

SPECIAL MANAGEMENT REVIEW Summary FY06

Background

In April 2003 the General Accounting Office (now the General Accountability Office) issued a report to Congress titled “Better Guidance Could Improve Oversight of State Highway Safety Programs” (GAO-03-474). In response, NHTSA’s Regional Operations and Program Delivery (ROPD) office developed an oversight process that was given to Regional Administrators in April 2004. One component of the process was the Special Management Reviews (SMRs) designed to be conducted in States that demonstrate consistent performance that is worse than the national average, progress that is less than half of that recorded by the Nation as a whole. An SMR is one part of the ROPD State Highway Safety Program oversight quality assurance process.

In 2005, Congress enacted Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) that requires the Secretary shall...(1) conduct a program improvement review of a highway safety program that does not make substantial progress over a three-year period in meeting its priority program goals and (2) provide technical assistance and safety program requirements to be incorporated in the State highway safety program for any goal not achieved. Additionally, the Secretary shall make publically available on the Web site (or successor electronic facility) the Administration’s Summary Report of findings from management reviews and improvement plans. (note- this not a title)

Currently, SMRs are conducted in NHTSA’s two high-priority areas, occupant protection and impaired driving. Each review looks at management and operational practices and examines six critical areas of State performance including leadership, project issues, spending, legislation, State priorities, and evaluation as it relates to the specified program area (see Appendix A). A Performance Enhancement Plan (PEP), formerly referred to as an Improvement Plan, developed collaboratively with the State, lists strategies to be used to implement recommendations that result from the SMR.

Summary

During FY2006, the second year in which SMRs were conducted, 18 States were recommended for SMRs, 9 for occupant protection and 9 for impaired driving.

Of the States identified, 9 were exempted, 6 for having SMRs in FY 2005, 2 for having recent program assessments in the specified program area, and 1 because the State was involved in a comprehensive Impaired Driving Demonstration Project. Of the remaining SMRs, 4 were for impaired driving and 5 were for occupant protection. By request of the region, 2 of the 5 States requiring occupant protection SMRs, received hybrid occupant protection reviews, which were a combined SMR and assessment and are not included in this report. This hybrid version has not been repeated as it has been the preference to keep these processes distinct. Appendix B has a listing of FY 2006 SMR States.

The number and type of specific strengths, deficiencies, and recommendations varied considerably from State to State. There were a total of 135 strengths, 104 deficiencies

and 132 recommendations. It is interesting to note that although there were factors that caused each of these States to be triggered for an SMR, there were a number of strengths already in place, particularly in the area of leadership. Summaries of each category are depicted in Tables 1, 2, and 3.

Table 1. Summary of Strengths

	Occupant Protection (3 States)	Impaired Driving (4 States)	Total
Leadership	16	40	56
Project	15	21	36
Legislation	7	7	14
Priorities	3	7	10
Spending	1	7	8
Evaluation	4	7	11
TOTAL	46	89	135

Table 2. Summary of Deficiencies

	Occupant Protection (3 States)	Impaired Driving (4 States)	Total
Leadership	9	14	23
Project	8	21	29
Legislation	7	10	17
Priorities	5	8	13
Spending	2	10	12
Evaluation	4	6	10
TOTAL	35	69	104

Table 3. Summary of Recommendations

	Occupant Protection (3 States)	Impaired Driving (4 States)	Total
Leadership	14	14	28
Project	16	23	39
Legislation	9	16	25
Priorities	4	11	15
Spending	4	11	15
Evaluation	6	4	10
TOTAL	53	79	132

Highlights of Occupant Protection Deficiencies and Recommendations

As there were only three States in this category, it is difficult to make any generalizations. The majority of deficiencies and subsequent recommendations were in the leadership, project, and legislative areas. In the leadership category they related to law enforcement including use of law enforcement liaisons (LELs); expanded funding to law enforcement agencies; expanded partnerships including outreach to diverse communities; legislation; and State coordination of occupant protection through either a statewide task force or CIOT coordinator. In the project area, increasing the number of LELs, funding more overtime, increasing sustained enforcement, developing a strong statewide media plan, and program planning improvements were most frequently cited. Understandably, promotion of primary seat belt laws was the main issue in the legislative category. There was one recommendation for an occupant protection assessment and one recommendation for a child passenger safety assessment.

Highlights of Impaired Driving Deficiencies and Recommendations

As with the occupant protection SMRs, the majority of the deficiencies and recommendations from the impaired driving SMRs revolved around leadership, project, and legislative issues. Recommendations addressed lack of statewide coordination either through a task force or advisory board, and program coordination between Office of Highway Safety and Governor's Representative. In the project area, improved problem identification, judicial training, training of drug recognition experts, development of a statewide tracking system, and improving high-visibility enforcement through coordinated media, better reporting, and accountability. Legislation focused on strengthening of or passing graduated licensing, administrative license revocation, and high-BAC legislation. There was one recommendation for an impaired driving assessment.

State Evaluation

States have the opportunity to express their thoughts about the SMR process by completing an evaluation form after the review. For FY 2006 only 1 of the 9 States returned the SMR evaluation form.

Examples of topics covered under each area are listed below.

Leadership Issues

Dedicated position for program area leadership
Statewide task force
High-visibility enforcement campaign
Governor's support
Governor's representative support
Key law enforcement support
Outreach to diverse populations
Use of partners

Project Issues

Use of earned media
Use of paid media and development of media plans
Project funding
Problem identification
Use of LELs and LEL networks
Types of funded projects

Spending Issues

Funding of seat belt incentive programs
Sources of seat belt funding
Percentage of Federal funding dedicated to increasing seat belt use
Percentage of funds used for paid media

Legislative Issues

Impediments to legislative improvements
Efforts underway to promote legislative improvements
Utilization of partners for legislative improvements

State's Priorities

Are State's goals in alignment with problem identification?
Ranking system for projects
Are approved surveys used?
Is data consistent with MMUCC guidelines?

Evaluation Issues

What program evaluation is being conducted?
Does the State use NHTSA resources for evaluation?
Does the State have a staff person who can conduct program evaluation?
Has there been an evaluation of incentive programs?

Appendix B

**FY 2006
States Identified for Special Management Reviews
Listed by Region.**

Region	State	Program Area	Status	Reason for Exemption
1	New Hampshire	OP	exempt	SMR 2005
2	None			
3	West Virginia	ID	conducted	
4	Alabama	ID	conducted	
	Florida	OP	conducted	
	Kentucky	OP	exempt	Assessment 2005
	Mississippi	ID	conducted	
	Mississippi	OP	exempt	Assessment 2005
	South Carolina	OP	exempt	SMR 2005
5	Wisconsin	OP	conducted	
6	Arkansas	ID	exempt	SMR 2005
	Arkansas	OP	conducted	
	New Mexico	ID	exempt	Involved in Special ID Project
7	None			
8	Montana	OP*	conducted	
	Montana	ID	exempt	SMR 2005
	South Dakota	ID	exempt	SMR 2005
	Wyoming	OP*	conducted	
9	Nevada	ID	exempt	SMR 2005
10	Idaho	ID	conducted	

* Wyoming and Montana received the combined SMR/Assessment Review