

HIGHWAY SAFETY STRATEGIC PLAN



2008



NEW YORK STATE GOVERNOR'S TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

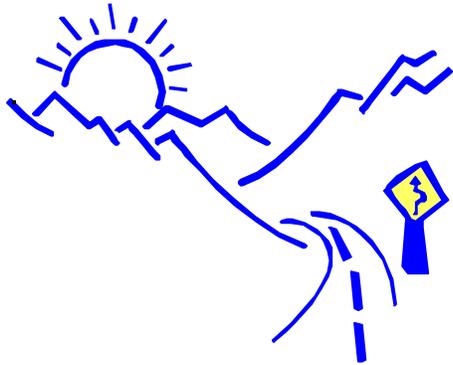
NEW YORK STATE
HIGHWAY SAFETY STRATEGIC PLAN
FFY 2008

New York State
Governor's Traffic Safety Committee

Eliot Spitzer, Governor
David J. Swarts, Chair

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2008 HIGHWAY SAFETY STRATEGIC PLAN

INTRODUCTION

In preparing its FFY 2008 Highway Safety Strategic Plan (HSSP), New York continued a performance-based approach to the planning and management of the state's program. The intent of New York's strategic planning process is to implement a data-driven approach in identifying problems and setting priorities for the state's highway safety program.

The top priorities of the 2008 highway safety program are to address trends of increasing numbers of crashes among some segments of highway users. Teen drivers, senior drivers, commercial vehicle drivers and motorcycle operators will be highlighted as New York undertakes efforts to increase the use of occupant restraints; reduce unsafe driving behaviors, including speeding and impaired driving; improve the safety of pedestrians; and expand education and training opportunities. This document outlines the major highway safety problems that have been identified and presents short-term and long-term performance goals for improvements in these areas. In addition to comprehensive statewide goals, specific goals and objectives for each major program area have been established. Brief descriptions of the current status, goals, and objectives of the statewide highway safety program and the major program areas follow.

At the time this HSSP was prepared, 2005 was the most recent complete set of crash data available. Preliminary 2006 data were also available for fatal crashes and fatalities. Goals for the state's highway safety program were established based on the trend in each measure over the three most recent years of data available. In setting objectives and performance measures related to tickets, 2006 was the most recent complete data set available.



STATEWIDE HIGHWAY SAFETY PROGRAM

The goals of New York's comprehensive statewide highway safety program are to prevent motor vehicle crashes, save lives, and reduce the severity of injuries suffered in crashes. The Governor's Traffic Safety Committee (GTSC) provides leadership and support for the attainment of these traffic safety goals through its administration of the federal 402 program and various incentive grants awarded to New York under the new Safe, Accountable, Flexible, and Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU).

The planning process for this year's Highway Safety Strategic Plan (HSSP) was again enhanced through its coordination with the development of a data-driven Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) for New York State. A crucial part of the HSSP performance-based planning process is problem identification which is accomplished through analyses of crash, fatality, and injury measures. Because both of these highway safety plans share many of the same goals, where appropriate, the goals established in the 2007 HSSP were adopted in the SHSP.

NEW YORK STATE CRASH, FATALITY, AND INJURY MEASURES, 2003-2006

	2003	2004	2005	2006*	2008 Goal	2012 Goal
Fatalities	1,477	1,495	1,410	1,435	1,387	1,285
Fatal Crash Rate/ 100 million VMT	1.00	1.00	.093	0.94	0.92	0.88
Mean Severity of Injury (MSI)	1.26	1.27	1.28	n/a	1.25	1.20

* Preliminary data based on completed cases as of June 2007

The number of fatalities in motor vehicle crashes in New York State fluctuated over the four-year period, 2003-2006. In New York, the fatal crash rate per 100 million vehicle miles traveled (VMT) declined from 1.00 in 2003 and 2004 to 0.93 in 2005 and remained relatively stable at 0.94 in 2006. As indicated by the MSI, the severity of injuries suffered in crashes remained relatively constant over the three years, 2003-2005.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The overall goals of New York's highway safety program are to prevent motor vehicle crashes, save lives, and reduce the severity of the injuries suffered. In FFY 2008, a comprehensive approach will continue to be taken with strategies implemented in all of the major highway safety program areas. The effectiveness of the collective efforts will be assessed through changes in fatality and injury measures.



IMPAIRED DRIVING

New York remains firmly committed to its long-term vigorous campaign to fight impaired driving. A cornerstone of New York's efforts has been the highly successful Special Traffic Options Program for Driving While Intoxicated (STOP-DWI) which celebrated its 25th anniversary in November 2006. Enhanced and innovative enforcement efforts coupled with increased public information and education have successfully produced very positive results in recent years.

