OCCUPANT PROTECTION

2016 National Law Enforcement Challenge

PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION:

The Roanoke Police Department understands that prevention is the best strategy to convey to unrestrained drivers. A core message to citizens and the media is this: "By the time officers are enforcing the law by ticketing citizens for not wearing a seat belt, it's already too late." The department utilized TREDS (Traffic Records Electronic System), a seat belt survey conducted before and after the annual Click It Or Ticket campaign, and data engineered through the four crime analysts in ISTAR (Intelligence, Statistics, Technology, Analysis, and Research) to measure our occupant protection usage rate.

- The Virginia Highway Safety Office identified peak time periods for unrestrained serious injury crashes as midnight to 3 am. The highest crash days were Monday and Friday. The highest crash month was January.
- A total of four pre-surveys for seat belt usage were conducted on April 17,2015, two weeks before the Click It or Ticket deadline on May 4th. Officers observed vehicles at four heavy traffic locations, selecting areas that included residential, business, and school zones. The average usage rate was 76 percent, which was below the state's seat belt usage rate at 80.9 percent.
- ISTAR and DMV data found the highest chances of unrestrained fatalities in the region as between 5 p.m. and 9 p.m.
- ISTAR and DMV data also calculated daylight and nighttime area "hot spots" where crashes involving unrestrained drivers were occurring.
- ISTAR found the highest traffic flow times were weekdays between Noon and 6 p.m.

POLICY:

Attached in separate PDF file are operational directives [in order of appearance]: Officer Contact with Traffic Violators (62.1.5), Trash Crash Investigation (63.1.1), Vehicle Operation and Vehicular Pursuits (41.2.2), Traffic Enforcement Data Collection and Evaluation (61.3.1), Traffic Law Enforcement (62.1.1), Detainee Transportation (2.3.6), and Ride Along Program (31.1.2).

PLANNING:

Using data driven strategies the department developed operational plans to increase occupant protection awareness. The department understands this was not a problem that could be solved strictly with enforcement, which is why there were many prevention strategies involving in planning as well.

- Using DMV grant money, the department planned saturation patrols to have a presence in hot spots where unrestrained drivers had been identified, including night time hours.

- **Specific target areas included: 3000 & 3100 blocks of Franklin Road SW, 1700 block of Orange Avenue NE, 1500 block of Lafayette Boulevard at Cove Road, 1100 block of Overland Road SW.** The target areas were selected, in part, because each location is in a different quadrant of the city. Overland Road included a school zone. The four locations are also among the busiest intersections in the city.
- The selected locations were the same locations that were monitored during the pre-surveys. The plan called for checkpoints at each location during peak traffic flow times, which was between noon and 6 pm. The date was planned for May 21, 2015.
- Follow-up was planned. Post surveys at each of the four locations would be administered on June 4, 2015, which was following the Click It or Ticket period.

STRATEGIC HIGHWAY SAFETY PLAN SUPPORT:

The Department supported the Virginia Strategic Highway Safety Plan by doing the following:

1) Used DMV overtime grants to pay for additional enforcement

2) Used surveys to track occupant protection performance

3) Developed and implemented plans to address occupant safety related concerns

4) Utilized TREDS, iSTAR, and seat belt surveys to track and analyze crash statistics

TRAINING:

Topic	Date(s)	Attendance
Click It or Ticket Training	May 2015	121
In-Service, Occupant Protection	Various	124

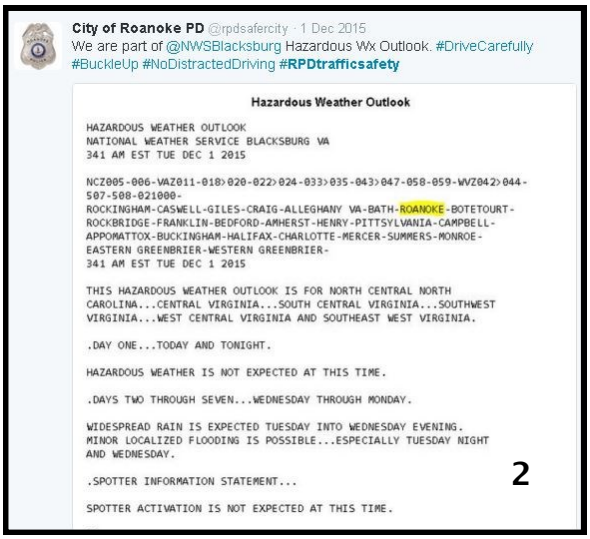
Half of the department's 248 sworn officers (124) are required to attend in-service training every two years. The training includes policy, procedure, and the importance of awareness and educating the public on occupant protection.

