

## SPECIAL MANAGEMENT REVIEW Summary FY08

### **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). These reviews are designed to be conducted in States that demonstrate consistent performance that is worse than the national average and progress that is less than half of that recorded by the Nation as a whole. The reviews are 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.

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. A Performance Enhancement Plan (PEP), developed collaboratively with the State, lists strategies to be used to implement recommendations that result from the SMR.

### **Summary**

During FY2008, the fourth year in which SMRs were conducted, 16 States were triggered for an SMR, 8 for occupant protection (OP) and 8 for impaired driving (ID). Four States were identified for a SMR in both OP and ID. Of the states identified, 7 States were exempted from having an occupant protection SMR and 7 States were exempted from having an impaired driving SMR. Exemptions were based on the fact that an SMR was conducted during the past three years, one State having had both an assessment and an SMR conducted within that timeframe. Of the remaining special management reviews, 1 was for occupant protection and 1 was for impaired driving. Appendix A lists FY 2008 States that were Special Management Review candidates.

It should be noted that during FY 2008 a review of all SMR processes and documents was initiated. As part of the interim process, a change in terminology of review results was instituted, with “program deficiencies” changed to “program management considerations” and “recommendations” changed to “recommended actions.” The changes in terminology are

reflected in this report. The completion of the review and update process will be completed in FY2009, at which time all approved changes will be implemented.

Similar to previous years the number and type of specific strengths, program management considerations, and recommended actions reflected the individuality of each State. There were a total of 8 strengths, 29 management considerations, and 33 recommended actions documented for the two involved States. It is important to note that there were factors that caused each of the listed States to be triggered for an SMR. There were strengths in place. Summaries for each category are depicted in tables 1, 2 and 3.

**Table 1. Summary of Strengths**

	Occupant Protection (1 State)	Impaired Driving (1 State)	Total
<b>Leadership</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
Project	2	0	1
Legislation	0	2	2
Priorities	1	1	2
Spending	0	0	0
Evaluation	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>8</b>

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

	Occupant Protection (1 State)	Impaired Driving (1 State)	Total
Leadership	2	5	7
<b>Project</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>8</b>
Legislation	2	3	5
Priorities	2	3	5
Spending	0	2	2
Evaluation	2	0	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>29</b>

**Table 3. Summary of Recommended Actions**

	Occupant Protection (1 State)	Impaired Driving (1 State)	Total
Leadership	2	5	7
<b>Project</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>8</b>
Legislation	2	4	6
Priorities	2	4	6
Spending	0	4	4
Evaluation	2	0	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>33</b>

**Highlights of Program Management Considerations and Corresponding Recommended Actions**

Similar to previous years, the majority of management considerations and resulting recommended actions were in the leadership and project areas. In both States, improved statewide coordination, either through a statewide task force, working group, or full-time impaired driving coordinator were again recurrent themes. Other recommended actions similar to those from previous years revolved around improvements to management, use of law enforcement liaisons (LELs) and increased strategic use of enforcement. One impaired driving assessment was recommended.

**Evaluations**

States have the opportunity to express their thoughts about the SMR process by completing evaluation forms after the reviews. For FY 2008, one of two 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 LEL's 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  
Use 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?

**FY 2008  
States Identified for Special Management Reviews  
Listed by Region.**

<b>Region</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Program Area</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Reason for Exemption</b>
1	None			
2	None			
3	Virginia	OP	conducted	
4	Alabama	ID	exempt	SMR 2006
	Florida	ID	exempt	SMR 2007
5	Wisconsin	OP	exempt	SMR 2006
	Wisconsin	ID	exempt	SMR 2007
6	Louisiana	OP	exempt	SMR 2007
	Louisiana	ID	conducted	
	Mississippi	ID	exempt	SMR 2006
7	Missouri	OP	exempt	SMR 2007
	Missouri	ID	exempt	SMR 2007
	Nebraska	OP	exempt	SMR 2007
8	None			
	Colorado	OP	exempt	Assessment 2006
	Wyoming	OP	exempt	SMR 2006
	Wyoming	ID	exempt	SMR 2005
9	Hawaii	ID	exempt	SMR 2007
10	Montana	OP	exempt	SMR 2006