



WASHINGTON  
*Traffic Safety*  
COMMISSION

# 2006 Washington Highway Safety Annual Report



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# Introduction

## Crash Summary

In 2005, following a record low in 2004, we experienced an increase in total traffic crash related deaths. Although the total number of fatal crashes was about the same as in 2004, the number of multiple fatality crashes increased in 2005.

## Accomplishments

Safety belt use rate increased to 96.3%, the highest ever recorded in the United States and possibly higher than any other country.

The Washington Traffic Safety Commission assumed a leading role in developing our state's first Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP.) This SHSP establishes short and long term traffic safety goals and performance measures for all state agencies with a traffic safety role. This data driven plan will insure that our resources are directed toward the highest priorities and that we employ only effective strategies.

## Challenges

The often delayed federal transportation budget reauthorization brought with it hope that both the funding and application process would be simplified and stabilized. Alas, the more things change, the more they remain the same. Applying for federal safety grants is still a complex, time consuming process spread over an entire year. Grant funding, if approved, also arrives sprinkled unevenly over a twelve month period. Adding to the federal funding "cone of confusion" are the seemingly endless continuing resolutions. This process makes it very difficult for the states to invest the taxpayers' dollars wisely.

CY 2007 will bring the first full year that Washington will operate with a state Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP.) For the first time, all state agencies with a traffic safety role will work with the same goals, performance measures, priorities and strategies. Implementing the SHSP will be a challenge and also a great opportunity.

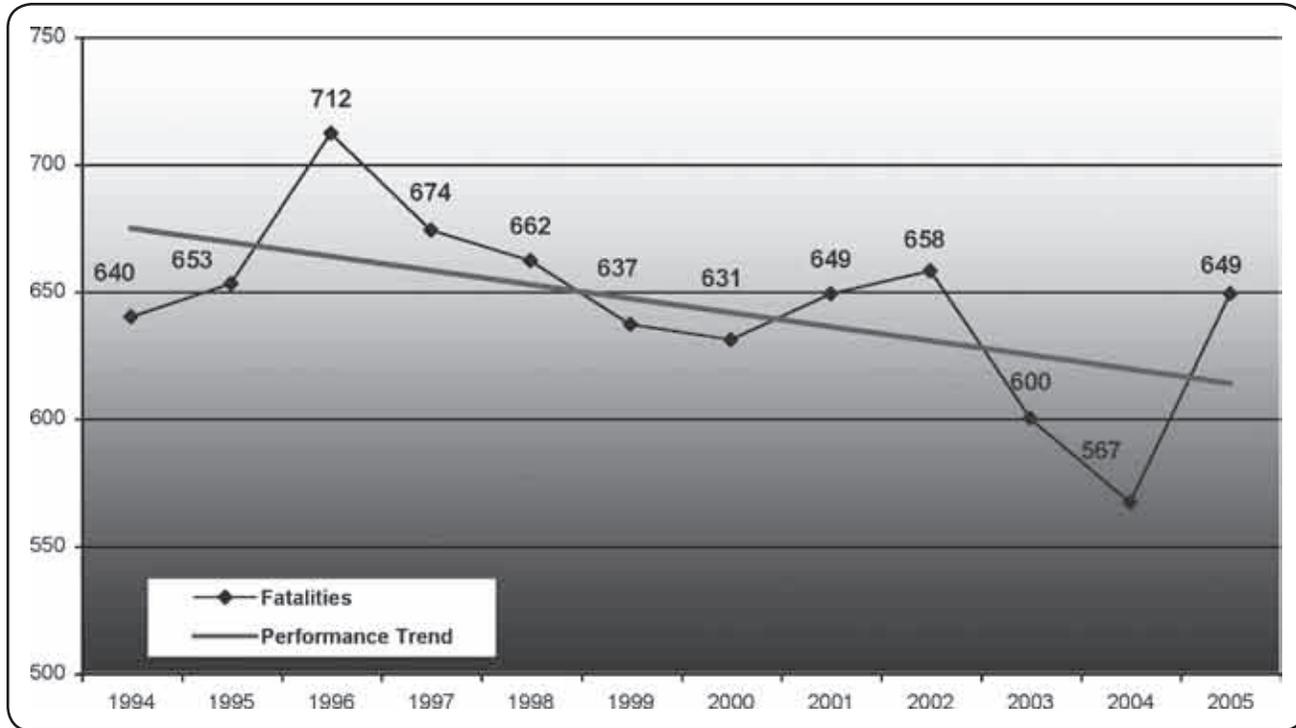
Our two main challenges from a behavioral traffic safety perspective remain impaired driving and speed related crashes. We have reorganized our program staff to reflect these priorities along with the importance of maintaining a high safety belt use rate. ■

## Crash Data and Performance Measures

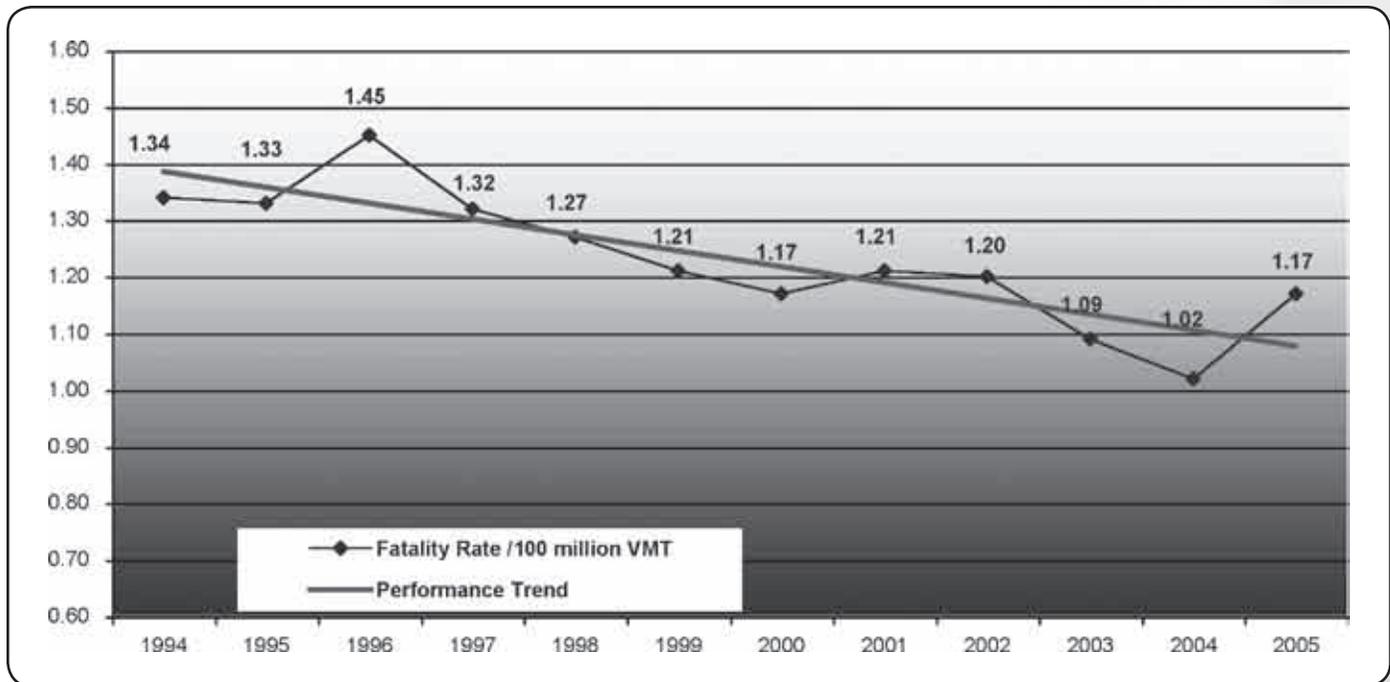
	Baseline Data 1994-1997						Progress Report Data 1998-2005					
	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Fatalities	640	653	712	674	662	637	631	649	658	600	567	649
Fatality Rate /100 million VMT	1.34	1.33	1.45	1.32	1.27	1.21	1.17	1.21	1.20	1.09	1.02	1.17
Safety Belt Use Rate	77.0%	80.0%	81.0%	78.0%	79.1%	81.1%	81.6%	82.6%	92.6%	94.8%	94.2%	95.2%
Drinking Driver Related Fatalities	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
	296	305	353	266	286	243	248	243	262	221	214	268
Drinking Driver Rate/100M VMT	0.62	0.62	0.72	0.52	0.55	0.46	0.46	0.45	0.48	0.40	0.38	0.48
Fatalities - Speed-related	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
	220	251	249	242	247	227	241	234	260	234	225	247
Vehicle occupant fatalities	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
	499	525	558	555	524	526	511	509	513	449	419	478
Pedestrian Fatalities	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
	86	74	92	73	77	60	68	75	70	75	58	62
Bicyclist Fatalities	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
	15	13	14	16	10	9	12	8	11	10	7	13
Motorcyclist Fatalities	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
	35	37	42	29	51	38	39	57	54	59	73	74
Child safety seat use rate	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
	54.4%	57.0%					76.8%			56.1%	70.9%	46.5%
Booster seat use rate	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
							22.1%		46.7%	44.7%	49.4%	28.7%

# Performance Goals and Trends

**Goal: Fatalities** Reduce the Number of Traffic Fatalities to 580 by 2008 and to 535 by 2012  
**Baseline** 1994 = 640 Fatalities



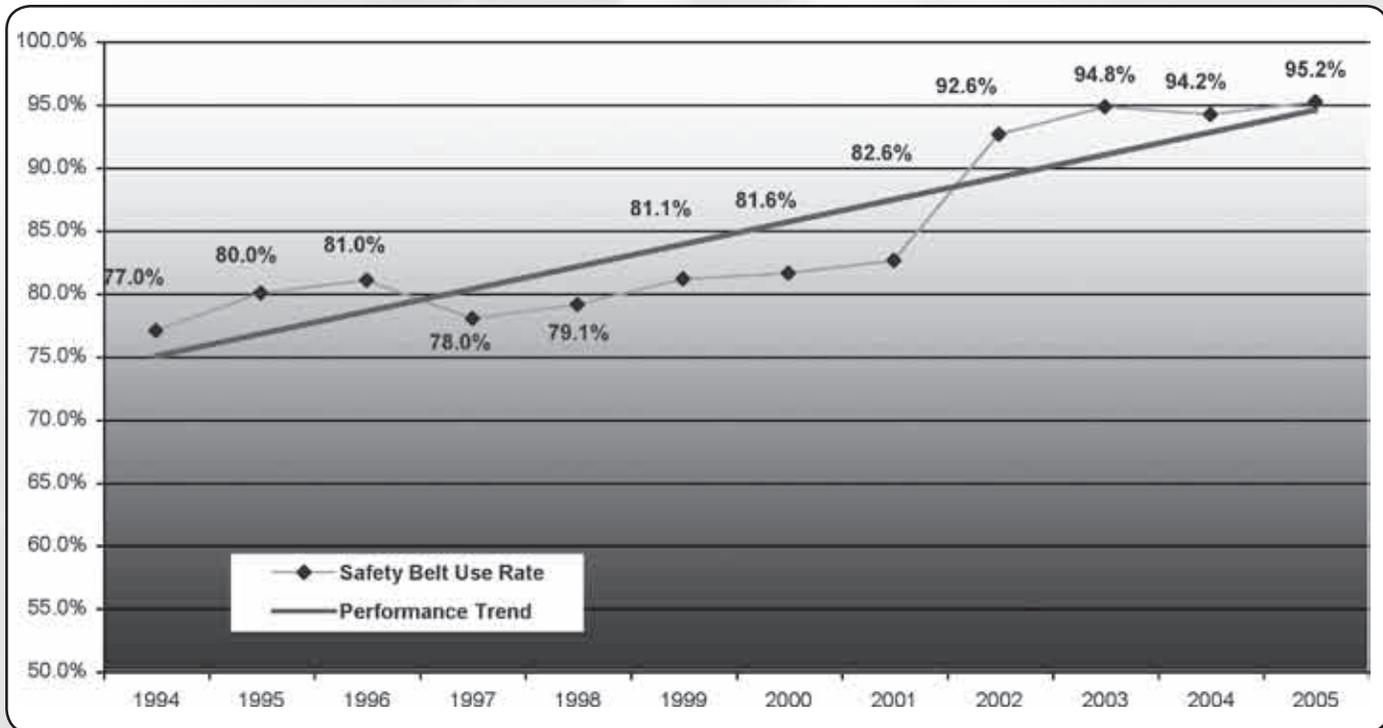
**Goal: Fatality Rate / VMT** Reduce the Fatality Rate to .98 in 2008 and to .86 by 2012  
**Baseline** 1994 = 1.34 Deaths per 100 M VMT