Platoon lieutenants engage in annual line-up training on the importance of seat belt safety.

The department has 10 certified child restraint technicians and partners with Roanoke Fire EMS and Carilion Clinic.

PUBLIC INFORMATION & EDUCATION:

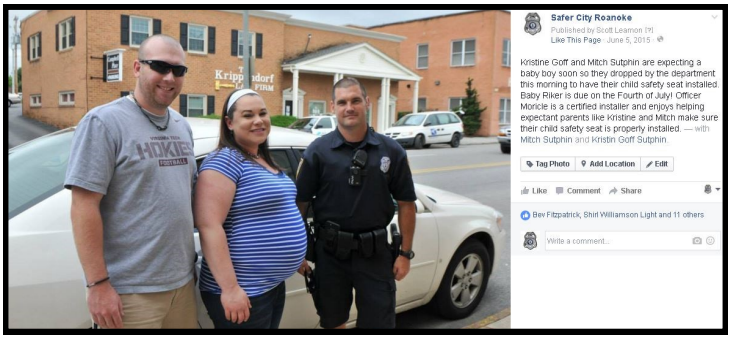
#RPDtrafficsafety Alerts: The department partnered with the National Weather Service's Blacksburg hub to issue #RPDtrafficsafety alerts using Twitter and Facebook. The alerts outlined potential hazardous weather and reminded drivers to buckle up. An example tweet is pictured on the right:



<u>Child Passenger Safety Week:</u> : The department partnered with Roanoke Fire EMS, Safe Kids Southwest Virginia, Carilion Clinic Children's Hospital, and Target for child safety seat checks during National Child Passenger Safety Week (Sept. 18-24) at Target and Fire EMS Station 6; **that same fire station holds a monthly safety seat check and installation in which officers participate. Officers checked and/or installed 162 child safety seats during 2015.**

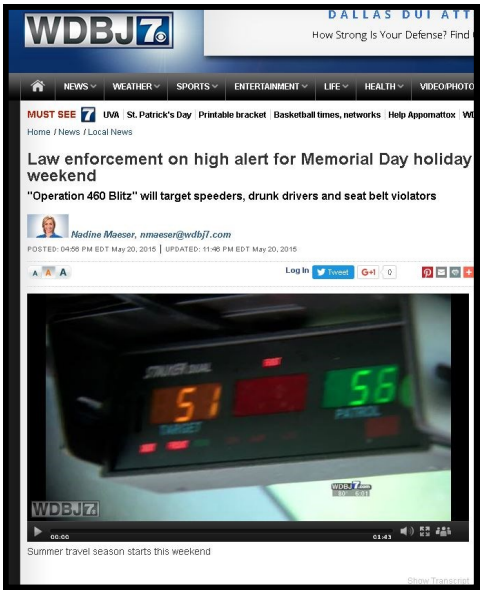
<u>Summer Lunch Crime Prevention & Traffic Safety Program:</u> Officers partnered with the Roanoke Regional Housing Authority to bring crime prevention and traffic safety tips to dozens of kids at five different summer lunch program sites. Among the topics were seat belt usage and why it's always safer to ride bicycles while wearing helmets.

<u>Child Safety Seat Installation Assistance:</u> The department has 10 certified child safety seat installers. Citizens can come in off the street for an inspection and advice or schedule an appointment. The department used its social media pages several times in 2015 to remind citizens about this valuable service, like this communication on the right involving Officer Dustin Moricle installing a child safety seat for a citizen in June. The communication also offers some basic installation tips.



<u>Click It or Ticket Campaign:</u> The department participated in the annual Click It or Ticket campaign, which was kicked off with a regional news conference in May. **The department worked together with several other law enforcement agencies and community stakeholders, including the media,** to get the word out to citizens that occupant protection was extremely important. The department did four occupant safety checkpoints during the summer, stopping 659 vehicles, making sure that each vehicle got a safety flyer before leaving each checkpoint. All of this activity was within the target areas.

<u>Operation 460 Blitz:</u> The department joined 13 other law enforcement agencies along the Route 460 corridor to pay special attention to the highway over the Memorial Day weekend. The partnering agencies included the Roanoke County Police Department, the Bedford Police Department, and the Lynchburg Police Department. On the first night of the holiday weekend, two officers on overtime hours issued a total of 11 summonses in five hours, including two citations for failure to wear a seat belt. Operation 460 Blitz attracted the attention of local media before, during, and after its implementation, as evidenced by the picture on the right.



