



# Badges, Buckles, Belts & Beyond

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## Spring 2002 Safety Memo No. 8

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## Ready... Set... Raise the Safety Belt Usage Rate!

The Smart, Safe and Sober Partnership conducted 6 training sessions on the May Mobilization during March. Over 200 law enforcement and traffic safety advocates attended. During the training, attendees received their SSS 2002 Spring Planner; heard about local showcase programs, proposed legislation from the 2002 Virginia

General Assembly, and traffic safety initiatives throughout Virginia and in NHTSA Region 3; and went home proudly with a Smart, Safe and Sober t-shirt.

Please refer to the May Mobilization schedule below and help raise the safety belt usage rate by supporting the **Buckle Up Now Virginia Campaign!**



### 2002 Memorial Day Holiday Wave

The current safety belt usage rate is 72.3%; the goal is 77%.

<b>Week 1 — Education &amp; Media</b>	<b>May 13 – 19</b>
Pre-enforcement safety belt survey due:	May 13
<b>Weeks 2 &amp; 3 — Enforcement</b>	<b>May 20 – June 3</b>
14 days of high visibility enforcement	Form due June 10
<b>Week 4 — Evaluation &amp; Media</b>	<b>June 3 – 9</b>
Post-enforcement safety belt survey due:	June 10
<b>All forms to be submitted by:</b>	<b>June 10</b>

## Child Safety Seat Training

The following dates have been set up for the Child Safety Seat Update Class and NTSC's Standardized Child Safety Seat Class at the Fairfax County Criminal Justice Academy.

These classes are open to all. **If you wish to attend please contact Charlie Brown or Terri Allen at (703) 449-7200.**

### Child Safety Seat Update Class

May 6, 2002  
July 22, 2002  
August 26, 2002  
September 16, 2002  
November 18, 2002  
December 9, 2002

### NHTSA Standardized CPS Certification Class

May 7-10, 2002  
—  
August 27-30, 2002  
September 17-20, 2002  
November 19-22, 2002  
December 10-13, 2002

## ACTS registrations are in the mail!

■ May 7-9, 2002  
Richmond

We look forward to seeing you at the **Annual Conference on Transportation Safety** in Richmond, at the Sheraton Richmond West Hotel. Preconference activities start on the evening of May 6 and the conference begins with the **Opening Reception at 6:00 pm on May 7**. Registration is \$45 per person and the hotel is \$77 per night.

If you have not received your registration packet, please contact Faye Hager at (804) 367-8107 to request one.

## Child Safety Seat Round-Up

The “Old, Used, Borrowed and Abused Child Safety Seat Round-Up” finished its 13th year with one of the biggest safety seat crushings ever destroying 981 old child safety seats! This program is geared to educating parents and caregivers to the potential dangers of using old child safety seats. These seats could be on recall, missing parts, or have been involved in a crash, posing a possible life threatening situation to children.

Along with The Concerned Citizens Advocating Traffic Safety (CCATS), AAA of Tidewater, DMV, Wal Mart and Super Centers collected old child safety seats throughout the month of February. People turning in these seats received a \$5.00 gift certificate courtesy of Wal Mart.

The crushing took place on March 12th. Hoffman Beverage, who stores the seats during the Round-Up brought a record 981 safety seats that were piled high in Wal Mart’s parking lot and crushed by a front end loader and carried away to the dump so that they could never put a child in danger. Special thanks to the Specialized Transportation



*East Coast Demo destroys the unsafe child seats.*

Safety Coalition—a subcommittee of CCATS for providing the heavy construction equipment and support to accomplish such a worthwhile activity.

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*For more information on this program, contact Mary Ann Rayment, CTSP Portsmouth, at (757) 416-1741 or via e-mail at [dmvm3r@dmv.state.va.us](mailto:dmvm3r@dmv.state.va.us).*

## Ford Boost America Program

Virginia was awarded an additional two-thousand booster seats from the **Boost America Program!** Due to our successful, well-planned and orchestrated kickoff event, the International Center for Injury Prevention (ICIP) issued 10,000 boosters instead of the original allotment of 8,000 boosters to Virginia.