# Performance Goals and Trends

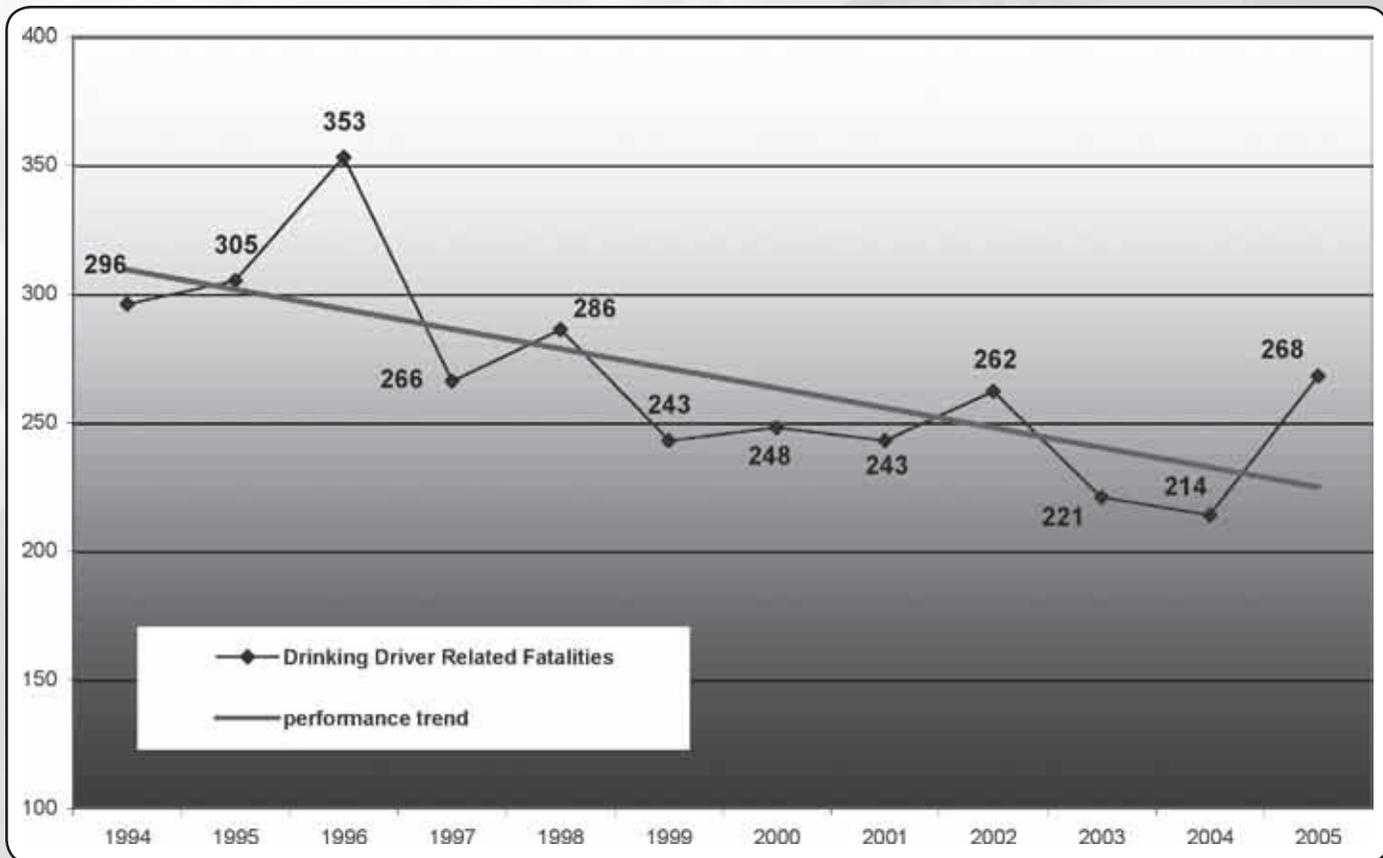
**Goal: Seat Belt Use Rate**  
**Baseline**

