

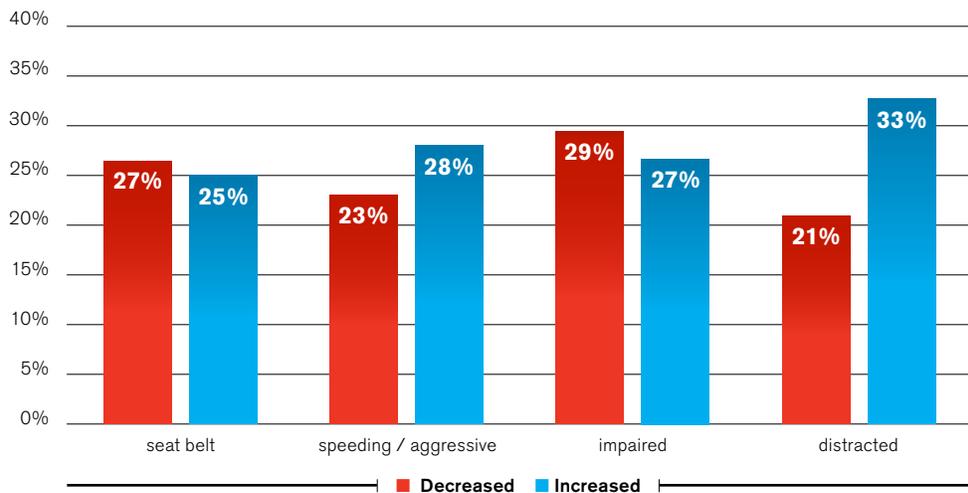
THE LEL

Law Enforcement Improving Traffic Safety

August 2019

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Has your current engagement in each of the following traffic safety enforcement activities decreased, stayed the same, or increased relative to 5 years ago?



Understanding our Audience: Law Enforcement & Traffic Safety

A recent report contains key insights into the attitudes and beliefs of law enforcement as it relates to traffic safety.

By Wil Price and Jay Otto

The data was collected through surveys completed by 568 law enforcement officers representing agencies in four states.

MUCH OF THE WORK OF A LAW ENFORCEMENT LIAISON (LEL) centers on influencing action. In agencies where traffic safety is not a core element of daily operations or is not recognized as important, an LEL must get leadership to understand its importance and take action. Therefore, it is critical to understand the views and attitudes of the executives who set agency policy and direction and the law enforcement officers who implement that policy.

Understanding Law Enforcement Attitudes and Beliefs About Traffic Safety is the most recent publication sponsored by the Traffic Safety Culture Transportation Pooled Fund Program supported by 14 states and managed by the Montana Department of Transportation. The data for the project was collected through surveys completed by 568 law enforcement officers representing 19 municipal police departments, sheriffs' offices and state police agencies in four states. The study had four distinct

Understanding our Audience: Law Enforcement & Traffic Safety

While the challenges LELs face vary, this is a resource that can assist in finding a best approach to engaging law enforcement in traffic safety and influencing law enforcement officers and leaders to act.



objectives: understand how law enforcement prioritizes traffic safety, identify attitudes and beliefs about traffic enforcement, explore how perceptions within law enforcement have changed in recent years and discover how the perceptions of change vary based on agency type, leadership and geographic setting.

The research found that state police agencies were more likely to engage in traffic enforcement and address the four priority high-risk behaviors: speeding, impaired driving, seat belt use and distracted driving. Sheriffs' offices and municipal agencies were found to be less engaged, with a greater focus on speed enforcement than the other three behaviors.

Several factors can impact the level and nature of traffic enforcement that occurs. The data show that law enforcement officers were 2.5 times more likely to conduct frequent traffic enforcement when they perceived high expectations from their supervisors and command personnel for enforcement than officers who perceived low expectations. Law enforcement officers who participated in four or more training activities were more likely to engage in traffic enforcement than officers who received less training.

These findings likely align with what LELs observe at agencies in their jurisdiction and this research can help identify strategies to increase traffic safety participation and engagement. For LELs, four of the report's six

recommendations are especially helpful in focusing efforts to influence action:

- **Frame conversations and efforts to increase enforcement around concern for safety and agreement with zero deaths and serious injuries goals.**

Getting people to think differently about traffic safety starts with communicating the impact it has on quality of life within communities. Discussions framed around the prevalence of human behavioral factors in traffic deaths can help build support for a goal of no more fatalities.