The Boost America Program kicked off in Norfolk on Saturday, February 23rd, as planned. Seventy-seven volunteers from across the Commonwealth came together to assist with the educational dissemination of booster seats supplied so graciously by the Ford Motor Company. Jim Savage represented ICIP and the program. More than 250 booster seats were distributed.

In addition to the Boost America booster seat giveaway, a simultaneous safety seat check was conducted. Out of the 119 safety seats inspected, none

of the safety seats were installed correctly; 20 convertible child safety seats were donated to families.

The remaining booster seats will be shared by various agencies and organizations throughout the 35 health districts. These sites are scheduled to receive booster seat shipments in late March. A distribution listing by location will be provided to ICIP, DMV, and for use by the VDH Center for Injury and Violence Prevention’s information line at 1-800-732-8333.

Thanks and congratulations go out to everyone involved with the program! This multi-agency effort was a very successful and enjoyable endeavor due to everyone’s hard work and expertise in this field. The cold weather was challenging at times, but the rewards were well worth it. Virginia’s children will be traveling our roadways more safely, thanks to all of you and Boost America!



## States Making Progress in Child Passenger Safety

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Across the country, dramatic improvements are being seen in the child passenger safety effort. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) Controlled Intersection Surveys, the number of infants restrained in safety seats has increased from 85 percent in 1996 to 95 percent in 2000, and for children age 1 to 4, restraint use increased from 60 percent in 1996 to 91 percent in 2000. While more work must be done to increase these numbers, this significant achievement is strong evidence that the states' approach is working.

NAGHSR Chair Marsha Lembke says the governors highway safety association continues to believe the key to increasing child passenger safety lies in a combination of education, enforcement and legislation. She says that fitting stations and high visibility educational campaigns are making a dramatic difference. "These education campaigns are very effective when they are complemented with enforcement efforts so the public knows there are serious consequences if they don't properly protect their children." Lembke continues, "Legislation is also part of the solution. States need strong laws as the backbone of their child safety effort." Six states (Arkansas, Georgia, Maryland, New Mexico, New Jersey and

South Carolina) strengthened their child passenger safety laws in 2001 while legislation has been proposed in many others.

Lembke says credit for the improving numbers goes not only to the states but also to NHTSA and numerous other safety partners including local SAFEKIDS Coalitions. Additionally, she says, "Credit must be given to corporate America which has literally donated millions of dollars for educational campaigns and seat distributions. In these challenging economic times, this support has been essential." NAGHSR has been a lead partner in Ford Motor Company's Boost America! Campaign which is providing up to a million booster seats to parents.

Although there is cause for celebration, the states and their safety partners must not become complacent. According to Lembke, "Much more work needs to be done. The NHTSA numbers also show that only 66 percent of kids age 5-12 are riding properly restrained." The highway safety leader concludes, "The states and their safety partners are clearly on the right track to reducing deaths and injuries to children in vehicle crashes. With improved laws, better enforcement and public education, these senseless tragedies will become much less frequent."

*NOTE: The 2002 Virginia General Assembly passed, and the Governor has signed, legislation to offer parity for all children under 16 with an across the board civil penalty for children unrestrained to \$50 (as compared to \$25 previously for ages 4-16) and increased the child safety seat age from children under age 4 to children under age 6.*

### Did You Know.....

■ That silver has become the most popular automotive color around the world?? This is according to the DuPont Global Color Popularity Report that lists silver at 21%, white at 15%, black at 11%, medium to dark blue at 9.9% and medium to dark green at 7.6%.

■ Today's airbag and safety belt systems are designed to meet the needs of an average-sized 150 pound adult! The Ford Motor Company is currently

developing technology to make their Personal Safety System more effective with new airbag and safety belt technology that more closely matches the safety system to the size of occupants and severity of a crash. Ford's new system will allow it to distinguish between a child, small adult or teenager, average adult or large adult and to deploy accordingly.