Increase Seat Belt Use Rate to 97% by 2008  
 1994 = 77%



**Goal: Drinking Driver Related**  
**Baseline**

Reduce to 165 by 2008 and to 118 by 2012  
 1994 = 296



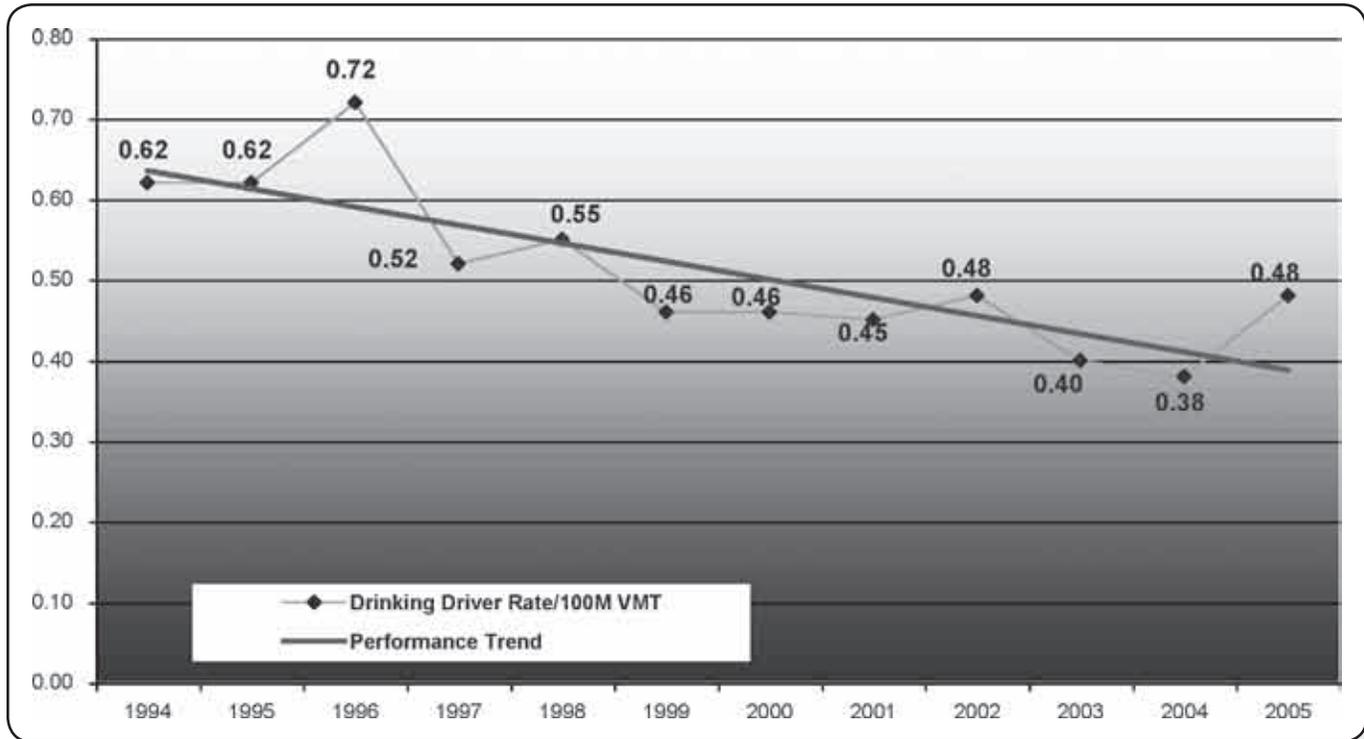
# Performance Goals and Trends

**Goal: Drinking Driving Related  
Fatal Rate per 100 M VMT**

Reduce Rate to .28 by 2008 and to .18 in 2012

**Baseline**

1994 = 0.62

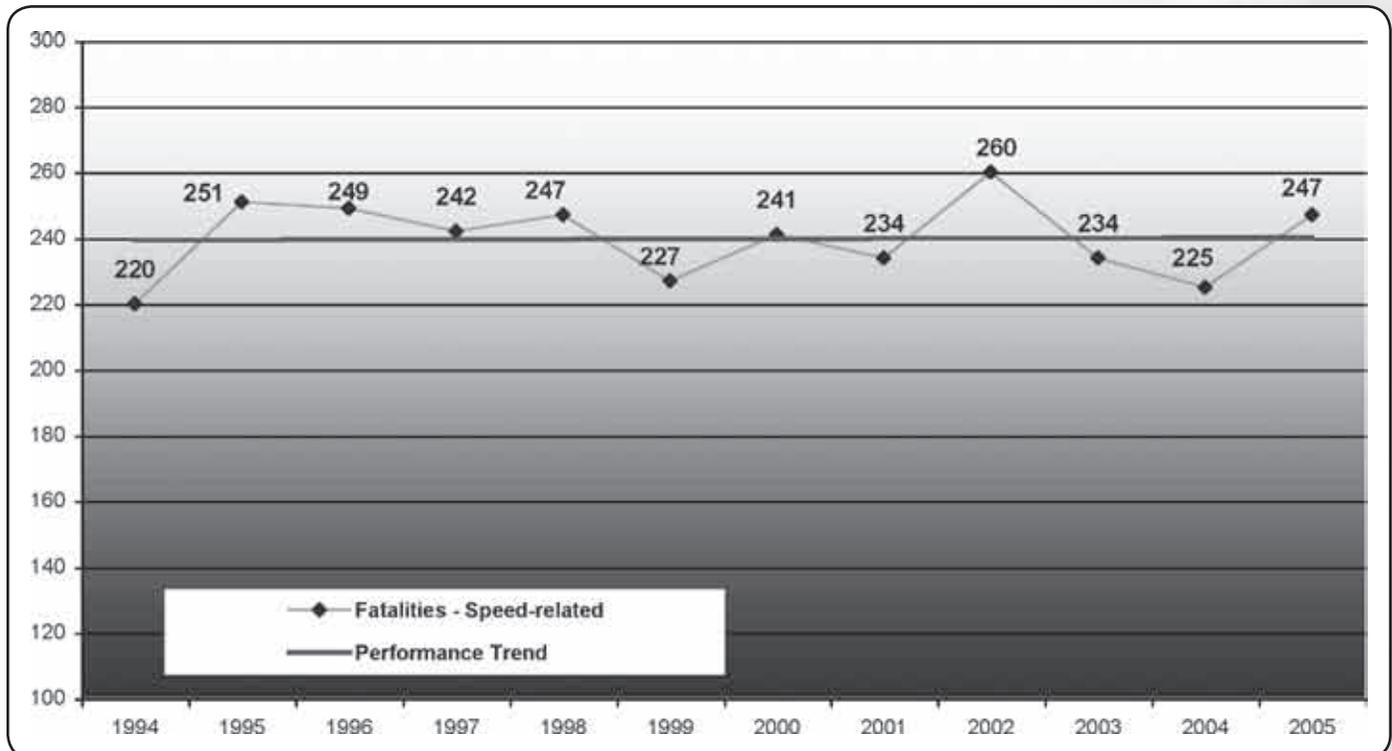


**Goal: Speed Related  
Fatalities**

Reduce Speed Related Fatalities to 225 by 2008 and to 212 by 2012

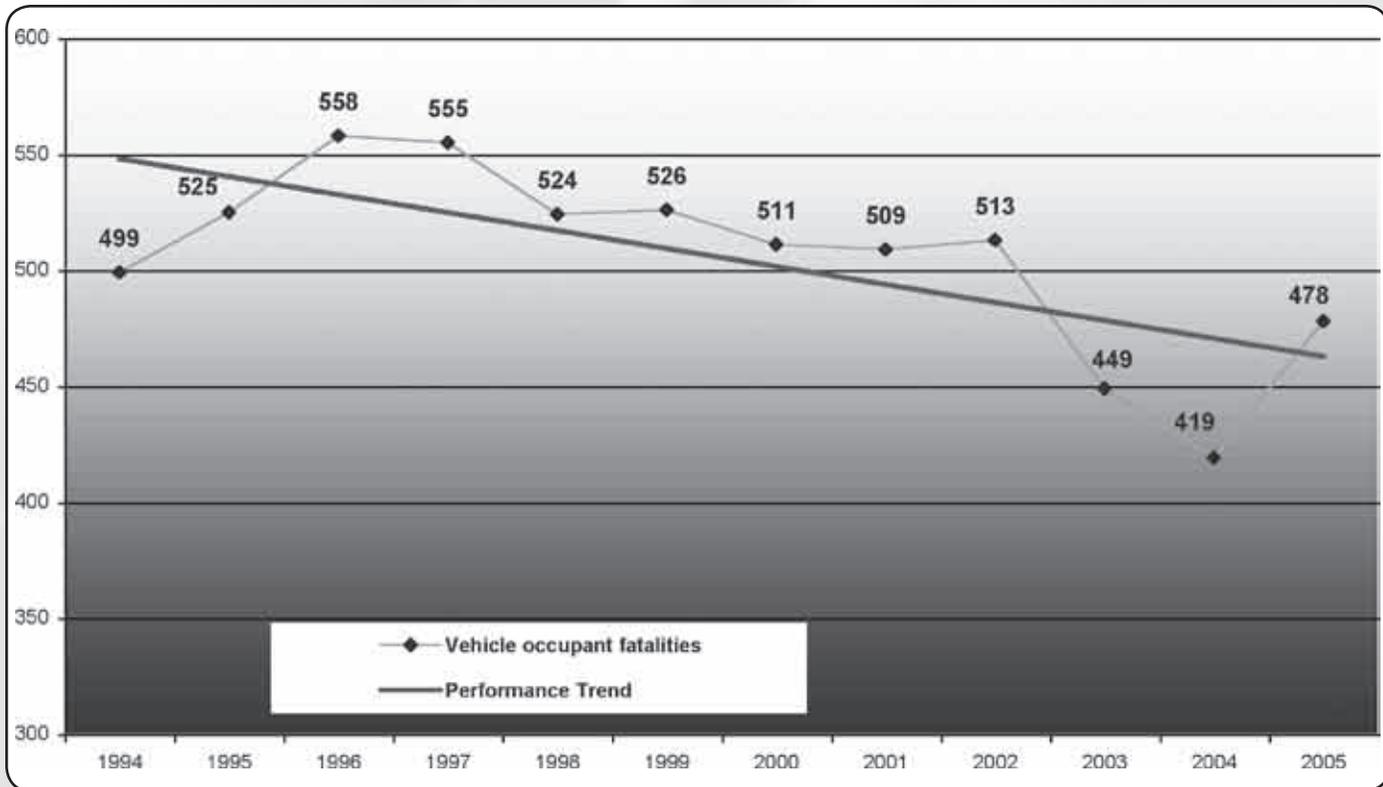
**Baseline**

1994 = 220

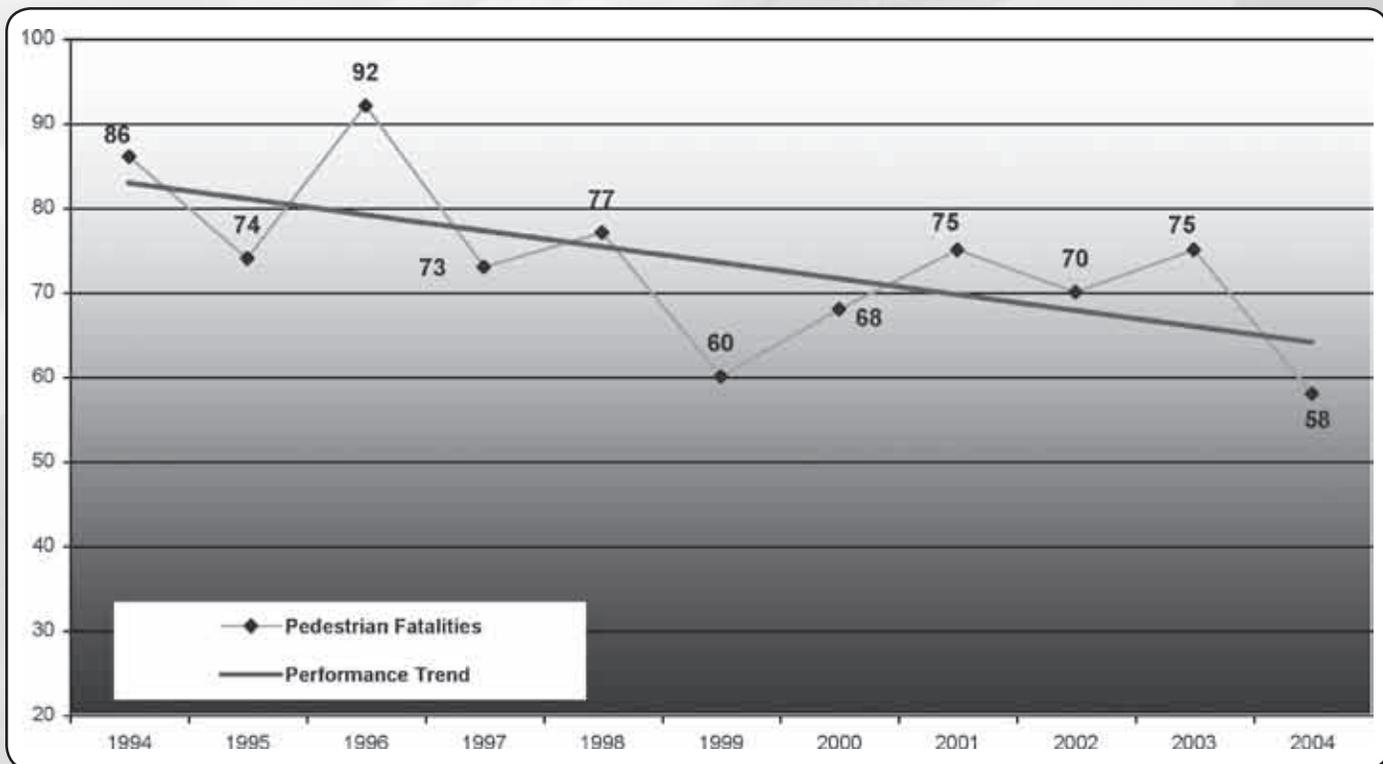


# Performance Goals and Trends

**Goal: Vehicle Occupant Fatalities** Reduce Vehicle Occupant Fatalities to 426 by 2008 and to 366 by 2012  
**Baseline** 1994 = 499



