



News Release No. 54

For Immediate Release: December 7, 2009

OPERATION AIR, LAND & SPEED INITIATIVE RESULTS IN 2,264 VIOLATIONS ON INTERSTATES 64 & 66

Two-Day Safety Campaign Cut Short Due To Inclement Weather

RICHMOND - *Operation Air, Land and Speed* concluded its final enforcement phase of 2009 concentrating on Interstate 64 and Interstate 66 and producing a total of 2,264 violations. Due to Saturday's inclement weather and hazardous conditions across the Commonwealth, Virginia State Police shortened the traffic safety initiative to one day – Dec. 4, 2009. The operation was originally scheduled to proceed for two consecutive days and conclude on Dec. 5, 2009.

"The goal of *Operation Air, Land and Speed* is to save lives, prevent crashes and change driving behaviors for the better," says Colonel W. Steven Flaherty, Virginia State Police Superintendent. "We know that the increased number of patrols serves as a deterrent to aggressive and reckless driving whether the initiative occurs on one or multiple days. As we continue into the holiday season, it is important that all drivers and passengers make their safety a priority on the road and remember to slow down and buckle up. "

The comprehensive enforcement project produced 1,926 violations along I-64, which stretches 300 miles from Hampton Roads to the West Virginia border. State police cited 824 for speeding, stopped 186 drivers for reckless driving and cited 90 individuals for safety belt violations. Troopers arrested three drunk drivers and made 11 drug/felony arrests.

Along I-66, which extends 75 miles from Strasburg, Va. to Washington, D.C., state police issued 338 summonses and/or arrests. Troopers cited 149 drivers for speeding, 40 for reckless driving and 15 individuals for safety belt citations.

All previous operations combined with last week's enforcement effort have yielded a total of 114,199 arrests and summonses, statewide. No fatalities were reported on any of the targeted interstates during December's operation. The last time *Operation Air, Land and Speed* focused on I-64 and I-66 was Dec. 5-6, 2008.

Funding for the enforcement initiative is provided through federal highway safety monies. Off-duty troopers are used for the traffic-safety operation, so as to not adversely affect the safety of other highways during the course of the Interstate-specific enforcement project.

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