- **Increase the prioritization of traffic safety and traffic safety enforcement among officers.**

Remind law enforcement officers that the value and effectiveness of High Visibility Enforcement (HVE) efforts for both the violator and the public who observes their contact are part of a proven strategy to reduce crashes.

- **Work to reduce barriers to regular and consistent enforcement.**

The research recommendations involve law enforcement, prosecutors, the judiciary and the public in meeting this challenge. For LELs, there is value in engaging with your Traffic Safety Resource Prosecutor (TSRP) to support and assist in eliminating potential roadblocks to enforcement.

- **Bolster training and knowledge about traffic safety**

enforcement. Promoting training for law enforcement officers enhances the knowledge and skills of the individual and can be a meaningful way for executives to demonstrate that traffic safety is a priority.

This is a brief overview of the research findings. All LELs and traffic safety professionals would benefit from reading the report and reviewing the recommendations to increase participation and engagement. The report also includes [a brief survey and talking points](#) that can help facilitate conversations with officers. In addition, a recording of the webinar discussing the report is posted on the Center for Health and Safety Culture's [YouTube channel](#).

While the challenges LELs face vary, this is a resource that can assist in finding a best approach to engaging law enforcement in traffic safety and influencing law enforcement officers and leaders to act.

Wil Price serves in the Enforcement and Justice Services Division at NHTSA and is NHTSA's manager of the National Law Enforcement Liaison Program.

Jay Otto is a Principal Scientist for the Center for Health and Safety Culture (CHSC) in the Western Transportation Institute at Montana State University.

Tim Burrows
PROGRAM MANAGER



An Introduction

I want to get to know every LEL, help where I can and learn from you all to build on an incredible program.

WHEN I STARTED MY POLICING career, my goal was to become a homicide detective. At the academy, I asked one of my instructors who had been a homicide investigator the best path to get me there.

His answer was simple: "Go to traffic; learn to interview people. The rest will fall into place." After a few weeks with my Field Training Officer (FTO), I fell in love with traffic and forgot all about homicide.

I'll never forget the first belligerent drunk my FTO placed in handcuffs. At the station, the driver told anyone within earshot what he was going to do to us and how big of a mistake we were making. Then he asked my FTO the magic question: "Who do you think you are?"

My FTO stopped what he was doing, looked the drunk guy in the eyes, held up his driver license and said in a low, slow tone, "I've got your license, I know the law and you're in my custody. To you, right now, I am God."

It was later explained to me when you know the laws, have lawful authority and have the resources you need to do your job, you have incredible power and with that power comes an even greater responsibility. You're saving lives.

As the National LEL Program Manager, I am once again work-

ing with amazing people who are committed to saving lives. I am humbled and honored to be working with all of you.

I'm an advocate for Below 100. "Move Over" is one of the most important programs we can promote. I believe in the "Road To Zero," that no one should drive distracted or impaired, that everyone in the vehicle needs to buckle up and that anyone who turns left on a red light while I'm waiting to go straight should immediately have their license revoked. I believe doing the speed limit, like good manners and respecting your elders, is old fashioned, honorable and should be practiced more.

I want to get to know every LEL, help where I can and learn from you all to build on an incredible program.

On that note, I want to thank my predecessor, Vern Betkey, for the tireless work and dedication he did on behalf of the National LEL Program and traffic safety during his long and very distinguished career.

Finally, thank you to the Governors Highway Safety Association Board of Directors and staff for trusting me to carry the NLELP forward and allowing me to work with the incredible team that is in place.



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Best Practices

From left: New York State Police (NYSP) Major James Michael, NSYP Sergeant Diane Kritz-Garner, conference keynote speaker and retired U.S. Navy SEAL Michael Sarraile (Echelon Front), New York LEL and NYSP Sergeant Todd Engwer, and New York Governor's Traffic Safety Committee Director Jim Allen.