**Goal: Pedestrian Fatalities** Reduce Pedestrian Fatalities to 55 by 2008 and to 46 by 2012  
**Baseline** 1994 = 86



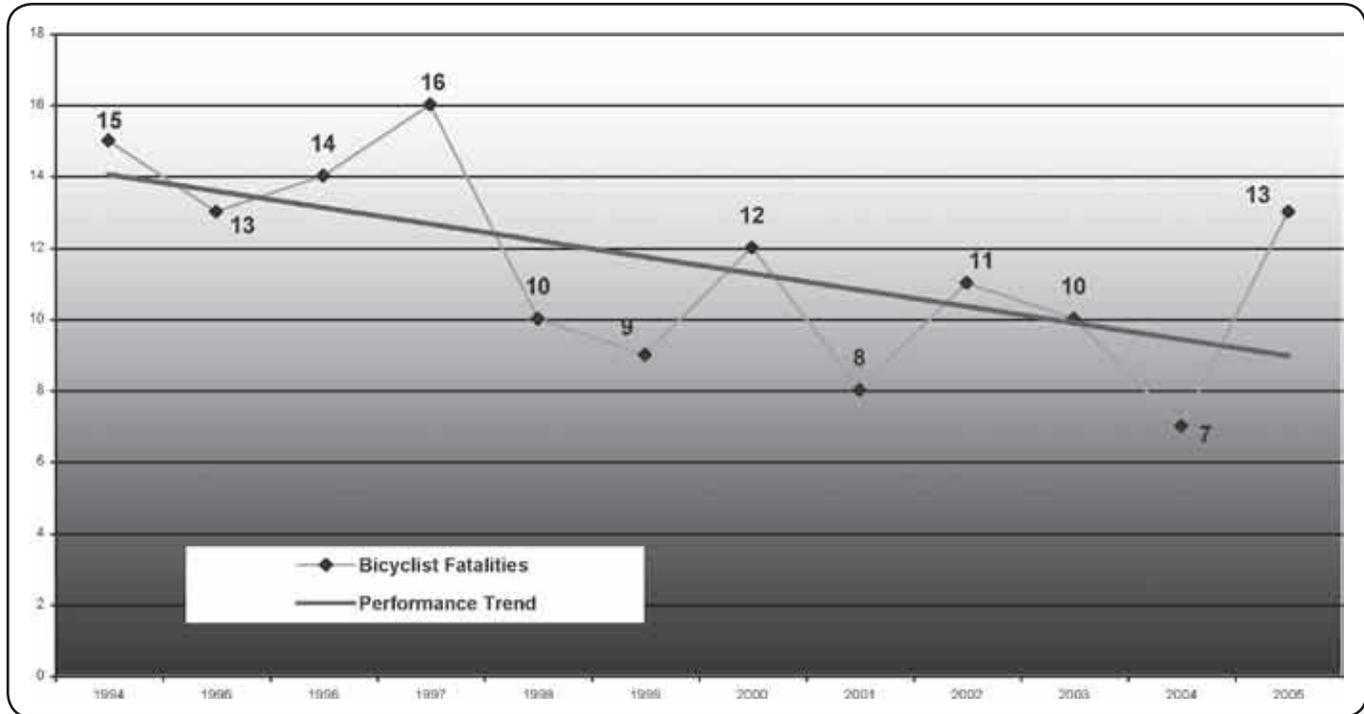
# Performance Goals and Trends

## Goal: Bicycle Fatalities

Reduce Bicyclist Fatalities to 8 by 2008 and to 7 by 2012

### Baseline

1994 = 15

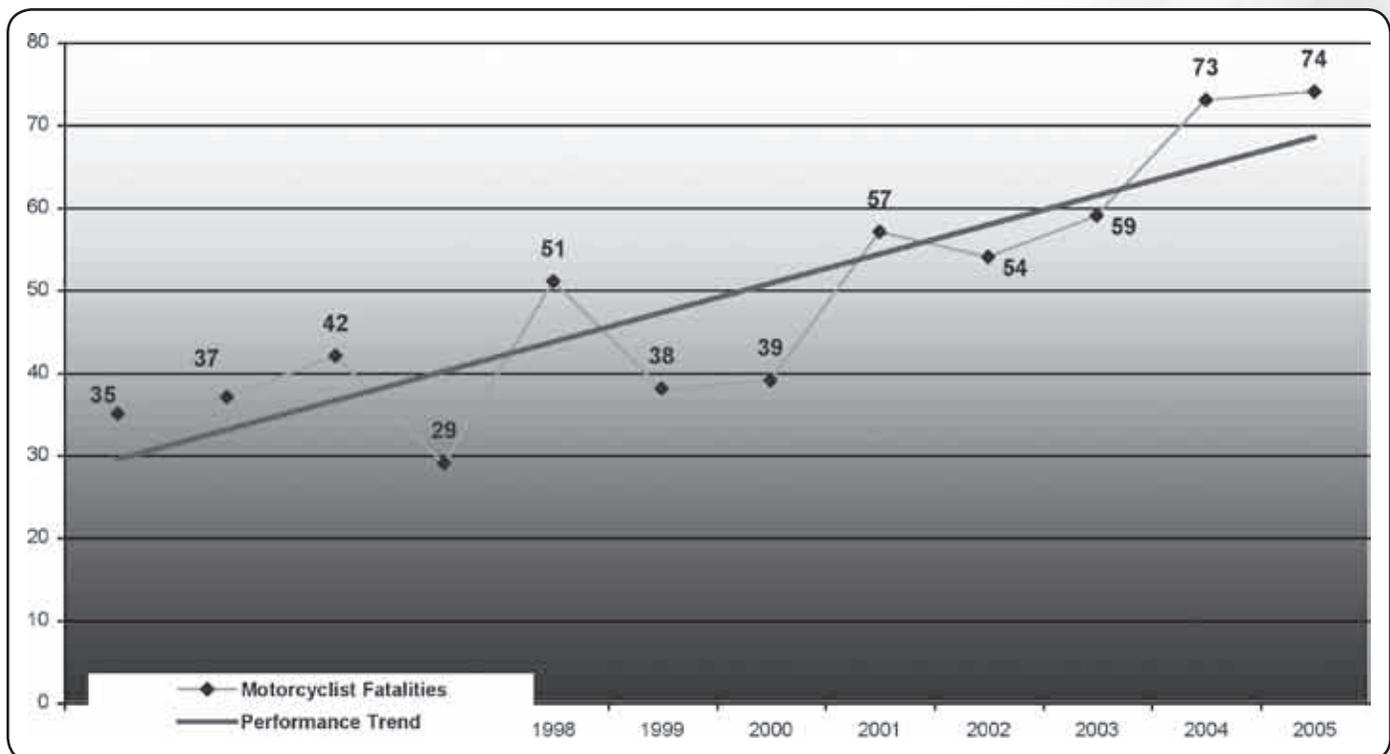


## Goal: Motorcyclist Fatalities

Reduce Motorcyclist Fatalities to 55 by 2008 and to 35 by 2012

### Baseline

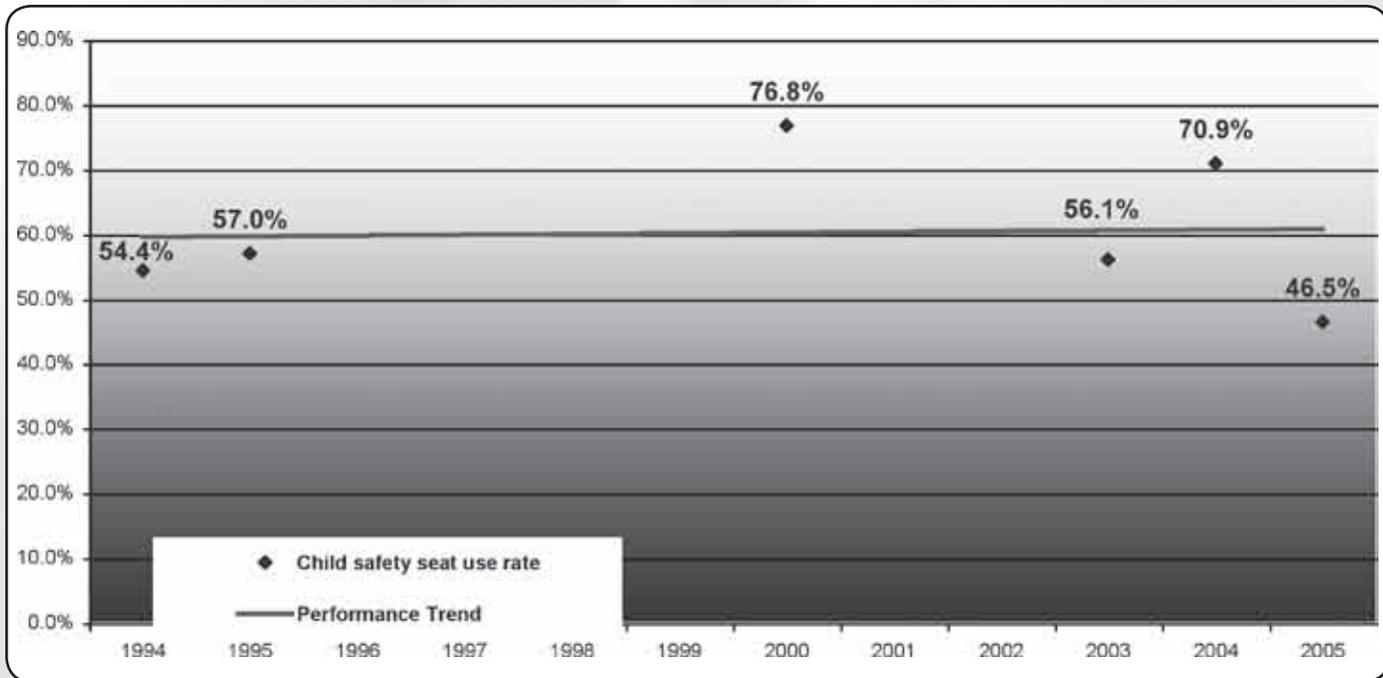
1994 = 34



# Performance Goals and Trends

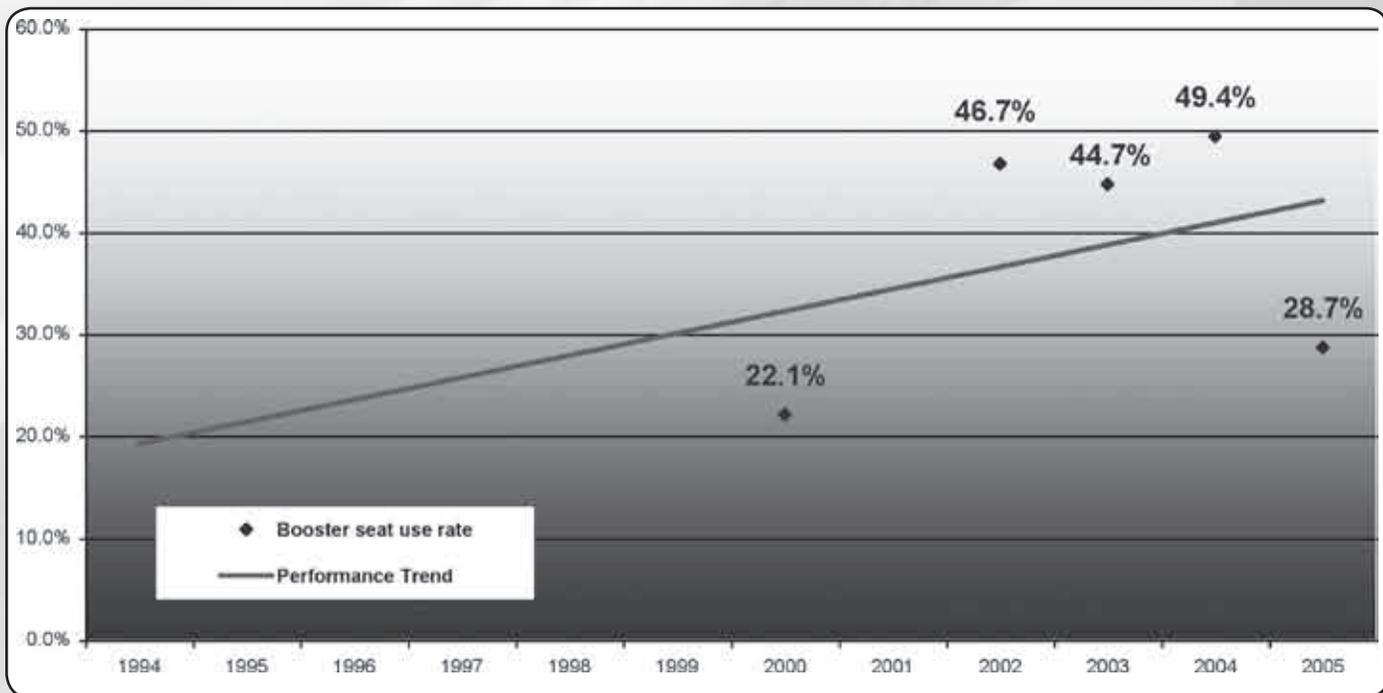
## Goal: Child Safety Seat Use Rate Baseline

Increase use rate to 80% by 2008 and to 90% by 2012  
1994 = 54.4%



## Goal: Booster Seat Use Rate Baseline

Increase Booster Seat Use Rate to 75% by 2008 and to 90% by 2012  
2000 = 22.0%



# Impaired Driving Program

## Strategies:

Although many varied strategies were employed in our effort to reduce the injuries and deaths that result from crashes involving impaired drivers, the main strategy remains combining a strong public education component with intense, visible enforcement. Other strategies can be found in the Noteworthy Program section below.

## Results:

The number of Washingtonians that died in a crash involving a driver who had been drinking has increased since 2004. That increase follows a decline in 2004 of nearly 18% since 2002.

## Noteworthy Programs:

**Drive Hammered – Get Nailed Campaign** was conducted in November & December 2005 and August & September of 2006. Overtime funds were provided to law enforcement agencies for DUI enforcement. Over 100 law enforcement agencies participated in the campaigns. A comprehensive public information campaign was developed to warn the public of these additional patrols.

Training opportunities were provided to law enforcement, judges, prosecutors and others in the DUI system. Brochures, videos, and other educational materials dealing with impaired driving were developed and distributed.

The 18th Annual Impaired Driver Traffic Safety Conference was held in Skamania, December 13-15, 2005. 336 attendees participated in workshops and heard national speakers talk about impaired driving issues.

**Department of Health (DOH)** – Project funds were used by DOH to address DUI prevention and other traffic safety issues through the eight EMS and Trauma Care Regions. Alcohol intoxication has been found to be the leading risk factor for injury, according to previous research. Of the estimated 20.5 million American adults requiring emergency department (ED) care for their injuries, 27 percent



# Impaired Driving Program continued...

screened positive for alcohol intoxication or dependency. A 30-minute intervention with a trained counselor (Brief Alcohol Intervention) has been shown to be highly effective at reducing subsequent alcohol use, injuries, and visits to the emergency department or hospital. Based on these findings DOH continued its efforts implementing Brief Alcohol Intervention training to designated trauma services (DTS) throughout the state. A “train the trainer” manner was developed through this project and nine Trauma Program Managers from across the state were trained to be regional consultants/experts in brief intervention. A critical assessment of the BI program was conducted by Harborview Injury Prevention and Research Center during this grant cycle. Barriers and potential solutions were identified and implemented.

**Judicial Education** - The Washington state Administrative Office of the Courts coordinated a program to provide continuing education for district and municipal court judges on traffic safety related topics. These seminars were conducted in Seattle, Vancouver and Kennewick.

**Operation Drive Thru** – Based on anecdotal information that impaired drivers frequent fast food drive thru windows, SeaTac Police Services implemented a program to attempt to use this venue to make contact with these individuals through “sting” operations. During high DUI times, an undercover deputy posed as a fast food employee just inside the drive thru window. Once an obviously impaired person came through the drive thru, the undercover deputy would radio to one of two assigned DUI emphasis cars assigned to the project. The emphasis cars would then establish their own probable cause for the stop and make the contact. 26 stings were implemented during the year-long project. There were many challenges in implementing this project but it ultimately produced one contact every 21 minutes and one DUI for every six hours worked.

**Spokane County DUI Court – DUI Intensive Supervision Program (DISP)** - The DISP program is a plea program that provides eligible participants with the opportunity to receive additional assistance in determining how to get into treatment, changing harmful life choices through a program of incentives in lieu of traditional sanctions. Upon choosing to join, participants come under the court’s supervision and are required to serve some or all of their confinement time, participate in GPS and other alcohol and drug monitoring, attend assigned treatment sessions, undergo random alcohol/drug testing, agree to refrain from driving and appear before the judge on a scheduled basis, all according to an individual DISP Plan. Participants who meet the requirement of each phase of the DISP plan graduate from the program and the sentence against them is either amended or deferred according to the DISP contract. Some of the goals of the DISP program are to reduce reliance on incarceration of alcohol/drug dependent DUI offenders, to hold alcohol/drug dependent offenders accountable for their actions, integrate effective alcohol/substance abuse treatment with criminal justice case processing, and to

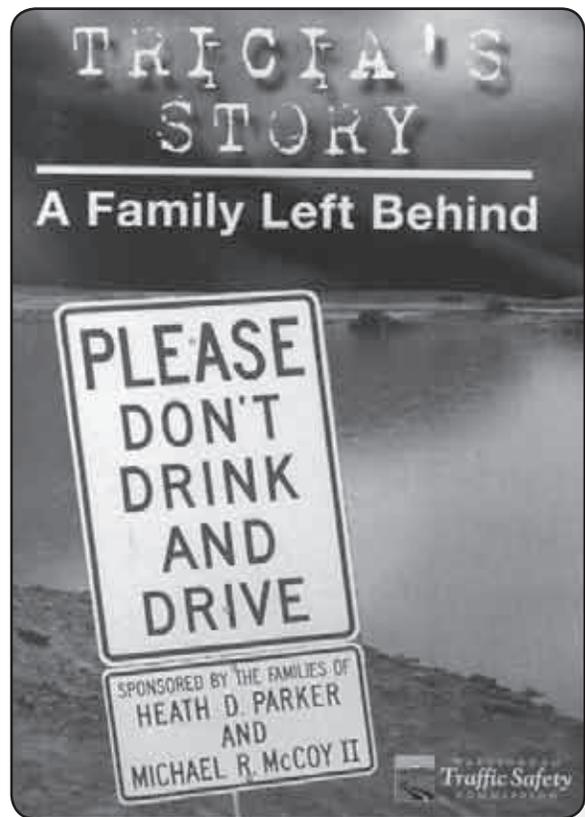


# Impaired Driving Program continued...

provide access for participants to resources and community supports to enable them to acquire skills necessary for the maintenance of sobriety. At the conclusion of the first year of this three-year project there were 27 DISP participants enrolled in the program.

**Washington State Patrol Drug Evaluation and Classification Project (DRE)** – Funds were used to support the Washington State DRE Program. This program is coordinated by the Washington State Patrol (WSP) and has 108 DRE's from the Washington State Patrol and 82 DRE's from 59 municipal, county and tribal police agencies. Per the 2005 International Association of Police Chief's report, Washington administers the most successful DRE project in the country. Evaluations completed for the project period were 1,279. Training and presentations conducted by DRE's statewide on impaired driving was as follows:

- Standardized Field Sobriety Test training:  
35 classes – 525 students
- Drugs that Impair Driving:  
23 classes – 697 students
- Drug Impairment Training for the Educational Professional:  
15 classes – 450 students
- DUI/DUID Overview Presentations – 56 presentations – 3,175 attendees
- DRE Schools: Two were completed with a total of 42 students
- DRE Instructor School: 12 students
- DRE's also had educational booths at two county fairs. ■



# Occupant Protection Program

Although many varied strategies were employed in our effort to reduce the injuries and deaths that result from failure to properly wear seat belts and child restraint systems, the main strategy remains combining a strong public education component with intense, visible enforcement. Other strategies can be found in the Noteworthy Program section below.

## Results:

Washington's seat belt use rate rose again in 2006 to a new high of 96.3% - the highest rate in the U.S.

## Occupant Protection

The purpose of this program is to increase the proper use of seat belts and child car seats and to provide occupant protection networks with technical assistance and educational resources.

Washington continued its involvement in the Click It Or Ticket (CIOT) project in 2006. Modeled after a program that was implemented in locations throughout the United States and Canada, CIOT has been shown to increase seat belt use rates. The campaign consists of informing the public through extensive paid and earned media about coming increased enforcement and then giving grants to law enforcement agencies to increase the enforcement of seat belt laws.

Activities in May/June of 2006 included a major public information/education effort and a statewide mobilization of police agencies to increase enforcement of the seat belt law. Television and radio spots were used to remind the public of the primary seat belt law and that it was being actively enforced. This paid media also increased the exposure of the message through earned media, i.e., radio talk shows and newspaper articles and editorials. 135 police agencies received grant funding for overtime including the Washington State Patrol, county sheriff's offices, city police agencies, tribal police departments and college campus police.



# Occupant Protection Program continued...

As a result of the CIOT campaign the seat belt use rate in Washington is currently 96.3%. This rate appears to be associated with reductions in the death toll among vehicle occupants. After the first two years of aggressive CIOT campaigns approximately 70 lives were saved, a 13% decrease for Washington State. This decrease in fatalities, as well as the projected decrease in serious injuries will significantly lower the overall cost of traffic crashes in Washington.

## Child Passenger Safety Program

The Child Passenger Safety (CPS) Program is designed to provide child passenger safety awareness, technical training and resources to a wide network of health and safety advocates.