Drive 2 Save Lives: The department participated in the Drive 2 Save Lives campaign, which in 2015 focused on reducing crashes between Christmas and New Year's Day. **The program allowed the department to cooperate with numerous law enforcement partners to increase public awareness.** The department educated the public on the campaign by working with the local media and several social media communications, like the social media post on the right that included our traffic safety partnership with the Roanoke Prevention Alliance.

RPA
Roanoke Prevention Alliance

MEDIA ADVISORY

Roanoke Police Department and Roanoke Prevention Alliance want you to
Keep the Party Off the Road During the Holiday Season

What's Your Plan? Designate a Sober Driver!

- Drunk driving is a killer on the roads all year round, but data shows that the tradition of celebrating the holidays with alcohol leads to an increase of traffic crashes and resulting deaths and injuries.
- According to National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, crashes involving alcohol increase during the holiday period, with about a 10 percent increase during the time between Christmas and New Year's Day.
- Nationwide, the holiday season is a particularly deadly time due to the high number of drunk drivers on the roads. In December 2014, 788 lives were lost due to drunk driving – one death every 57 minutes.
- Drinking and driving endangers yourself, your passengers, and those on the road around you. Whether you've had one or one too many, always hand the keys to a sober driver.

The Consequences of Driving Drunk Are Deadly Serious.

- Driving while impaired is a crime that seriously risks your safety and the safety of those around you. Whether you have had one too many or are way over the limit, drunk driving is not worth causing a traffic crash, serious injury, or worse—death.
- The legal and financial costs of driving while impaired can be significant. Drunk-driving violators often face jail time, the loss of their driver licenses, higher insurance rates, and dozens of other unanticipated expenses ranging from attorney fees, court costs, car towing and repairs, and lost wages due to time off from work.
- Refusing to take a breath test in many jurisdictions results in immediate arrest, the loss of your driver's license on the spot and the impoundment of your vehicle. Also, there's the added embarrassment, humiliation, and consequences of telling family, friends and employers of your arrest.

WHAT'S YOUR PLAN?

- Even one drink can impair your judgment and increase the risk of getting arrested for driving drunk—or worse, the risk of having a crash while driving.
- Plan a safe way home before the festivities begin:
  - Designate a Sober Driver and have them pick you up
  - Know who to call before you are impaired and have the numbers programmed into your phone
  - Call a taxi, a sober friend or family member, or use public transportation to get home safely
  - Make arrangements to stay with the party hosts
- If you know someone who is about to drive impaired or ride with someone who is impaired, help them make other arrangements
- If a friend is drunk and wants to drive, don't let it happen, even if it means taking the keys away
- If you see a drunk driver on the road, contact your local law enforcement

For more information contact:
Scott Leamon, phone: (540) 853-6884, mail to: Scott.Leamon@RoanokeVA.gov
Ray Bemis, Director, Roanoke Prevention Alliance, phone: (540) 529-6103, mail to: RBemis@RBBII.org
# # #

Safer City Roanoke
Published by Scott Leamon [?]
Like This Page · December 18, 2015 · Edited

Traffic Safety Friday: Holiday saturation patrols begin

Our holiday saturation patrols start tonight and run through New Year's. As we've been doing for several years now, we're working together with the Roanoke Prevention Alliance to do our best to prevent DUI. Please make sure and have a plan on how you're going to get home safely after your holiday party or New Year's celebration. Call a cab. Call a friend. Be a sober driver. See the message RPA sent to the media below.

Tag Photo · Add Location · Edit

Like · Comment · Share

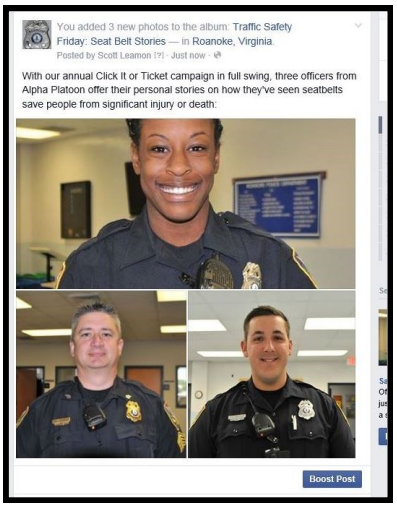
Jason Lane, Priscilla Broughman and 4 others

2 shares

Write a comment...