Empire State Conference to Mark 20 Years

By Staff Sergeant Terry McDonnell

REMEMBER Y2K? WHILE DISASTER did not strike the world's computer systems, something monumental did happen in the world of traffic safety: it was the inaugural year of the Empire State Law Enforcement Traffic Safety Conference (ESLETS), the only statewide law enforcement traffic safety conference at the time, organized by law enforcement for law enforcement. Since then, it has been on the calendars of police agencies across the state of New York every year.

ESLETS was born from the concept that the law enforcement community is most effective when everyone works together toward common objectives. In 1999, New York was one of only a handful of states that embarked on an

effort that has since become the standard for traffic safety initiatives—high visibility, zero tolerance traffic enforcement by a unified law enforcement community.

The Buckle Up New York (BUNY) seat belt campaign brings together more than 400 individual police departments from Buffalo to the eastern tip of Long Island to conduct annual waves of safety restraint enforcement to save lives by increasing safety restraint use. At the time the campaign started, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) estimated that increasing seat belt use by 10 percent in New York could save 148 lives and more than \$400 million in medical and other direct costs. New York's law enforcement community acting collectively achieved that goal in just two years. Today, the seat belt use rate is over 93 percent!

Born of that success, the New York State Police and the Gov-

ernor's Traffic Safety Committee conceived of the ESLETS conference to continue the law enforcement partnership across a broader spectrum of traffic safety issues. Since its inaugural year, more than 300 police officers, sheriff's deputies and troopers of all ranks have attended the conference each year.

The conference location changes each year to make it more accessible to police agencies in a variety of geographic regions. Planning has begun for the 20th annual conference, which will take place in May 2020 at a location to be determined. A final location will be announced in December 2019.

Staff Sergeant Terry McDonnell is an officer with the New York State Police.

The Best: Practice

By Tim Burrows

AT THE ARIZONA GOVERNOR'S Office of Highway Safety 2019 Law Enforcement and Prosecutors Training Conference, one of the presenters asked the audience, "How did your first DUI trial go?" There were a lot of snickers and some laughs from the audience.

My first DUI trial was an epic failure. I said the wrong things, failed to say the right things and watched in utter embarrassment as the accused

ESLETS was born from the concept that the law enforcement community is most effective when everyone works together toward common objectives.

Best Practices

Professionals practice continually. That is true with everything you do.

walked away with a judicial finding of “not guilty.”

I was not prepared.

An experienced traffic officer took me aside and explained everything I did wrong. He told me to watch his trial and take notes. He gave evidence that was well beyond what I was told during training would be needed to prove the facts in issue. He told me everything I needed to do to meet the standard: the right words, the right circumstances, how to testify professionally and some of the things to watch for. His best advice, though, had nothing to do with the evidence or his observations. It had to do with something more important.

“Practice,” he said.

Practice how you describe observations. Practice watching for cues and clues. Practice your answers. Practice your note-taking. Professionals practice continually. That is true with everything you do.

A world class sprinter runs 100 meters flat out in about 10 seconds, but to get to that 10 seconds they spend hundreds of hours working on starts, form, stride and strength. A professional golfer might strike the ball 280 times in a four-day tournament, but they will do that in one day with just their wedge on the driving range.

How much time do you spend in practice mode compared to game mode?

As a parent, I've spent many hours having my children do role playing exercises on how to deal with strangers that may approach them in real life and online. One of those encounters may only last a few seconds but I want to make sure my children have experienced the situation in practice mode before the stakes are real. I don't subscribe to the belief that practice makes per-

fect. Practice makes prepared; prepared makes professional. Be a professional in everything you do. Strive to be the best.

The best practice.

Tim Burrows is the National LEL Program Manager for the Governors Highway Safety Association.

Spreading the Word About Heatstroke

In the span of 10 minutes, a car can heat up by 20 degrees, enough to kill a child left alone in the vehicle. Visit [Traffic Safety Marketing](#) for all the materials you need to help prevent vehicle related Heat Stroke deaths and to remind your community to [#CheckForBaby](#).





First Person

We gain ground when we get people to begin to understand why traffic safety is so important. Make your passion work for you; tell your story.

What is the Source of Your Passion?

By Wil Price

EVERY LEL BRINGS PASSION TO THE JOB.