Regular coordination of statewide program efforts is important when managing a diverse and multi-faceted program. Washington's CPS program is run through contracts with the Safety Restraint Coalition (SRC), and the Washington State Booster Seat Coalition (WSBSC) coordinated by Harborview Injury Prevention and Research Center and Children's Hospital. Consistent meetings between the managers of these programs, the WTSC occupant protection program manager, and the SAFE KIDS (SK) program state coordinator ensures that all agencies concerned are working together on CPS issues in a coordinated and focused manner.

The key to any successful statewide program is coordination at the local level. Both the Safety Restraint Coalition and the SAFE KIDS Program manage teams at the local level. There are 33 local teams that provide service to 32 of Washington's 39 counties. These teams are responsible for providing their community with child passenger safety education, child car seat checks, and for serving as a resource to schools, doctors, daycares, parents, and caregivers. The WTSC, SRC, and SK all provide resources to these teams in the form of printed materials,

supplies for child car seat checks, mini-grants, and training. These teams conducted more than 6,414 car seat checks at outreach and education events and trainings. Over 1,617 free or low-cost car seats and boosters were distributed to low-income families during this same time period.

During 2006 an additional 108 people were certified as child passenger safety technicians through the NHTSA Certification course. Currently Washington has 560 certified child passenger safety instructors and technicians.

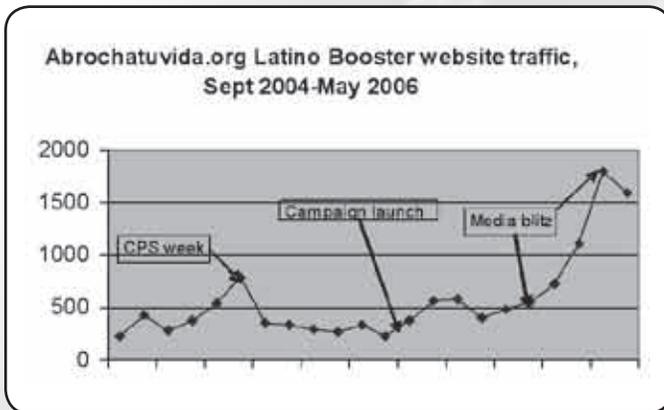


The SRC website continues to be a valuable and well-used resource for the residents of Washington. Visitors to the site can:

- Read and download copies of Washington's safety restraint laws
- Compare optimal protection for children in cars against what is required by law
- Locate a person who can check the installation of a car
- View the child car seat recall list
- Report unbuckled children

The SRC 800-BUCK-L-UP phone line responded to 4,341 calls this period. Citizens call this line to get child passenger safety information and to report sightings of unbuckled children. In the case of unbuckled children sightings, letters are

# Occupant Protection Program continued...



sent to the registered owners of vehicles that are seen with unbuckled children inside them with information about what could happen in a crash.

The Washington State Safety Restraint Coalition also continued coordination of the Spanish toll free line. Latino citizens can call 1-8-777-TU-VIDA to receive child passenger safety information in Spanish.

“We Love You – Buckle Up” Early Childhood Education curriculums were distributed to preschools, day care centers, and elementary schools and worked with local pupil transportation staff regarding the safe transportation of preschool age and special needs children on school buses. Information and materials were provided to employees of school districts, Headstart programs, and Early Childhood Education Assistance Programs.

A new video “Common Mistakes-Simple Solutions” was produced in cooperation with the SRC and WTSC. This 10 minute video addresses the most common (and most dangerous) types of child car seat misuse and offers easy to follow instructions to fix these problems.

The WTSC worked with the state Department of Health through the Child Profile program to distribute age-specific child passenger safety information for parents of children birth to 6 years using the immunization registry system mailing list.

## King County Latino Booster Seat Project

Latino children and their families are the fastest growing population in the United States. Latino children are also less likely to be properly restrained in the vehicle and are therefore at higher risk of dying in a crash when they travel. Harborview Injury Prevention and Research Center continues to reach out to the Latino population in King County through the King County Latino Booster Seat Program. This project aims to determine the behavioral barriers and facilitators for booster seat use among Latino families. Using qualitative research to identify these barriers, Harborview developed and tested campaign messages to promote booster seat use among Latino families not only in King County, but across the state. These materials are being widely disseminated throughout the state. This project also endeavors to point Latino families to the Spanish toll-free child passenger safety line and website [www.abrochatuvida.org](http://www.abrochatuvida.org). Website and telephone traffic are increasing dramatically with campaign activities (see figure). In addition Harborview received a grant from Walmart to provide access to low-cost seats in the Yakima Valley and established a partnership between Sea Mar clinics and the Community Health Plan of Washington to provide seats for distribution clinic events. Baseline observational use data on car seat use has been collected for both intervention and control communities involved in the project. Follow-up

**BEBÉS**

Si tu niño(a) tiene menos de un año:

- Debe ir en el asiento trasero y estar hacia atrás.
- Usa un asiento hecho para bebés de su tamaño.
- No uses el asiento hasta que el niño pesa al menos 20 libras.
- No uses el asiento hasta que el niño cumple un año de edad.
- Los cinturones de los niños deben quedar ajustados y no sueltos.

**PREESCOLARES**

Si tu niño(a) tiene más de un año y pesa entre 20 y 40 libras:

- Usa un asiento trasero y hacia adelante.
- Usa un asiento adecuado hacia el frente, hacia atrás y hacia el lado.
- No uses el asiento hasta que el niño cumple dos años de edad.
- Los cinturones de los niños deben quedar ajustados y no sueltos.

**NIÑOS Y NIÑAS**

Si tu niño(a) tiene entre 4 y 8 años de edad y pesa entre 40 y 80 libras:

- Usa un asiento trasero y hacia adelante.
- Usa un asiento adecuado (señalado).
- Usa los cinturones de hombros y caderas con su mecanismo de bloqueo.
- El cinturón de los niños debe estar ajustado y no suelto.
- El cinturón de los niños debe estar ajustado y no suelto.

Logo: WTSC

# Occupant Protection Program continued...

observational data was collected in the fall of 2006 in order to measure the change in booster seat use among Latino families. Results of those observations will be available in January 2007. The radionovela, telenovela and posters produced for this campaign all won awards at the International Injury Conference in Durban South Africa

## **Comprehensive Child Passenger Safety Education for Snohomish County Maternal Child Health Clients**

In an effort to increase the correct use of child restraint systems among the low income and non-English speaking populations in Snohomish County the Health District implemented a program to provide child passenger safety classes. In addition to general car seat education and installation instructions, the classes included information regarding seat belt usage and the newly-revised child passenger safety law that will take effect in 2007. Thirty-nine classes were provided during the project year in the following languages: 25 English, 8 Spanish, 2 Arabic, 2 Russian. One hundred twenty-nine child car seats were provided to these clients during the trainings. In addition the project led to a better understanding of child passenger safety on the part of many constituencies with the Snohomish Health District including public health nurses, Women Infants and Children program staff, and management.

## **Mary Bridge Child Passenger Safety Booster Seat Education Program**

Research that shows less than one-half of all children in Washington between the ages of four and eight are placed in the correction child restraints while riding in a car. In response to this traffic safety challenge, Mary Bridge Children's Hospital developed a program including curriculum, interactive video, and supporting materials that target preschool through first-grade children, and their families, to address the importance of the use of booster seats for children up to age eight or 4 feet 9 inches tall (based on best practice and Washington's new law that will take effect June 2007. After completion of the materials this program was presented in 9 schools, to 17 classes, and 197 children in Pierce County. Once a complete evaluation of this program is complete, materials may be made available on a statewide basis.

# The Public Information and Education Program

The goal of the Washington Traffic Safety Commission's Public Information and Education Program is to increase public awareness about traffic safety issues and to supplement the efforts of the other Commission programs.



In 2005, Washington led a pilot safety project known as Ticketing Aggressive Cars and Trucks (TACT), which combined enforcement and education to increase awareness and reduce collisions between commuter vehicles and large commercial vehicles. As a follow-up in 2006, the WTSC conducted TACT opinion surveys at several different rest areas along Interstate 5. These surveys helped measure the effectiveness of the TACT campaign. In addition, these surveys helped gain additional press coverage and awareness of the TACT safety project. Presentations about the TACT results were given by members of the WTSC and Washington State Patrol on a national level. In the summer of 2006, the WTSC hosted an awards luncheon to recognize 35 trucking companies in Western Washington who were key members of the TACT safety project. The representatives from these companies worked with WTSC to spread the message in their companies and to their fellow drivers, as well as display the safety ads on their trailers as a "rolling billboard" to help educate the public.

The Commission continued to participate in numerous statewide law enforcement campaigns to keep seat belt use rates at historic high levels. Washington currently boasts a seat belt use rate of 96.3%, the highest rate in the United States. Washington continues to maintain this high seat belt use rate by combining law enforcement efforts and statewide publicity. The publicity warns drivers that law enforcement will be ticketing unbelted drivers, and then follows up with enforcement. Because of the continued success of this "Click It or Ticket" formula for changing driver behaviors,

# The Public Information and Education Program

continued...

this same formula was applied in other traffic safety arenas to; combat the impaired driving problem, slow down speeding drivers in high risk, high speed areas, promote pedestrian safety in school zones and other pedestrian problem areas, and promote greater awareness about rules for newly licensed teen drivers.

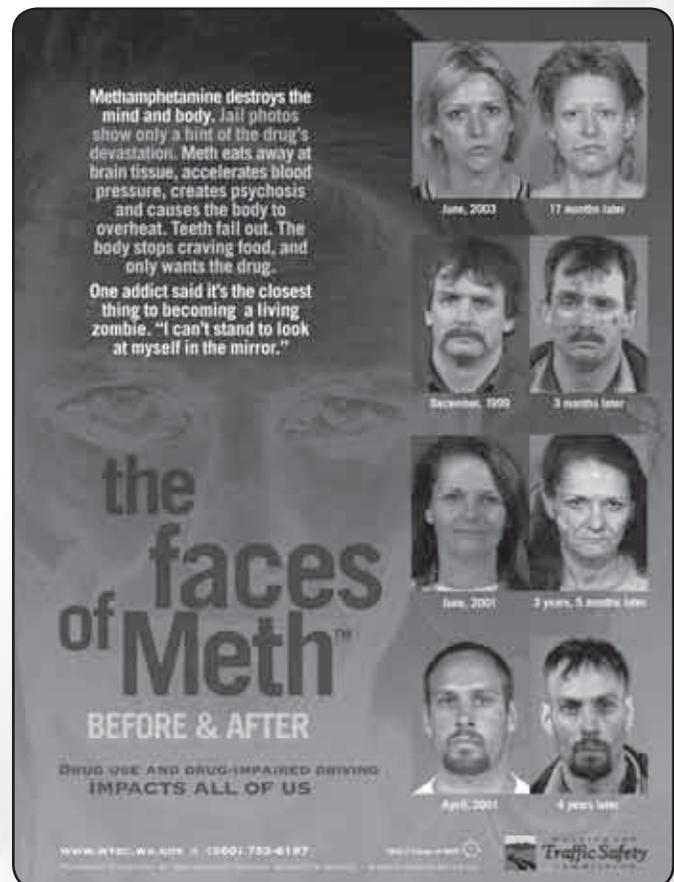
As in the past few years, two large enforcement/publicity campaigns were implemented in 2006 to promote seat belt use and one large campaign was implemented to combat the impaired driving problem. Publicity efforts involved extensive radio and television campaigns supplemented by broad scale stakeholder work statewide to get the traffic safety messages picked up as news stories and to extend the reach of the publicity campaign materials distributed at the local level. Statewide intercept surveys to publicize Click It or Ticket and determine the attitudes of seat belt use were conducted at several high schools throughout the state. Local media picked up the stories which helped promote seat belt use, and a final report was written and presented to several stakeholder groups. Web page and newspaper ads were also purchased. Press releases, photo releases, radio news releases, ad slicks and guest editorial copy were all distributed in a targeted fashion to the print media statewide. Spanish language materials were also developed and distributed to the Spanish speaking population during these campaigns.

Engrossed House Bill 1246 is a newer law in Washington which says all stereo equipment inside a vehicle must be bolted down and secured to prevent them from becoming missile-like objects during a sudden stop or crash. The students at Snohomish High School helped to get this law passed as a result of a crash that killed one of their students. The Commission worked with the supporters of the bill including Representative Hans Dunshee and the teachers and students at the school to create posters and fliers publicizing this law. "Secure Your Sound, Bolt It Down" posters and

fliers were distributed to every high school in Washington, as well as all stereo retail stores such as Car Toys, Best Buy, Good Guys, Circuit City, and independent dealers.

In an on-going effort to reach Washington's Hispanic population, the Traffic Safety Commission produced more Spanish language educational materials. New and updated Child Passenger Safety fliers and posters were produced in Spanish, and distributed through the Commission's website, as well as the Washington Booster Seat Coalition and county Task Force Coordinators.

Many new educational materials were developed in ongoing public information and education support for national traffic safety media campaigns. These include localized winter holiday radio and television PSA's, web ads, brochures, anti-DUI posters localized by county to feature a variety of law enforcement officers throughout the state, anti-DUI coasters,



# The Public Information and Education Program

continued...

Spanish brochures, posters, and radio/television PSA's, and a hugely popular poster called "Faces of Meth" featuring the booking photos and stories of actual meth users and the effects of drug use.