Occupant Safety Education at William Fleming High School: School resource officers spoke to six classes at William Fleming High School explaining the importance of occupant protection and safety, reaching more than 120 students.

Traffic Safety Friday: The department offers a traffic safety tip every Friday on its social media pages. The tips are sometimes shared by citizens and the media. Officer testimonials, such as the one on the right, where offered to remind drivers the importance of buckling up:



You added 3 new photos to the album: Traffic Safety Friday: Seat Belt Stories — in Roanoke, Virginia.
Posted by Scott Leamon [?] · Just now

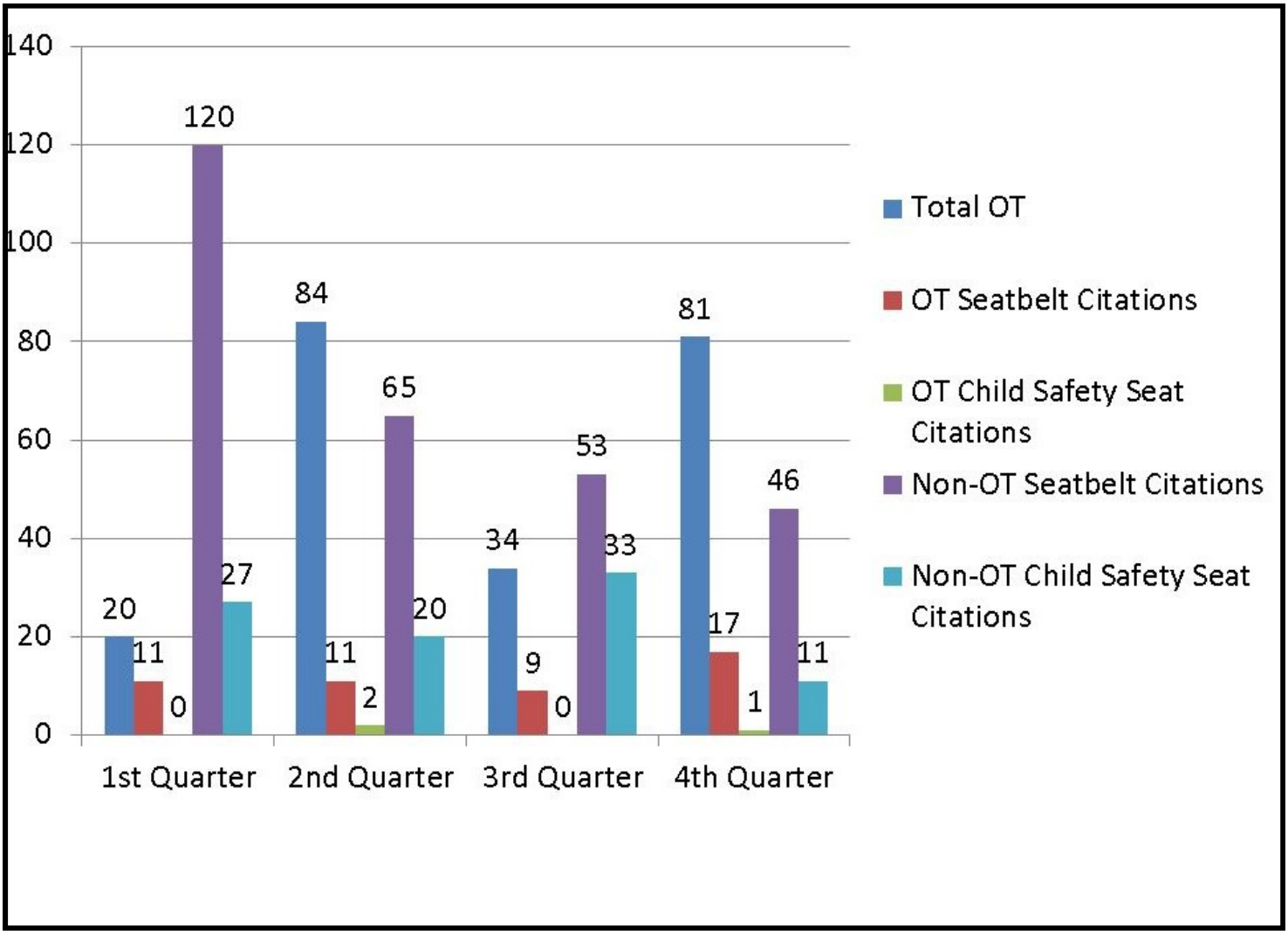
With our annual Click It or Ticket campaign in full swing, three officers from Alpha Platoon offer their personal stories on how they've seen seatbelts save people from significant injury or death:

Boost Post

National Seat Check Saturday: On September 19th the department participated in National Seat Belt Check Saturday at the Valley View Target store. **Partners in this event included Carilion Clinic, Roanoke Fire EMS, and Target.** Officers worked together with our partner agencies and citizens to install 39 child safety seats during the three hour event. In the picture on the right, Officers and certified safety technicians, Officer Hariston (kneeling) and Officer Moricle are examining a child safety seat at the event.