■ A new study from the University of Washington shows that altering roadway landscapes can reduce run-off-the-road

crashes! Researchers found that run-off-the-road incident frequency and severity can be reduced by avoiding cut side slopes, decreasing the distance from the outside shoulder edge to the guardrail, decreasing the number of isolated trees along roadway sections, and increasing the distance from the outside shoulder edge to light poles. The study is published in the March issue of Accident Analysis and Prevention.

■ Ford Motor Company has equipped late model

passenger vehicles with a new safety belt use reminder system. The system flashes a warning light and chimes for six seconds, pauses for 30 seconds, and then repeats for up to five minutes if the driver fails to buckle up. The IIHS observed increased seat belt use from 71% to 76% when these specially-equipped cars were brought in for service at 12 dealerships in Tulsa and Oklahoma City during August – September, 2001.

— from NETS Notes

## Augusta County State Police Initiate “Project Alliance”

The State Police in Augusta County launched Project Alliance on January 28, 2002. The goal of Project Alliance is to decrease county road accidents by 20% over a two-year period.

In 2001, 13% of all crashes were on Interstate 81 and 83% of all crashes were on the primary and secondary roads. The local State Police office responds to an average of 2000 crashes yearly. In 2001, approximately 1300 crashes were reportable.

Due to manpower shortages, a limited budget, and a significant increase in accidents, the local office of the State Police designed the program to form an alliance of organizations and agencies to promote highway safety. A power point program was presented, defining the roles of each partner in the program.

The local State Police office coordinates the effort and other partners include: DMV, VDOT, EMS, the media, insurance agencies, trucking companies, industry, Augusta County schools, Augusta County Sheriff's Office, county government officials and citizens of Augusta County.

Some highlights of the program include: driving tip bill boarding along the roads, increased child seat training and inspections, a monthly community newsletter, the use of extra speed trailers, better use of variable message boards, citizen input meetings, close crash analysis of accident prone locations, combined enforcement efforts on accident prone highways, pamphlets and brochures, and more awareness programs to teen drivers. One exciting aspect is establishing an intern program with ambulances for teen drivers to observe the consequences of crashes. Traffic question boxes will be

placed at each high school and responses will be given through a monthly teen newsletter.

The program will be monitored monthly and evaluated semi-annually to determine modifications that are needed to improve the effectiveness of the program.

*Article submitted by First Sergeant Joe Rader. For more information, email Sgt. Rader at [fourrs@cfw.com](mailto:fourrs@cfw.com).*



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## Operation Safe Corridor

Beginning March 9, 2002, the Fairfax County Police Department will kick off “Operation Safe Corridor.” This project is a 45 day selected enforcement program that will target Richmond Highway between Interstate 495 and the county line.

Officers from the Mount Vernon District Station, Franconia District Station, Neighborhood Patrol Unit, Motor Carrier Safety Section, as well as the Motor Squad will be participating in the enforcement.

This strategic plan on traffic resolution is part of the continuing

community policing initiative. Officers will be enforcing several traffic codes, including speeding, reckless driving, red light violations, blocking intersections, and improper lane change. Officers will be utilizing message boards, the S.M.A.R.T. Trailer, Radar, Laser, dummy cruisers, and unmarked cruisers. In addition, officers will be educating and citing pedestrians who do not use crosswalks or who cross the street and impact traffic.

Operation Safe Corridor originates from continued observations of traffic and speed between 7:00

a.m. and 8:00 a.m. Over 95 percent of the cars traveling southbound on Richmond Highway at Belvoir Court in the Fort Belvoir area were moving faster than the posted speed limit. Nineteen percent of those cars were traveling in excess of 15 miles an hour over the posted speed limit. This year alone, seven people have died as a result of automobile accidents on Richmond Highway.

*For more information about this program, you can reach Jackie Smith, PIO, Fairfax County Police Department at (703) 246-2253.*

## MADD Virginia's 1st Legislative Action Day a Success

MADD Virginia State held its first-ever Legislative Action Day on February 1, 2002 at the Virginia General Assembly in Richmond. MADD members from across the state converged upon the members of the General Assembly, impressing the members not just by our sheer numbers, but our unity and support for the passage – or defeat – of several pieces of key legislation.