New videos and DVD's were produced by the Commission in 2006 on a variety of traffic safety issues. Compilation DVD's were developed for each major program area, including Impaired Driving, Occupant Protection, Teen Drivers, Risky Driving, and Law Enforcement Training. The Commission has produced a large number of popular educational videos in recent years, so it became much more cost efficient for us and more useful to our stakeholders to combine several educational videos onto a single DVD. Several Washington citizens who have been involved in, or affected by, traffic crashes approached the Commission in 2006 wanting to publicize their emotional stories and hopefully help prevent other crashes. A DVD was produced featuring Tricia McCoy telling her story of losing her husband and brother to an impaired driving crash. A program about the importance of wearing a seat belt was produced featuring a young Cheney resident who lost control and rolled her vehicle traveling home from work. Interviewed back at the crash scene, she gives vivid details about how her seat belt saved her life and allowed her to walk away from the wrecked car. Another seat belt safety project was completed featuring Rob Kaufman, a lead crash investigator with Harborview Injury Prevention and Research Center in Seattle. Rob uses physics and crash dynamics to describe real-life crashes and explain the importance of wearing a seat belt in all traffic situations. Educational materials including a DVD, CD-Rom, and teacher's training manual were developed and distributed to schools and stakeholders throughout Washington State. As always, all our educational materials are available to order online through our website.

Those involved with the dissemination of traffic safety materials included Community Traffic Safety Task Force Programs, law enforcement

public information officers and school resource officers, hospital marketing specialists, child passenger safety team members, local health department community relations professionals, civic groups like Mothers Against Drunk Driving and Students Against Destructive Decisions, insurance professionals, drivers education instructors, trauma nurses and emergency response professionals. In addition to putting up posters and distributing fliers, these stakeholders gave presentations at the local level with educational videos and display materials, as well as speaker points developed by the Commission. They also found places at the local level where banners could be hung against public buildings, and where free ad placements could be obtained. They also helped organize press conferences and other media events.

A statewide publicity campaign combined with an enforcement effort was conducted to improve pedestrian safety in school zones. Posters and other print materials were developed and distributed to schools. Static clings were also developed in association with the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction to remind drivers to stop for school buses. The static clings are designed to be displayed on personal vehicles with the message "Thanks For Stopping For My School Bus", and reminds people it's illegal to pass a school bus when the stop sign is displayed and red lights flash.

In 2006, the Commission conducted various activities to get the news media to pick up traffic safety stories. Press conferences were organized with local stakeholder groups and individual reporters were extensively "pitched" with story ideas. For many campaigns including TACT, bicycle safety, and the Speeding project, video producers at the Commission shot real life video footage around the state and compiled the "b-roll" for the media. Providing this b-roll to the media saved them time and garnered more coverage of our traffic safety campaigns. Collateral materials were also

# The Public Information and Education Program

continued...

developed including posters, bumper stickers, and PSA's, as well as road signs and billboards for the Speeding project that say "Slow Down or Pay Up". The result was extensive coverage of traffic safety messages in the media to supplement the paid advertising.

In addition to these major publicity campaigns, the Commission continued efforts to:

- Promote the upcoming changes (2007) to the booster seat laws through the dissemination of a DVD, brochures, and posters.
- Combat drowsy driving through the distribution of educational materials and videos,
- Promote safety for pedestrians, bicyclists and motorcyclists through the dissemination of safety materials.

As was the case in previous years, approximately 30 quality traffic safety programs and efforts at the local level were chosen to be recognized at a statewide awards program in February 2006. For the first time in over a decade, the awards luncheon was separate from the Impaired Driving Conference, which made for a large turnout. Washington State Attorney General Rob McKenna was the keynote speaker and addressed the problems of drugs and drug-impaired drivers on our roadways. Photos and press releases were sent to the local media outlets for all winners, and the event received great television and newspaper coverage around the state.

**The program's objectives include:**

- Assess the effectiveness of the "Click It or Ticket", "Drive Hammered-Get Nailed", TACT, and Speeding campaigns based on participant feedback.
- Determine whether the following four goals that WTSC uses to guide development and production of television and radio spots have been met. Radio and television spots must:
  - Stand out among the clutter of the approximately 2,000+ media messages an individual encounters each day;
  - Inform the public about a traffic safety enforcement campaign that is either pending or underway;
  - Entertain the public without presenting the message in an amateur or annoying way; and
  - Present the message in such a way that the public can accept it without any negative reaction or publicity;
- Determine whether media spots are influencing behavioral changes. ■



# Paid Media Programs and Results

Media funds were used to purchase radio advertising to air public service announcements to let the public know about enforcement campaigns. Funds were also used to purchase contract support to generate earned media messages about enforcement campaigns. The goal of the messages was to reach high risk populations (males ages 16 – 34, but others as well) with the message that law enforcement patrols are taking place on a particular traffic safety emphasis issue.

## Campaigns focused on:

- promoting seat belt and child car seat use;
- battling impaired driving,
- pedestrian safety and awareness, and
- promoting safe driving around schools and playgrounds to reduce pedestrian deaths and injuries.

The media campaigns were, in turn, supplemented by enforcement campaigns as research confirms that these two activities work together to reduce roadway deaths and injuries. Campaigns were organized to coincide with priority emphasis dates identified by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

## Specific Campaigns and Dates:

**The seat belt campaign**, based on the Click it or Ticket model, was conducted during the months of May/June, 2006. The paid media budget for this campaign was \$126,000. Media Plus of Seattle researched radio markets statewide to determine which stations reach the target market. The target audience was males, ages 18-34. The television ads reached 83% of the state with a frequency of 6.5 times each. The radio ads reached 51% of the state at a frequency of 6.5 times each. Media Plus then negotiated the air buy to ensure that the lowest media rates were secured for the Washington Traffic Safety Commission, as well as numerous opportunities for earned media support for the campaigns. Another \$157,000 of bonus time was secured at no cost to the Commission.



**The impaired driving campaign** (Drive Hammered-Get Nailed) was scheduled to coincide with grant funded enforcement campaigns following a schedule developed by the NHTSA. Similar to the seat belt campaigns, the goal of the impaired driving campaign was to put people on notice that extra law enforcement patrols were taking place in their areas. The anti-DUI winter holiday campaign (November 2005 through January 1, 2006) included a paid media budget of \$100,000. All of the radio air time purchases were conducted by a Seattle firm that specializes in the purchase of media air time. The paid schedules were supplemented with earned media efforts, bonus schedules and the distribution of collateral materials at the local level. Reach and frequency statistics showed that the radio spots reached 55% of Washington's population and reached our target audience (males, age 18-34) about 7.9 times each. In addition, internet ads for this campaign had 3.2 million hits per month.

**The Pedestrian safety campaign** in May/June, 2006 used transit bus ads to reach 90% of the population with a target audience of all adults (18+ years old) and a frequency of 28 times each.

# Paid Media Programs and Results continued...

**The School Zone Safety project** in August-October, 2006 cost \$88,000 and involved radio air time purchases which reached 63% of the state's population with a frequency of 12.4 times each. An additional \$97,000 in bonus time was secured at no cost to the Commission. This project was paid for with state funds.

**A booster seat safety campaign** was conducted in September/October, 2006 where television spots were purchased with a budget of approximately \$230,000. Another \$215,000 of bonus spots aired at no cost to the Commission, giving us great value for our purchase. The booster seat safety ads reached 56% of Washington's population (target audience – women, age 25-54) with a frequency of 7.1 times each.

Community Traffic Safety Task Force Coordinators supplemented the work of all of the Commission's paid media efforts by organizing press events, putting up posters and banners statewide, and distributing collateral materials via government offices, business and the religious community.

## **The Program's objectives include:**

### **Maintaining Washington's high seat belt use rate:**

Washington currently has the highest seat belt use rate in the United States at 96.3%. Keeping the seat belt use rate at this high level requires continuous advertising that "cuts through the clutter" and reminds motorists to "Click it or Ticket!"

### **Reducing serious injuries and deaths caused by impaired driving.**

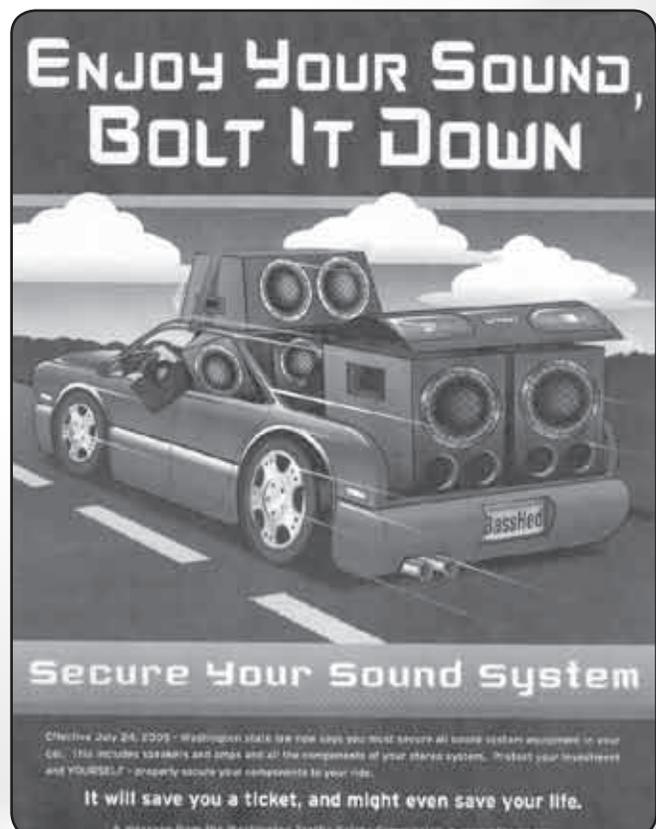
Drunk and drugged driving continues to be one of the single largest causes of roadway death and injuries. The Commission's approach is to apply the Click it or Ticket project model to fight the battle against DUI, with continuous year-around pressure as well as special emphasis patrols during NHTSA's designated emphasis periods.

### **Using the contracting process, identify and use experts to develop creative concepts and design advertising that cuts through the clutter.**

We are all bombarded with advertising and companies invent new ways to advertise every day. We see ads on internet web pages, in movie theaters, in public bathrooms, on road signs and billboards, and every time we listen to the radio, watch T.V. and read the newspaper and magazines. What kind of ad is needed and where can it be placed to reach our target market with these important safety messages? That is a problem best solved with the best experts in the communications business.

### **Work with community stakeholders to develop communications materials that they find useful.**

This requires holding meetings with them and listening as they describe their needs and desires for communications materials that work in their programs. ■



# Corridor Traffic Safety

The Traffic Safety Corridor Program is a joint effort between the Washington Traffic Safety Commission, the Washington State Department of Transportation, and many partner agencies including the Washington State Patrol. This program works to reduce collisions on roadways using low-cost, near-term solutions through partnerships with engineering, enforcement, education, and emergency services. The program is locally coordinated in each community, and involves interested citizens along with businesses and agencies that have a vested interest in the safety of their roadways.



The Corridor Safety Program has been a very successful effort, not only in building community relationships, but also in terms of making roadways safer. In completed corridor sections around the state, total collisions have been reduced 10%, total injuries have been reduced 14%, alcohol-related collisions have been reduced 15%, and fatal/disabling collisions have been reduced 25%.

Project activity during the fiscal year was directed at the following corridor projects:

- **Memorial Traffic Safety Project.** This project located in Spokane County on State Route 904 extended south of the Cheney city limits to the intersection with 1-90, a distance of eight miles. This project closed down on April 30, 2006. Final results show a 21% decrease in total collisions, a 36% decrease in alcohol-related collisions, and a 70% decrease in fatal/disabling collisions.
- **The Cape Horn Traffic Safety Project.** This project encompassed 15 miles of State Route 14 from the Skamania County Line east to North Bonneville. It closed on May 31, 2006. Final results indicate that total collisions decreased 19%, alcohol-related collisions decreased 57%, and fatal/disabling collisions decreased 65%.

# Corridor Traffic Safety continued...

- **Kittitas/Vantage Highway Traffic Safety Project.** This project consists of approximately 17 miles of county routes and includes parallel sections of Vantage and Kittitas highways. The Vantage Highway portion extends from the City of Ellensburg to Parke Creek Road, a distance of 11 miles. The Kittitas Highway portion extends from Ellensburg to the City of Kittitas, a distance of 7 miles.
- **Fourth Plain Traffic Safety Project.** Encompasses 7 miles of roadway on Fourth Plain Boulevard within the city limits of Vancouver. This project distinguishes itself from the others as the first project that lies totally within a city's boundary.
- **Highway 26 Traffic Safety Project.** This project consisted of a 20-mile section of State Route 26 extending from the Adams County line to a point just east of the city of Othello. It closed on September 30, 2006, and final results will be available next year.
- **Driving 101 Traffic Safety Project.** The US 101 Corridor is approximately 32 miles in length, extending from State Route 112 (Laird's Corner) east through the cities of Port Angeles and Sequim to the Clallam County Line, just east of Chicken Coop Road.
- **Francis to Nine Mile Traffic Safety Project.** The State Route 291 Corridor consists of an 11 mile section of roadway extending from Division Street in the city of Spokane to the Stevens County line.
- **Mountain Highway Traffic Safety Corridor.** Encompasses approximately 12 miles of State Route 7 in south Pierce County, extending from the intersection with State Route 702 north to the intersection of 184th Street South.
- **Upper Skagit Valley Corridor.** This project consists of approximately 26 miles of State Route 20, extending from Sedro-Woolley to, and through, the city of Concrete.
- **Rainier Avenue Traffic Safety Corridor.** This is the second traffic safety corridor in Washington State that lies completely within city limits – in this instance, the city of Seattle. The corridor is 8 miles in length, extending north from 75th Avenue South to South Dearborn Street. ■



# Police Traffic Services

The Police Traffic Services (PTS) program provides traffic enforcement training and equipment to the 300 law enforcement agencies of Washington State. In federal fiscal year 2006, the PTS program awarded nearly \$2,500,000 to state, county, and city enforcement agencies for specialized training in traffic safety issues, for equipment for traffic enforcement, for special projects, and for high-tech equipment that would not ordinarily be available to perform traffic-related functions.