ENFORCEMENT:

The bar graph on the next page depicts total overtime hours, total citations written during those hours for occupant protection related offenses, and the same information for offenses written during non-overtime duty hours.



Total grant funded OT hours:	**219**
Total occupant protection citations issued:	**426**
Total occupant protection citations in target areas & times:	**51**
Total occupant protection citations during night hours:	**315**
Total child restraint citations issued:	**101**
Total child restraint citations issues in target areas & times:	**3**
Total child restraint citations– night hours:	**64**

Total special enforcement details:

- **4 total checkpoints were conducted.** All on May 21, 2015.
- **3 first quarter of year DMV funded saturation patrols.** Focused on time period between 5 pm and 9 pm, identified by DMV historical data as the highest chance of fatalities in the region.
- **9 second quarter of year DMV funded saturation patrols.** Focused on highest traffic flow time, which was between noon and 6 pm.
- **7 third quarter of year DMV funded saturation patrols.**

- **16 fourth quarter of year saturation patrols.** Focused on Click It or Ticket mini-mobilization period of November 19th to November 26th, 2015. The saturation patrols focused on high crash days during the holidays as determined by historical data.

National Click It or Ticket Campaign Day: May 21, 2015

- **3000 to 3100 Franklin Road checkpoint:** 128 vehicles contacted, 0 summons
- **1700 Orange Avenue checkpoint:** 160 vehicles contacted, 0 summons
- **1500 Lafayette Boulevard at Cove Road checkpoint:** 169 vehicles contacted, 3 summonses issued for child safety seat violations
- **1100 Overland Road checkpoint:** 202 vehicles contacted, 0 summons

Each driver contacted was given educational material on the importance of buckling up and restraining children properly.

2015 Click It or Ticket Saturation Patrol Results [May 18—31, 2015]:

Total number of officers who participated:	8
Total overtime hours:	32
Total vehicles stopped:	59
Total number of seatbelt violations:	9
Total number of suspended/revoked:	3
Total number of speeding violations:	32

OUTCOMES:

A **post survey** revealed a seat belt usage rate in the City of Roanoke at **91 percent**, which was **11 percentage points above** the state seat belt usage percentage rate of **80.9 percent**. The locations surveyed for the post survey were the same four as the pre-survey.

The traffic enforcement presence helped reduce Part One Violent crime by 8 percent in 2015.

The overall plan helped **reduce** the number of crashes involving unrestrained drivers/ occupants **by 17%** compared to 2014.

Officer Recognition:

The following officer received a Merit Award for traffic safety seatbelt enforcement:

- **Sergeant Rob McNiff.** 91 total summonses issued.

The following officer received a Merit Award for traffic safety child safety seat enforcement:

- **Officer Kinga Baker:** 10 total summonses issued.

In 2013, command staff approved the Harold F. Wallick Traffic Safety Excellence Awards to be given to the officers who go above and beyond the call of duty when it comes to traffic safety. Award winners must meet certain criteria outlined in policy. The award's namesake, Retired Officer Harold F. Wallick, served the department for 25+ years and was known for his extensive legal, prevention, and enforcement knowledge in traffic safety.

2015 Harold F. Wallick Award for Traffic Safety Excellence winners:

- **Officer Kenneth Wilkerson**
- **Officer Cynthia Berrman**
- **Officer Gregory Benton**
- **Officer Billy Wood**
- **Officer Jacob Hawkins**

Community recognizes Officer Dustin Moricle's Woodrow Wilson Middle School Bicycle Club:

Cardinal Bicycles, a local business, recognized Officer Moricle's leadership by donating the majority of bikes to the 40 kids enrolled in the club. The school's PTA donated safety flags for each bicycle. Officer Moricle preaches occupant protection by his rule that all riders must have helmets, which were also donated by local businesses.

External Stakeholder Recognition: The Citizens Police Academy Alumni assisted on many traffic safety related outreach and enforcement events. The department honored the group with a special dinner during National Volunteer Week in April. The dinner featured a buffet and was catered by a local restaurant.