We see the devastation and impact of serious injuries and deaths resulting from traffic crashes and we feel strongly about making a difference. As individuals, we should give some thought to where our passion comes from and use that understanding of ourselves to leverage our effectiveness. Sharing your passion can influence how our audience thinks about and responds to our mission of advancing traffic safety.

I recently reconnected with an old high school buddy with whom I lost contact more than 30 years ago as life took us in different directions. We get together for lunch periodically to catch up, reminisce and swap stories about our lives and work. During our last lunch, he was talking about lousy drivers and how they cause traffic “accidents.” Naturally, I went into work mode saying there are no accidents—just crashes and collisions—and how these events are almost always the result of human behavior. That led to a lengthy conversation about traffic safety and 20 minutes or so into the topic, he stopped me and asked where all of this was coming from. Traffic wasn’t something I was keen about as a young officer; when did this change?

To answer, I shared the story of my good friend, Rob, who was murdered (a term I do not use lightly) by a drunk driver who ran a red light at somewhere between 75 and 80 miles per hour. I recounted the

date (May 23, 1998) and location (the intersection of Baseline Road and Mill Avenue in Tempe, Arizona) where Rob’s life was taken. I was a patrol sergeant working a night shift at the time, and among the things that haunt me is that this happened in my city and on my watch.

I then told him the driver was someone we both knew—a fellow with whom we went to high school. This is where the passion lives: having “skin in the game.” I finished by sharing that I think about Rob every day and still miss him terribly.

Storytelling can be a powerful tool for educating and influencing. I have just shared mine, and if nothing else you now know what drives me. Influencing action requires us first to get folks to think about traffic safety differently and then to do something about it. We gain ground when we get people to begin to understand why traffic safety is so important. Make your passion work for you; tell your story. You never know what opportunities and connections will come about to help you get things done.

Wil Price serves in the Enforcement and Justice Services Division at NHTSA and is NHTSA’s manager of the National Law Enforcement Liaison Program.

Regional Spot light

The campaign resulted in 381 impaired driving arrests, 367 drug arrests, 100 DRE evaluations and 12,880 traffic citations.

Region 7 Sees 420 Campaign Success

By Bill Sullivan

ON APRIL 20 AND 21, THE NHTSA Region 7 Office joined the region's State Highway Safety Offices (SHSOs) in Missouri, Kansas, Iowa, Nebraska and Arkansas and the Region 6 Oklahoma SHSO to conduct a media and enforcement campaign focused on drug-impaired driving.

This campaign was timed to coincide with marijuana users' celebration of "420," or April 20, as a holiday. According to the NHTSA Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS), traffic fatalities typically increase 12 percent on April 20. The goal of the campaign was to reduce the number of impaired drivers on our roadways.

Each state held a media event to kick off the campaign, highlighting plans to increase impaired



driving enforcement throughout the weekend. Leadership representing all six state police agencies participated in kick-off activities, along with local law enforcement agencies who spoke on the dangers of driving while high. Drug Recognition Experts (DREs) were available to answer questions for the media and drug-detecting dogs were on hand to provide demonstrations on how drug-impaired driving arrests are made. In addition, public service announcements were produced for each individual state's use. The campaign received a lot of local and social media attention throughout the region and Oklahoma.

Several hundred law enforcement agencies voluntarily participated in the enforcement campaign. Many agencies assigned their DREs and officers trained in Advanced Roadside Impaired Driving Enforcement (ARIDE) to work this special enforcement period.

The "420" campaign generated impressive results, both in terms of media coverage and in enforcement totals. The dangers of driving while high were widely

discussed on social media platforms, as was the campaign messaging, "Drive High—Get a DUI" and "If You Feel Different, You Drive Different."

The campaign resulted in 381 impaired driving arrests (including 10 drivers of commercial motor vehicles), 367 drug arrests, 100 DRE evaluations and 12,880 traffic citations.

"Drug-impaired driving is a safety issue for drivers and for all law enforcement," said NHTSA Region 7 Administrator Susan DeCourcy. "It is our hope that people will think twice before driving while impaired by drugs. It is deadly for the driver, but also for his or her passengers, and for other people on the streets. If you are taking any type of drug—prescription, over-the-counter, or illegal—pass your keys to a sober driver. Remember: A DUI is for more than just alcohol."

Bill Sullivan is the NHTSA Region 7 Law Enforcement Liaison.