**Federal 157** funds were used to purchase collision investigation equipment for the Okanogan County Sheriff's Office and to create and print teaching curriculum guides to use as a supplement to the street racing videos developed in 2005. These funds were also used to support several speeding projects identified by local law enforcement agencies in Cowlitz County, Bellevue, Pacific County, and Bellingham. Speeding funds were also used to begin media development for an extensive speeding pilot project starting in fiscal year 2007.

**Federal 410** funds were used for statewide DUI emphasis patrols that involved ninety-eight law enforcement agencies. This project, known as DOTs, was designed to be flexible to the participants so that patrols could be scheduled during activities when local agencies knew there were likely to be drinking drivers on the road (i.e. high school graduations, city festivals, etc.) These funds also paid for concentrated DUI patrols titled "Surround the Sound" and the "Night of 1000 Stars". Due to a financial shortfall following passage of SAFETEA-LU, this popular project had to be curtailed in March 2006.

Among special projects funded was a commercial vehicle enforcement project in Grays Harbor County. This project united the commercial vehicle certified officers of the State

Patrol and the Sheriff's Office with local law enforcement to target logging trucks and other large trucks that were being driven with poorly secured loads or that had serious mechanical defects.

PTS continued to work in concert with agencies with similar missions, such as the Liquor Control Board and the Washington Criminal Justice Training Commission, which provided training in the field to law enforcement at locations convenient to small agencies. Classes included SFST, collision investigation, and BAC and radar certification.

PTS also provided the following large grants:

- **Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs**

A block grant of \$325,000 was given to WASPC from 402 funds to distribute to local law enforcement agencies for traffic enforcement equipment. WASPC Traffic Committee members are law enforcement professionals who are in the best position to know which types of equipment are needed by local agencies to further their traffic safety efforts. Consideration in grant awards was given to agencies that work well with other agencies and to agencies that take part in statewide enforcement initiatives.

- **Washington State Patrol**

In fiscal year 2006, WSP received a block grant of \$1,000,000 from federal 402, 157 and 163 funds. This grant was used to fund overtime and equipment for the eight WSP districts throughout Washington State. Overtime was used for WTSC emphasis patrols and for special events in the districts, such as Rod Run, Apple Blossom Festival, and enforcement before and after the Concerts in the Columbia Gorge. In addition, WSP purchased needed traffic enforcement equipment. ■

# Bicycle and Pedestrian Programs

WTSC bicycle and pedestrian programs focus primarily on community based projects. WTSC offers a wide range of services, including technical support, consultation, training, and educational materials to support programs for local audiences.

This past year WTSC worked very closely with local law enforcement to increase pedestrian and bicycle safety awareness of drivers, cyclists and pedestrians. Local grants were allocated to individual cities and counties to increase enforcement activity and community awareness through public information and education.

The cities of Seattle, Everett, and Spokane received funds to establish pro-active pedestrian/crosswalk enforcement in the high-risk areas of the city. Wenatchee received funds for a summer Pedestrian Awareness Month. The mayor declared a proclamation of pedestrian safety and local citizens, including children, were used in the media campaign. Large bus ads, street banners, and radio and television PSA's brought attention to the walking and biking citizens.

The Cooper Jones Advisory Committee continues to assist the WTSC in improving pedestrian & bicycle safety. Committee members include representatives from health, education, enforcement, insurance, licensing and state legislative staff. In February of 2006, MOBIUS Children's Museum opened "Coopers Corner", a hands-on traffic safety exhibit designed to educate and inform children and parents about traffic safety issues. Since the opening, the museum has experienced an average of 7,000 visitors per month and has found Coopers Corner to be the most popular exhibit in the museum. The Badlands Bicycle Club from Spokane received funds to vinyl wrap a transit bus in bright yellow green colors with a SHARE THE ROAD message. This bus will act as a moving billboard in the second largest Washington city for the next 5 years.

WTSC continued to provide funding to the Washington Trauma Society to provide bicycle helmets for needy citizens. This activity is conducted through eight regional EMS Councils and each helmet is fitted properly and accompanied by bicycle safety education.

WTSC staff provides assistance to local governments seeking to pass a local ordinance requiring bicycle helmets. State and local surveys conducted this past year indicate an 84% usage rate in local areas currently governed by helmet ordinances. ■



# School Zone Safety

As part of our efforts to improve school zone and pupil transportation safety, the WTSC has worked very closely with the Washington State Department of Transportation, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction and Department of Health to establish an active Safe Routes to School Plan in all elementary schools.

The School Administrators Guide to Pedestrian Safety was re-published and all school administrators received a copy. AAA of Washington and WTSC proved school Zone Crossing Guard training to increase the awareness and safety of the walking and patrolling students and adults. WTSC continues to offer mini grant to support the purchase of school zone crossing guard gear to schools in need of equipment.

School bus driver training has been offered in Washington as a “train the trainer” program, designed to enhance the school bus driver’s skills in high-risk weather conditions. This training is conducted by the Washington State Patrol and is open to all school districts in Washington State.

The WTSC continues to be an dedicated partner with WSDOT in the Safe Routes to School program in Washington. This past year over \$7 Million in funds was distributed through WSDOT SR2S program to enhance the number of children walking and biking to school.

WSTC also released funds for local communities, schools and governmental agencies to purchase flashing yellow lights to install in elementary school zones. Snohomish County was successful in their request and has completed the installation of lights in every elementary school within unincorporated Snohomish County. Over 120 school zones throughout Washington will receive funds for these improvements this year and the program in designed to continue for the next 6-8 years. ■

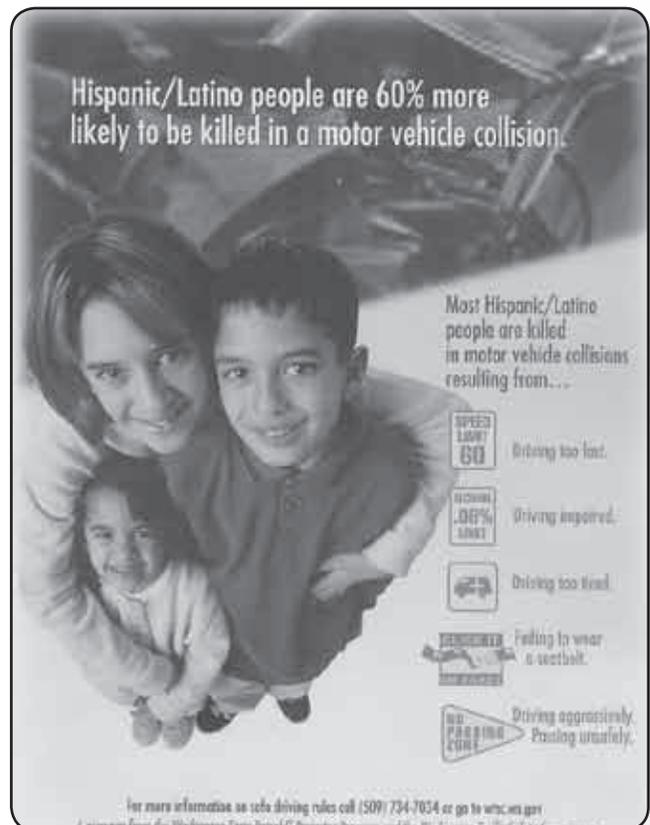


# Community Traffic Safety Task Force Program

The first DUI/Traffic Safety Task Forces began in Washington State as pilot projects in 1983. In FY 2006, WTSC increased the number of Task Forces to 25.24 task forces in operation across the state. Task forces play a vital role for the WTSC, carrying out state and national traffic safety campaigns at the local level. Coordinators work to organize law enforcement emphasis patrols in their area, serve as car seat technicians, and are the point of contact for local organizations and entities such as schools who desire information and materials regarding all aspects of traffic safety. They also work closely with WTSC to create and implement public information materials and media events.

WTSC provided funding in FY 2006 for the coordinators to meet twice during the year for training and sharing of information. Task force coordinators also had the opportunity to attend WTSC's other meetings and conferences throughout the year, such as the annual Impaired Driver Conference in December and the spring 3 Flags occupant protection meeting. Work also began this year to create the state's first tribal task force.

Funds for mini-grants are made available to task forces each fiscal year to support their local work, as well as the occasional larger amount of money for a special project or needed piece of equipment. ■



# Tribal Traffic Safety

This past year WTSC has expanded efforts to improve and involve tribes in traffic safety issues.

WTSC established a formal Government to Government agreement established between the state of Washington -Washington Traffic Safety Commission and the Tribes of Washington State, in accordance with the Centennial Accord, the 2000 Millennium Agreement and related executive orders. The purpose of this agreement is to enhance traffic safety, thereby savings lives, preventing injuries, and preventing loss of property on tribal lands throughout Washington resulting from traffic crashes.

WTSC has partnered with the Colville Tribe to successfully launch the first Tribal Traffic Safety Task Force in Washington. Funds were granted to the North American Tribal Enforcement Officers to purchase equipment to increase DUI and other traffic safety enforcement issues on reservation land. This summer WTSC hosted the 2nd annual Tribal Traffic Safety Summit. This summit brings tribal leaders and law enforcement officials together to identify traffic safety issues, promote safety and outline future efforts of tribes. WTSC also supported the WSDOT Tribal Transportation Conference, bringing together engineers from the tribes and the state to share information and establish a work plan to address local tribal issues. ■

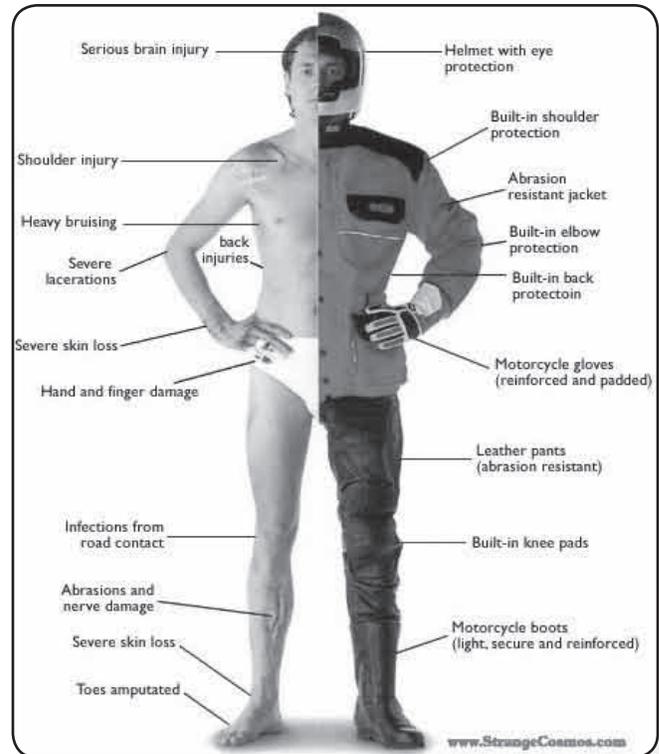


# Motorcycle Safety

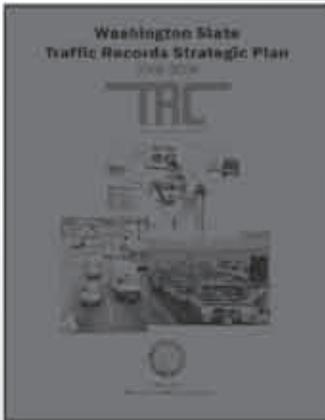
This past year WSTC addressed the increase in motorcycle deaths very seriously. The Department of Licensing, Washington State Patrol and WTSC created a Motorcycle Safety Task Force representing from local riders groups, Department of Health, Department of Transportation, motorcycle dealerships and motorcycle training instructors. The goal of the task force was to reduce deaths and injuries and to identify areas where safety could be increased. Recommendations include a review of the current safety curriculum, a stronger vehicle impound law, and increased funding for the Motorcycle Safety Account in an effort to allow more students to receive training.

WTSC is currently funding a motorcycle research project to review 377 motorcycle crashes by a certified re-constructionist. This study should provide detailed insights to the causation factors of motorcycle crashes and identify areas that can be addressed to reduce death and injuries to the rider.