MADD Virginia also packed the room for our press conference at which Senator Mims spoke about his “repeat offender” bill (SB521) which would require that an ignition interlock be installed in the vehicle of a second-DUI offender. Senator Norment, sponsor of the Senate version of the “Open Container” bill, also addressed the large number

of media about his bill. Media present to cover the event included the Associated Press, the local affiliates of NBC and ABC, WCVE (TV), WDBJ (TV), WRVA (AM radio), the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, and the *Roanoke Times*. The 2002 Legislative Action Day was a good beginning and lays a firm foundation for making this an annual event.



*Article submitted by John Pinckney, MADD Virginia State Public Policy Liaison*

## Not You in 2002: Drive to Stay Alive

The “Not You in 2002: Drive to Stay Alive” campaign is up and running. The Blue Ridge Transportation Safety Board organized the regional initiative to encourage safe driving practices on the region’s roadways. It was organized as a way for law enforcement agencies to coordinate their efforts to work together to promote traffic safety and enforce traffic laws on a larger scale. In addition to the efforts of law enforcement agencies, high school YOVASO chapters will receive “Not You in 2002” resource packets so they can take the message into high schools as well.

Awareness will be generated through visible posters and yard signs, which display the campaign logo. Sixteen billboards have been donated by Lamar Advertising, which will also display the logo. Additionally, tip cards will be distributed by participating law enforcement agencies at checkpoints and during routing traffic stops.

On February 20, 2002, the “Not You in 2002” campaign kicked off at the Salem Civic Center. Twenty-five law enforcement agencies were able to attend the kickoff event and represent their agencies in the group photograph that was taken for use in promotional materials. The Salem Fire Department provided two fire trucks, one of which appeared in the photograph, and another, which supplied a basket that raised photographers to the height needed to take the pictures.

At the kickoff, Capt. Robert Strickler, Chairman of the

Blue Ridge Transportation Safety Board gave a speech, which stressed the importance of preventing unnecessary traffic fatalities at a time when the focus on national and local security is at such a high level.

“Recently, our law enforcement officers throughout the region have received unprecedented security training enabling our officers to keep Virginians safe from terrorist threats,” Strickler said. “As the state’s only regional traffic safety board, the Blue Ridge Transportation Safety Board is addressing the threat that continues to claim

hundreds of lives every year — traffic crashes.”

Participating law enforcement agencies will keep a tally of the amount of additional materials that they produce from

the resource folders they are given, and distribute to the public. Agencies that produce and distribute the most materials will be rewarded at the end of the campaign.

The “Not You in 2002: Drive to Stay Alive” campaign is sponsored by the Blue Ridge Transportation Safety Board, the Department of Motor Vehicles, the Smart, Safe, and Sober Partnership, Youth of Virginia Speak Out (YOVASO) About Traffic Safety, and Ferrum College. Look for more information about the “Not You in 2002” campaign in upcoming newsletters.

*For more information on the campaign or to receive a copy of the resource packet, contact Mandy Selph at (540) 561-7499 or via e-mail at [aselph@ferrum.edu](mailto:aselph@ferrum.edu).*

# ◆ YOVASO Drives Home Belt Usage During Safety Belt

◆ A number of Youth of Virginia Speak Out (YOVASO) schools actively participated in safety belt awareness week February 10-16, 2002. Four high schools that are active with YOVASO conducted various awareness campaigns throughout the week to increase safety belt usage in their schools. Bassett High School, Patrick County High School, Rustburg High School, and Salem High School all conducted safety belt checks during the week.

◆ **Bassett High School's YOVASO group** created awareness by handing out information during safety belt checks, as well as reading PSA's on the morning and afternoon announcements throughout the week. Not only did the chapter make a difference in their school, but also in their community. The Martinsville Bulletin wrote a detailed article covering the week's activities, as well as the story of a girl who was in a car crash during the week. She did not usually wear a safety belt, but after hearing the importance of wearing it from the YOVASO activities, she took time to buckle up. Shortly after, she was involved in a car crash and was told that wearing a safety belt had probably saved her from more serious injury. Knowing that they had



*Rustburg High School student safety council members visit local elementary schools dressed in the Crash Dummy costume.*

made an obvious difference in the life of at least one person was very meaningful to the YOVASO chapter, and it made their hard work worthwhile. As a result of their efforts, the safety belt usage rate increased from 65% to 78%.