Every three hours, a person or vehicle is struck by a train somewhere in the U.S. Every one of these incidents is preventable.

Operation Clear Track

LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES across the U.S. are encouraged to participate in Operation Clear Track this September and LELs can help get the word out. The initiative, conducted as part of Rail Safety Week, is organized by Amtrak and Operation Lifesaver.

Every three hours, a person or vehicle is struck by a train somewhere in the U.S. Every one of these incidents is preventable.

Agencies are being asked to be a part of the largest single-day railroad safety law enforcement initiative by conducting a safety detail at railroad grade crossings within their community on Tuesday, September 24. More than 500 local police, state police, highway/traffic patrol and sheriff's officials will participate.

The crossings selected for this initiative will be locations that have experienced multiple strikes



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or are known problem areas for railroad incidents. Participating officers will report to the crossings of their choice, during the hours of their choice, to maximize participation.

During the safety detail, officers will issue citations, along with written and/or verbal warnings to those who fail to comply with state railroad grade crossing and trespassing laws. As part of the enforcement duty, officials will hand out railroad safety pocket cards to motorists and pedestrians at and around the crossings. The pocket cards offer tips about crossing the railroad tracks safely and legally.

At the end of the safety detail, each department will fill out an online reporting form to send their results to Operation Lifesaver and Amtrak. They will be asked to report on how many

citations and warnings were issued, plus the number of pocket cards that were handed out.

Local media will be invited to cover the safety detail. The goal of the initiative is to make sure people understand that when they SEE TRACKS, they must THINK TRAINS. Trains can come from any direction, at any time, on any track. It takes a train traveling at 55 mph about one mile to stop. That's 18 football fields!

If you want to volunteer to help spread the railroad safety message contact Operation Lifesaver at www.oli.org.



From the Bench

Impaired Driving: Some Questions to Think About

By Judge Neil Edward Axel

With the increase in the number of prescriptions taken, the legalization of marijuana, the use of illicit drugs and the public's acceptance of the use of drugs, greater attention is being paid to the impact of drug-impaired driving.

LET US LOOK AT THE FOLLOWING HYPOTHETICAL: an impaired driver is operating their vehicle at 8:30 p.m. on a two-lane road with his five-year-old son as a passenger. Due to his impairment, he is driving erratically and loses control of his vehicle, hitting another vehicle and causing significant property damage but no serious injuries. The driver is impaired by one or more of the following substances and under the following circumstances:

- Alcohol following an office holiday party
- Lawfully-taken prescription medication
- Cocaine
- Medical marijuana
- Marijuana in a state where possession is legal
- Marijuana in a state where possession is illegal

Does it make a difference to the criminal justice system what substance the driver was impaired by? Should it make a difference? Is the issue impairment, or the substance they were impaired by? Is there a difference whether the impairing substance was lawful or illicit? And finally, does the criminal justice system, in fact, treat these cases differently?

Impaired driving, regardless of the nature of the impairing substance, continues

to be the cause of one-third of all fatal crashes. Even as the overall number of drivers killed in motor vehicle crashes has declined, the rate of involvement of drugs in fatal crashes has increased. DUI statutes around the country generally prohibit a person from operating a motor vehicle when their cognitive or physical condition to do so is impaired by alcohol, drugs, or a combination of alcohol and drugs. Under such statutes, "drugs" may include not only illicit drugs, but also prescriptions, over-the-counter medications, and other "intoxicants."

With the increase in the number of prescriptions taken, the legalization of marijuana, the use of illicit drugs and the public's acceptance of the use of drugs, greater attention is being paid to the impact of drug-impaired driving. Although reasonable minds may disagree as to the correct answers to the above questions, the bottom line is that when one is operating a motor vehicle when their cognitive or physical condition to do so is impaired, they place the public at greatly enhanced risk of death or injury. Those impacted by such crashes probably are not going to care about the nature of the substance taken by the impaired driver.

Judge Axel has served on the District Court of Maryland for 22 years, and currently sits as a Senior Judge throughout the state. He is the American Bar Association National Judicial Fellow for traffic safety issues.