WTSC funded the Aberdeen Police Department's Motorcycle Crash Investigation Class. This class provided technical training to law enforcement crash re-constructionists and taught extended motorcycle crash scene investigation skills. Thirty members of law enforcement agencies from across the state received this training. ■



# 2006 Traffic Records



In September 2006, Washington's Traffic Records Committee (TRC) published the state's first comprehensive, multi-year strategic plan and projects portfolio for traffic records. The Washington State Traffic Records Strategic Plan is

a significant milestone in on-going efforts to provide a unified, strategic approach to improving the timeliness, accuracy, completeness, uniformity, and accessibility of traffic records data.

This strategic plan was submitted to NHTSA in June as part of the state's application for Section 408 funds (Traffic Safety Information Systems Improvement Grant). In late September, the Pacific Northwest NHTSA Region Office awarded Washington \$763,733. These funds will be used throughout 2007 to further progress in improving the state's traffic records system.

Distribution of Section 408 funds will primarily be determined by the state's Traffic Records Projects Portfolio. This comprehensive list of Washington's traffic records improvement projects serves as a single point of reference for all projects impacting the state's traffic records system. The TRC has included a prioritization list for all four years of 408 authorization to facilitate allocating resources.

The two primary points of focus within the state's projects portfolio are the Electronic Traffic Information Processing (eTRIP) Initiative and the Washington Emergency Medical Services Information System (WEMSIS).

**The eTRIP Initiative** is a series of coordinated projects aimed at creating a seamless and integrated system through which traffic-related information can travel from its point of origin

to its end use and analysis. The heart of this undertaking is to eliminate the excessive inefficiencies of the state's current paper-based process of collecting and exchanging collision reports and citations and infractions. Many of the eTRIP projects have been completed and the remainder are at various stages of implementation. System testing and enhancements will continue throughout 2007. Once testing has been thoroughly completed, law enforcement agencies throughout the state will be able to begin creating electronic citations and collision reports.

**The WEMSIS project** will capture data on all pre-hospital patient encounters from the 500+ licensed pre-hospital services in Washington State. WEMSIS will establish a standard for pre-hospital patient care reporting, a DOH repository for collecting and storing the data, and a method that enables pre-hospital agencies, supervising physicians, regional planners and others to retrieve reports from the dataset. 2006 was a significant year in the planning phase of WEMSIS and resulted in the acquisition of an experienced industry contractor to facilitate statewide implementation. Implementation and training for WEMSIS will continue through 2007 and 2008.

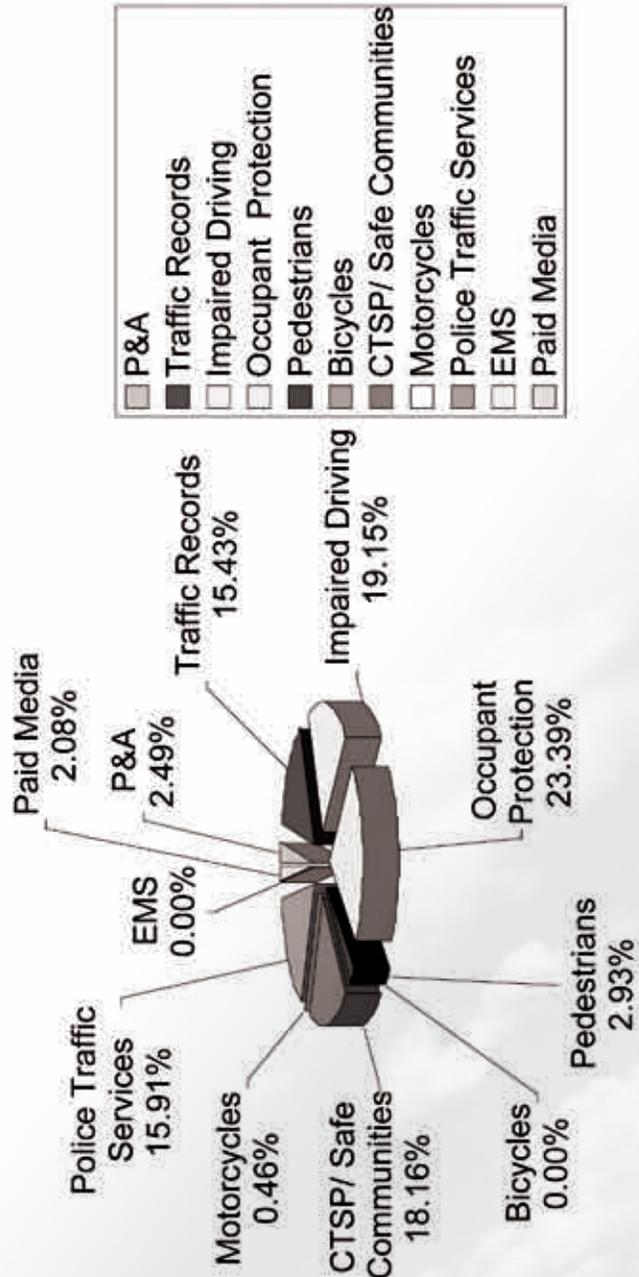
The TRC will continue to work collaboratively throughout 2007 utilizing both federal and state funds to accomplish its strategic goals by successfully implementing traffic records improvement projects. ■



# Financial Summary

## Financial Summary

	402	405	410	411	154	157	163	164	2003b	Total	% of Total
P&A	\$210,541									\$210,541	2.5%
Traffic Records	\$953,971					\$106,609	\$244,301			\$1,304,881	%15.4
Impaired Driving	\$1,196,788		\$398,379			\$24,679				\$1,619,846	%19.1
Occupant Protection	\$444,041	\$1,372,450				\$29,951			\$131,923	\$1,978,365	%23.4
Pedestrians	\$247,942									\$247,942	%2.9
Bicycles	\$0									\$0	%0.0
CTSP/Safe Communities	\$1,184,930					\$49,614	\$301,969			\$1,536,513	%18.2
Motorcycles	\$39,031									\$39,013	%0.5
Police Traffic Services	\$495,380					\$700,828	\$150,000			\$1,346,208	%15.9
EMS	\$0									\$0	%0.0
Paid Media	\$0					\$75,648	\$99,979			\$175,627	%2.1
<b>Total</b>										<b>\$8,458,936</b>	



# Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS)

**The Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS)** was conceived, designed, and developed by the National Center for Statistical Analysis (NCSA) of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) to collect data on traffic fatalities. This valuable information helps identify traffic safety problems, suggests solutions, and helps provide an objective basis to evaluate the effectiveness of motor vehicle safety standards and highway safety programs.

To be included in the FARS data base, the fatality must result from a motor vehicle crash when the death occurs on a public trafficway within 30 days of the crash.

In Washington State, FARS is housed at the Washington Traffic Safety Commission and is part of the Traffic Research and Data Center. The Washington State FARS Team works with traffic safety program managers and researchers to provide accurate and timely data that is used for evaluating safety programs, as well as to aid in the efforts of partner state, federal, and local agencies. Washington State FARS is responsible for gathering data on more than 600 fatal crashes yearly.

Washington FARS coordinates with numerous agencies to collect data on each fatal traffic case, including the Washington State Departments of Licensing and Transportation, Washington State Patrol, the Department of Health Center for Health Statistics, the Washington State Toxicology Lab, statewide EMS agencies (public, private, and volunteer), the Federal Highway Administration, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) Special Crash Investigations unit, the NHTSA Center for Statistical Analysis (NCSA), the Federal Motor Carriers Administration, city and county governments, Canadian driver and vehicle records, as well as FARS Analysts in other states.

Information from each state's collision report is coded to standards and definitions adopted by FARS to allow for comparisons between states. In addition to a computerized self-training system and an initial one-week training session, FARS Analysts and Supervisors attend yearly national trainings.

## FARS Staff

**Sandi Lee**, FARS Analyst, is serving a second year on the National FARS Coding Committee. Her presence on the committee gives a voice to Washington's particular traffic safety data collection issues. **Mimi Nickerson**, FARS Analyst, joined the FARS Unit on May 1.

## Government Management Accountability Process (GMAP)

FARS staff participates in monthly GMAP meetings, presenting preliminary fatality data broken down in a variety of ways, including type of vehicle, type of roadway, and whether the collision was urban or rural. FARS analysts maintain a five-year fatality comparison spreadsheet which is distributed quarterly to individuals in partner agencies and local community organizations.

## Data Collection Innovations

The current traffic data collection process in Washington State involves the duplicative manual entry at multiple agencies of large volumes of data from traffic citations and collision reports. Over 140,000 collision reports and 1,000,000 tickets are entered annually, with an expected future growth rate of 10% per year. These paper-based data collection systems are subject to inefficiencies, errors, time delays, and excessive costs.

# Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) continued...

The Electronic Traffic Information Processing (eTRIP) initiative will develop and implement an automated system enabling law enforcement agencies (LEA's) to generate tickets, collision reports, and other forms in the field and then transmit them electronically to authorized users. This initiative seeks to accomplish the Washington Traffic Records Strategic Plan by replacing paper-based collection processes and exchanges to speed up and improve the quality of statewide traffic data.

For the FARS Unit, eTRIP means that Police Accident Reports will be generated and delivered more promptly, accurately, and completely. These improvements will significantly reduce the number of written requests for further information sent to law enforcement agencies, saving time for both the FARS Unit and the officers. It will open the door to improving the Electronic Data Transfer from DOT. Ultimately, it is likely that all collision data will eventually be transmitted electronically to initiate and autofill cases within the state and national data base.

## EMS Data Collection

Pre-hospital information, e.g., crash notification times, "scene" arrival times, occupant ejection paths, and extrication data, is critical to traffic fatality data collection. Currently no vehicle exists to provide this vital information automatically to the FARS Unit. Therefore, analysts must issue written requests to individual EMS providers for information on every fatality collision. Washington is fortunate to have over 800 public, private, and volunteer EMS agencies; however, it is not always clear which agency responded to a collision and often information requests must be issued multiple times. The Department of Health's EMS data-sharing project, Washington EMS Information System (WEMSIS) has launched its pilot in four areas and expects to be fully operational in January 2007. FARS analysts will soon be able to access EMS pre-hospital data online, which will save hours of tedious paperwork for FARS staff and EMS providers.

## Drug and Alcohol Reporting

Washington Administrative Code requires toxicology testing within a 4-hour window for all persons who die in traffic collisions. For surviving drivers involved in fatal crashes, no such requirement exists, so unless officers suspect impairment and order BACs, they will not obtain test results for FARS staff to analyze. ■



# Looking to the Future

## **Training, technical assistance, expertise and other resources necessary for success**

We have benefited greatly from NHTSA sponsored program assessments, including a traffic records assessment in 2003 and an impaired driving assessment in 2004. We also rely heavily on the excellent courses offered by NHTSA's TSI in Oklahoma City.

We are also benefiting from the NHTSA Management Review conducted in August of 2006. The NHTSA staff who conducted the review worked closely with us for more than a year prior to the review and they continue to work closely with WTSC staff to implement the recommendations made in the review. The benefit of this constructive partnership that exists between WTSC staff and the staff of the NHTSA regional office cannot be overstated. ■



# Contact Information

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Mary Selecky • Department of Health

Judge Judith R. Eiler • Judiciary

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Terri Bergeson • Superintendent of Public  
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Robin Arnold-Williams • Department of  
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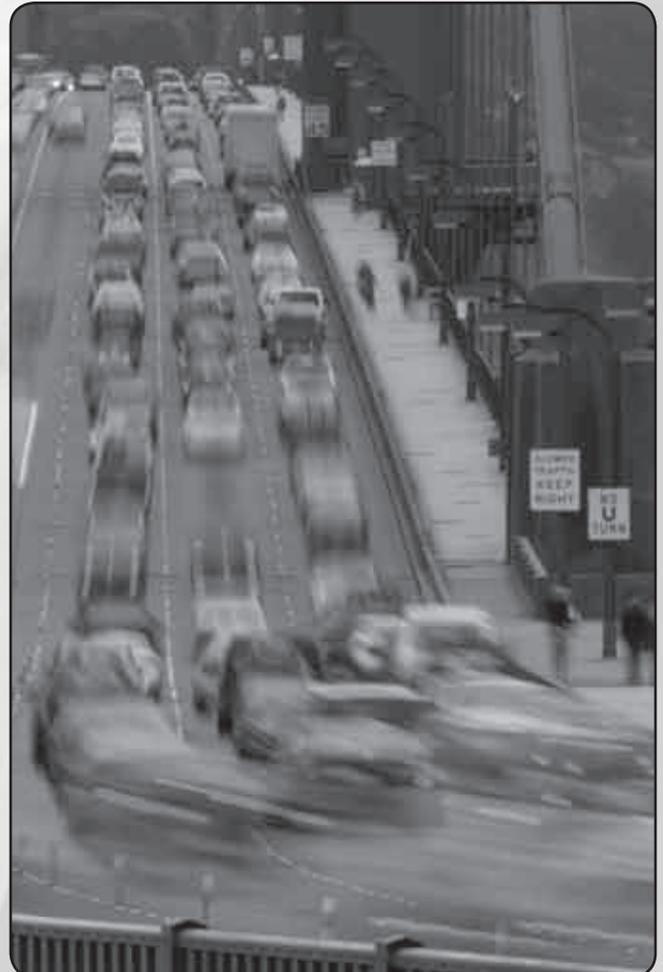
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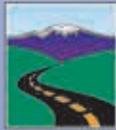
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