◆ **Patrick County High School students** saw a considerable increase in their safety belt usage rate as a result of their week of activities. On Monday, the chapter made a presentation on the school's closed circuit TV during the morning announcements. Also, on Monday afternoon, a safety belt survey was taken as students were leaving, which showed that 70% of students were buckled up. Tuesday, members of YOVASO went into individual classes and gave presentations about the importance of wearing safety belts. By the end of the week, their rate had climbed to an impressive 90%.



*Patrick County High School YOVASO members saw a considerable increase in safety belt usage as a result of their efforts.*

◆ **Rustburg High School student safety council members** visited three local elementary schools wearing the Crash Dummy costumes and the Snapdragon costume throughout the week. Safety stickers were passed out to the elementary school students and

# Awareness Week

they were encouraged to wear their safety belts. On Thursday, WSET News 13 provided news coverage about Child Passenger Safety Week and the Safety Council's activities at the elementary school. On Wednesday, there was a pledge sheet on display during lunch for students to pledge to wear their safety belts. Each student who signed the pledge received a Dum-Dum sucker with a buckle up message and some also were given key chains and pens. Rustburg High School's usage rate increased from 65% on Monday to 79% on Friday.

up was signed by students. Salem High School's usage rate increased from 19% on Monday to 79% on Friday.

*For more information about YOVASO, or to find out how your school can become involved with the YOVASO program, please contact Jessica Bland at (540) 561-7468 or via e-mail, [jessicabland@msn.com](mailto:jessicabland@msn.com).*

- ◆ **Salem High School students** also conducted safety belt surveys throughout the week. On Monday, Wednesday and Friday, every sixty-third car to enter the parking lot was stopped and a prize was awarded if that individual was belted. During lunches, information regarding safety belts was handed out and a pledge to always buckle

## Safety Belt Awareness Increases Usage Rates at YOVASO High Schools

	Monday	Friday
Bassett HS	44%	78%
Patrick County HS	70%	90%
Rustburg HS	65%	79%
Salem HS	19%	79%



*Bassett High School's YOVASO group created awareness by handing out information during safety belt checks. They saw a 34 percent increase in safety belt usage at the conclusion of their week of efforts.*



## MTRS v. 7.0

The Micro Traffic Records Software (MTRS) system has been providing its users with the ability to collect and analyze Accident and Summons data for the past 20 years. A police department that plans to utilize MTRS must provide the computer and personnel to input the data and generate the reports. However, the software itself has been provided to police departments throughout the state of Virginia, free of charge. This includes on-site installation and ongoing support. This is made possible through funding by the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV).

The most current release in production today is Version 6.2. MTRS has recently been upgraded to Version 7.0 and is scheduled to be released in April. While this new release retains all the functionality and benefits of its predecessors, it also includes significant enhancements.

The most noticeable difference is its GUI (graphical user interface), which has been upgraded to better work with the various underlying Windows operating systems, particularly in regards to screen interaction and printing. Its menu system now looks and feels like a standard, Windows-based menu. MTRS users can more easily navigate from one area of the software to another.

One of the most requested enhancements dealing with the <F1> Help has been included in this release. Instead of using the <F1> key to produce a popup box of codes, which can be entered into various fields, the user will now be presented with "combo

boxes" on the data entry screens. These are the standard, Windows-style data entry boxes where the entry can be typed in or can be selected from a drop-down menu box. Online documentation exists as well by simply selecting "Help" from the MTRS menu. Another Help feature that has been added is the Windows-standard Help/About [MTRS]. Selecting this option displays a popup box indicating the MTRS version, as well as various information about the computer for diagnostic purposes.

The processing of dates has also been improved. The user no longer has to specify the year before entering, modifying, or viewing an Accident record. Earlier versions were Y2K compliant, however the user had to enter all 4 digits of any year that was 2000 or later. For example, Version 7 is now aware that '01' means '2001' and not '1901' as Version 6 interpreted.

Another area in which enhancements have been made is the entry of the various components of an Accident record. The user is no longer forced into entering the various data in any particular order. In addition, the user can come back at a later time and add additional vehicles, drivers, property damage, and injuries to an existing accident record. Also, records can be added, modified, or deleted from a single screen, without having to first jump back to a menu.

All the reports providing detailed analysis are still available as they were, with the exception that the user is no longer

asked to choose between "MTRS 5 cases," "MTRS 6 cases," or "Both." Also, many MTRS users like to print out a listing of the streets and their associated codes. Some of this need may go away with Version 7, due to the fact that the street code data entry fields also utilize the drop-down menu boxes. In the event that a street listing is still desired however, it can now be sorted by street name instead of only by street code.

The Backup and Restore facilities have been improved to work with a wider variety of Windows operating systems. The Backup and Restore can now take place over a network, on a floppy disk, or on any other media type which is referenced by a drive letter on the computer, such as a Zip drive or some CD burners. If the user chooses to backup to a floppy disk and the files are too large to fit on a single disk, the backup will automatically span across multiple disks. In addition, the user can control which files are to be included in the Backup procedure. For instance, if a locality only uses the Accident side and never utilizes the Summons area, the MTRS user could opt to backup only Accident-related data files, thus skipping the Summons data files and saving storage space on the backup media.

Case numbering is no longer forced to follow the MTRS guidelines for numbering. This is still an option, but the user may elect instead to utilize the department's own numbering system for cases.

*continued on page 11*



# Smooth Operator

## One Way to Get Tough On Aggressive Driving in DC, MD and VA

Over the past few years, there were several weeks with larger than normal amounts of law enforcement on our roads. They were after aggressive drivers – speeders, tailgaters, red light and stop sign runners, and drivers swerving in and out of lanes.

Ninety-two thousand citations for aggressive driving were issued during the four law enforcement waves in 2001, plus thousands of warnings. But high profile enforcement was just one element in a broad campaign. Police also used new technology such as lasers, red light cameras and aerial surveil-

lance. Fines and points included punishments like anger management classes. Radio ads, posters and print ads created awareness of the problem and worked to brand aggressive driving negatively. Employers, transit professionals, doctors, civil engineers and safety organizations worked together on solutions.

It's part of a metro area-wide program called Smooth Operator, a unique public safety initiative formed by a partnership of area law enforcement agen-

cies, trauma experts, and government officials in 1998 to find solutions to aggressive driving.

Aggressive driving is a serious problem, especially in the metro area, with the second-worst in the nation today. Motorists here lose more hours to traffic delays – 82 hours per year on average – than any other city in the country. It's only going to get worse. Our area will grow by 1.4 million people and a million new jobs by 2020. Demand on our roads will increase 40%, while road capacity will increase only 9%.

Program results are carefully measured and Smooth Operator is working.

Aggressive driving is becoming stigmatized, and people are beginning to realize that some of their driving behaviors every time they get behind the wheel are also against the law.

Smooth Operator's law enforcement waves will continue in 2002, along with a media campaign. This year's target dates are:

- May 19-24
- June 16-21
- July 21-26
- August 25-30

Working together, the many jurisdictions involved in the Smooth Operator Program are helping to lessen injuries, accidents and deaths on our roads today.

### How to Manage an Aggressive Driving Situation:

- Get out of the way of aggressive drivers.
- Don't challenge them. Avoid eye contact. Ignore rude gestures and refuse to return them.
- Give them the benefit of the doubt. Not all aggressive driving behavior is intentional.
- Don't block the passing lane, especially if you are going slower than most of the traffic. Move over to the right lane.
- Don't tailgate.
- Allow more time to get to your destination. It reduces stress dramatically.
- Resist the temptation to "teach someone a lesson."
- Dial #77 on a cell phone to report aggressive drivers or call your local police when you can.