Training & Research



Fourteen LELs, instructors and guests participated in the July 2019 delivery of the LEL Professional Development Course, which was held in Louisville, Kentucky. The course provides foundational knowledge critical for LELs to be effective at the state and local level and to develop and enhance the skills necessary to engage with law enforcement leaders in a meaningful way that can influence action. Dates and locations for the FY 2020 classes will be announced this fall.



Lifesavers Conference Seeks Speaker Proposals

THE LIFESAVERS NATIONAL Conference on Highway Safety Priorities is now accepting speaker proposals for the 2020 Conference, which will be held March 15-17 in Tampa, Florida. Proposals must be submitted via [Lifesavers' online portal](#) and will be accepted until September 6. Conference organizers are only accepting single-speaker proposals and may combine submissions with others in a single workshop. For more information, visit the Lifesavers website at [lifesaversconference.org](#).

New Publications

Social Media Practices in Traffic Safety

This publication highlights promising practices designed to help inform planning and decision-making for the different platforms, provides examples of messages with high engagement rates, and offers real world case studies. The report is the product of NHTSA and GHSA's National Cooperative Research and Evaluation Program (NCREP).

Traffic Safety Facts: Motorcycles (2017)

This fact sheet contains information on fatal motorcycle crashes and fatalities based on data from the Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS). There were 5,172 motorcyclists killed in motor vehicle traffic crashes in 2017, a three percent decrease from the previous year. Motorcyclists accounted for 14 percent of all traffic fatalities.

Motorcyclists' Attitudes on Using High-Visibility Gear to Improve Conspicuity

This report by NHTSA and GHSA's National Cooperative Research and Evaluation Program (NCREP) examines why riders choose to wear—or not wear—high-visibility gear. While most participants in a focus group did not regularly wear such gear, those who did reported doing so after having been in a crash with a motor vehicle or personally knowing another rider who had been in such a crash.



Traffic Safety Calendar

AUGUST

BACK TO SCHOOL SAFETY MONTH

Primary Message: *Walk, Bike, and Ride to School Safely!*

AUGUST 10-12

ANNUAL IACP TRAINING CONFERENCE ON DRUGS, ALCOHOL, AND IMPAIRED DRIVING

Anaheim Marriott
Anaheim, CA

AUGUST 16-SEPT 2

NATIONAL DRIVE SOBER OR GET PULLED OVER ENFORCEMENT MOBILIZATION

Law enforcement professionals across the country will be working to stop one of the deadliest and most often committed crimes—drunk driving—by increasing enforcement efforts and raising public awareness.

AUGUST 21

LEL WEBINAR: MULTI-STATE AND REGIONAL INITIATIVES

AUGUST 24-28

GHSA 2019 ANNUAL MEETING

Anaheim Marriott
Anaheim, CA

SEPTEMBER

SEPTEMBER 18

LEL WEBINAR: BELOW 100, MOVE OVER AND PROTECTING LEOs AT ROADSIDE: HOW LELs CAN ADVANCE OFFICER SAFETY

SEPTEMBER 15-21

CHILD PASSENGER SAFETY WEEK & NATIONAL SEAT CHECK SATURDAY

Car crashes are a leading cause of death for children ages 1 to 13. Many times, deaths and injuries can be prevented by proper use of car seats, boosters and seat belts.

OCTOBER

OCTOBER 2

NATIONAL WALK TO SCHOOL DAY

OCTOBER 16

LEL WEBINAR: 2019 WINTER DRIVE SOBER OR GET PULLED OVER CAMPAIGN FEATURING NEW IMPAIRED DRIVING RESOURCES & TOOLS

OCTOBER 20-26

NATIONAL TEEN DRIVER SAFETY WEEK

Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for teens in the United States, ahead of all other types of injury, disease, or violence.

OCTOBER 21-25

NATIONAL SCHOOL BUS SAFETY WEEK

OCTOBER 26-29

2019 INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CHIEFS OF POLICE ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND EXPOSITION

McCormick Place West
Chicago, IL

OCTOBER 31

HALLOWEEN IMPAIRED DRIVING MESSAGING

Primary Message: *Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving*

A calendar of events, recordings of past webinars, newsletter archives and many more resources for LELs are available at www.nlelp.org. For campaign materials and tools to help you with your traffic safety marketing and messaging, visit www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov.