b>	<b>conducted</b>	
7	Missouri	Seat belt	exempt	SMR 2007
8	Colorado	Seat belt	exempt	Unrestrained fatalities decreased past three years, exceeded national percentage restrained passenger vehicle fatalities, strong leadership and solid programs in place
	North Dakota	Impaired driving	exempt	SMR 2009
	South Dakota	Seat belt	exempt	SMR 2007
	<b>Wyoming</b>	<b>Impaired driving</b>	<b>conducted</b>	
9	<b>Arizona</b>	<b>Seat belt</b>	<b>conducted</b>	<b>Deferred from 2009 and also identified in 2010</b>
10	Idaho	Seat belt	exempt	SMR 2009
	<b>Montana</b>	<b>Impaired driving</b>	<b>conducted</b>	<b>Deferred from 2009</b>
	Montana	Seat belt	deferred	Deferred until 2011. Impaired driving SMR and MR being conducted in 2010

Note: SMR exemption requests and letters of approval are on file with NHTSA.