**SMOOTH OPERATOR**

*It's Time To Get Tough On Aggressive Drivers!*

**Aggressive Drivers Cause Crashes, Injuries & Deaths.**



### Websites for Reference:

[www.fhwa.dot.gov](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov) — The 2000 edition of the Highway Statistics with a wide range of information on the nation's road and highway users.

[www.buckleupamerica.org](http://www.buckleupamerica.org) — News and resources for Buckle America Week.

[www.nhtsa.dot.gov](http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov) — Information for Operation ABC and the May Mobilization.

[www.bicyclinginfo.org](http://www.bicyclinginfo.org) — FHWA Bicycle Safety Education

[www.vachiefs.org](http://www.vachiefs.org) — News and information about traffic safety programs, trainings, and the Law Enforcement Challenge.

# Virginians Express Views on Cars and Trucks Sharing the Road

■ Consortium of government agencies focuses on motor carrier safety in VA, MD, NC, WV

RICHMOND, VA—According to a recent survey, Virginians feel that the Commonwealth’s highways are generally safe. Yet, 40 percent of those surveyed felt that it has become more dangerous to drive a car near large trucks during the past five years. Interestingly, the respondents said that truck drivers generally drive as safely as car drivers. Only 15 percent of respondents believe truckers are primarily at fault for serious car/truck crashes.

These results come from a survey of 2,400 drivers in four states (VA, MD, NC, WV). The survey was conducted by the Center for Public Policy at VCU on behalf of the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles and the Multi-State Motor Carrier Project. Results from the Virginia survey (602 drivers) include the following:

**Virginians are generally positive about safety on highways.**

- Overall, 81 percent of respondents reported that the highways they drive on are either very safe or somewhat safe. Attitudes, however, varied across the state. In northern Virginia, for example, 74 percent of drivers said highways are very safe or somewhat safe.
- Asked if they thought driving cars near large trucks is more dangerous today than it was five years ago, 40 percent of Virginians surveyed said it has become more dangerous, 44 percent said it has stayed about the same, and 11 percent said that it has become safer. In northern Virginia, 51 percent of respondents said driving a car near large trucks has become more dangerous in the last five years compared with 27 percent of respondents in Tidewater.

**Truckers are not seen as more dangerous than car drivers.**

- Thirty-seven percent of the respondents said that both the car and truck driver are equally at fault when serious crashes occur between cars and large trucks. Thirty-five percent said that the car driver is usually at fault while only 15 percent said that it was the truck driver’s fault.
- Respondents said that truck drivers drive as safely as car and SUV drivers. Overall, 67 percent of

respondents said that car drivers drive very or somewhat safely, 69 percent said that truck drivers drive very or somewhat safely, and 69 percent said that SUV drivers drive very or somewhat safely.

- Virginians see drivers of large buses as the safest drivers. Ninety percent of respondents said that the drivers of large buses drive very or somewhat safely.

**Speed enforcement and weight enforcement are seen positively, but concern over speed is high in northern Virginia.**

- Overall, respondents were equally satisfied with speed limit enforcement both for drivers of large trucks and cars. Sixty-two percent of respondents said that the police are about right in enforcing speed limits for large trucks compared with 63 percent for cars. Only 56 percent of northern Virginians felt speed enforcement was about right for trucks and 51 percent for cars.
- Overall, 46 percent of respondents said that police enforcement of weight and length limits for large trucks is about right (32 percent said that they did not know enough about the issue to rate it).

The Multi-State Motor Carrier Project is a consortium of representatives from motor vehicle, law enforcement and transportation agencies in Virginia, Maryland, North Carolina and West Virginia as well as representatives from the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration. The states and the consortium are in the process of collecting data and assessing public opinion to form effective public education and enforcement campaigns. In addition to collecting the opinions of the general public, the consortium will evaluate highway safety from the truck drivers’ perspectives.

“Because trucks and passenger vehicles differ greatly in weight, size and performance, drivers of these vehicles must exercise a large amount of caution when sharing the road,” said DMV’s Vince Burgess, Assistant Commissioner for Transportation Safety. “This partnership will look at this issue from both perspectives and create information and enforcement campaigns to enhance public safety on our shared roadways. This will be an ongoing process.”

Virginia Region	How safe are the highways that you mostly drive on? <sup>1</sup>				
	Very Safe	Somewhat Safe	Somewhat Unsafe	Very Unsafe	Don't Know/No Answer
North West VA	27%	52%	17%	3%	2%
Northern VA	16%	58%	18%	6%	2%
Western VA	17%	60%	15%	7%	2%
South Central VA	29%	59%	7%	3%	2%
Tidewater	23%	64%	10%	2%	0%

For more information, contact Jonathan Mosher at (804) 367-1888.

<sup>1</sup> Rows may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding.

## Invitation To Host A No-Zone Program

The Virginia Trucking Association (VTA), through the VTA Foundation, is pleased to offer its services to present a new truck and highway safety education program for your organization or event. The program is based on Federal Highway Administration's national public service highway safety campaign called the "No Zone" Campaign. The main goal of this program is to educate the motoring public in an entertaining manner to make them aware of commercial vehicle limitations. It focuses on trucks' blind spots called "No Zones" and teaches safe driving techniques for motorists to use when operating around large commercial vehicles. The program includes a lecture/talk by a truck safety professional, an entertaining video that illustrates trucks' blind spots and other "sharing the road with a truck" safe driving techniques and a hands-on demonstration of the "No Zones" using a professional truck driver, a

tractor-trailer and cars.

To request presentation of the "No-Zone" program for your organization or an event, please contact the VTA Foundation so we

can begin the planning process. If you have any questions or need additional information please call Debra Wood-Whittington of the VTAF at (804) 355-5371.

### 2002 Safety Break Programs

Also, the Virginia Trucking Association's Safety Council is planning to conduct its Safety Break programs again this year. We would like to schedule programs for the following dates at the following Rest Areas:

Date	Location	Time
Thursday, June 6	Caroline Rest Area I-95 North	8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Thursday, August 29	Mt. Sydney Rest Area	8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Thursday, October 10	Ironto Rest Area	8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

As in the past, the program will be conducted away from the normal flow of vehicle and pedestrian traffic and in an orderly manner. We will not attempt to attract more than the normal flow of traffic so that the safe operation of the rest area will not be disrupted.

### MTRS v. 7.0

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There are also other preferences that can be set. Among those is a default county to use when adding Accident records. In addition, MTRS v.7 offers the ability to track several user-defined fields for each area.

The Import/Export now works with the more recent versions of Microsoft Excel, instead of requiring the older file format as was the case in Version 6.

The re-indexing feature has been enhanced. A corrupted index file will no longer prevent the user from getting into the MTRS software. A menu option has been added which allows the user to rebuild the index files upon demand. The user can choose to re-index all the data files or only a specified subset of them.

MTRS v.7 can now be installed from a CD instead of diskettes, resulting in a much faster installation. The structure of the data files has changed slightly from the previous version, but the

conversion can happen automatically upon installation. Or, if the user prefers, Version 7 can be installed with a new, blank set of data files, and then an older set of data can be imported into Version 7 at a later time.

MTRS is dedicated to capturing data in conjunction with any changes that may occur to the FR300 Accident Report form over time.

For the future, several exciting enhancements of MTRS beyond Version 7 are already being considered. Some of the enhancements being looked at include multi-user capabilities over a network, improved reporting, expanded import/export to allow interfaces with various other systems, integration of accident and summons data, and collision diagrams.

*Anyone interested in MTRS v7.0 can contact either Robert Breitenbach, Transportation Safety and Training Center Director, at (804) 828-6235, or Kathy Bateman, MTRS Programmer/Analyst, at (434) 974-9892. Corresponding email addresses are [rbreiten@mail1.vcu.edu](mailto:rbreiten@mail1.vcu.edu) and [kbateman@cstone.net](mailto:kbateman@cstone.net).*

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