Major legislation targeting the worst impaired drivers was enacted in New York within the past year. Effective November 1, 2006, this omnibus DWI reform legislation addresses a wide range of issues including high BAC drivers, persistent offenders and alcohol-related homicides that involve certain aggravating factors. The state agencies and other partner organizations responsible for the various components of the impaired driving system are planning a two-day conference for fall 2007 that will address the implementation of this new legislation. Additional legislation directed toward the most serious impaired driving offenses was also passed during the 2007 legislative session, including legislation related to the installation and operation of ignition interlock devices. Other legislation effective November 1, 2007 creates the new crimes of aggravated vehicular assault and aggravated vehicular homicide when such crimes are committed by motorists that meet specific criteria.

Other new legislation taking effect within the last year was the "Bill Leaf – Brandi Woods Law." This legislation amended the Penal Law to provide for a charge of vehicular assault or vehicular manslaughter in the 1st degree if the driver committing either of these crimes has been convicted of any impaired driving provisions of the Vehicle & Traffic Law within the preceding ten years. Another newly-enacted law created a 21-member Advisory Council on Underage Alcohol Consumption to conduct a study and recommend strategies for reducing underage drinking.

The most recent statistics reinforce the need to continue efforts to reduce impaired driving in New York State. The number of alcohol-related fatalities increased from 295 in 2003 to 382 in 2004 and 2005. The upward trend continued in 2006 with 388 alcohol-related fatalities. The number of persons injured in alcohol-related crashes increased slightly from 8,004 in 2003 to 8,024 in 2004 and then decreased slightly to 7,724 in 2005.

ALCOHOL-RELATED FATALITIES AND INJURIES IN NEW YORK STATE,* 2003-2006

	2003	2004	2005	2006**	2008 Goal	2012 Goal
Alcohol-Related Fatalities	295	382	382	388	320	270
Alcohol-Related Injuries	8,004	8,024	7,724	n/a	7,600	7,300

* Police-reported crashes

** Preliminary data based on completed cases as of June 2007

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The primary goals of the impaired driving program are to reduce the numbers of alcohol-related traffic fatalities and injuries. These goals will be accomplished by increasing enforcement of the impaired driving laws, conducting training programs for police officers on underage alcohol sales enforcement, conducting training for prosecutors, and raising public awareness of the dangers of drinking and driving. A variety of programs targeting underage drinking drivers will be supported; the expertise and resources of the NYS Office of Alcohol and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS) and other agencies will be enlisted to enhance these efforts. Strategies that target high BAC and recidivist impaired drivers will also be emphasized.



POLICE TRAFFIC SERVICES

Enforcement of the Vehicle and Traffic Law, in conjunction with public information and education, continues to be a cornerstone of New York's highway safety program. Coupled with excessive speed and other unsafe driver behaviors, the continuing increases in traffic volume and vehicle miles traveled have created a challenge for the law enforcement community. A proven strategy for success, and a long-held traffic safety doctrine, is that a combination of highly visible enforcement and public information and education (PI&E) is needed to achieve and sustain significant improvements in highway safety. These strategies have the added benefit of encouraging positive behavior such as safety belt use and reductions in aggressive driving. Although traditional enforcement strategies are successful with the general driving population, different approaches are required for some groups, especially those who intentionally disregard the laws and become adept at avoiding apprehension, posing a high risk of injury or death to themselves and others. This group includes recidivist and high BAC drunk drivers, aggressive

drivers, those who continue to drive with a suspended driver's license (aggravated unlicensed operation), and those who refuse to wear safety restraints. For these drivers, highly publicized selective enforcement efforts and targeted PI&E are needed. Various programs targeting impaired driving, non-compliance with the seat belt law, and aggressive driving have been very effective in New York; the GTSC continues to support these successful ongoing programs, as well as the development of innovative strategies to address these problems.

Speeding continues to be one of the biggest challenges facing law enforcement and poses a serious risk to all users of the state's roadways, including occupants of the speeding vehicle, other cars, trucks and motorcycles, as well as pedestrians. Law enforcement continues to address speeding in traditional ways using radar technology, which has dramatically improved over the years, as well as through new and innovative means.

One example of a successful program combining enforcement and PI&E is the *Traffic Safety Corridor* project which targets high crash locations with a high incidence of speeding and other aggressive driving-related contributing factors. This statewide program, coordinated by the State Police and the NYS Department of Transportation (NYSDOT), utilizes local law enforcement and media to saturate an area with intensive enforcement and publicity; the police then follow up with frequent enforcement activities. This program has been very effective in reducing speeding and other aggressive driving behaviors within these corridors.

The table below shows the trends in the involvement of speed and other aggressive behaviors in fatal and personal injury crashes. In each of the three years, 2003-2005, the proportions of fatal and personal injury crashes for which the police reported failure to yield the right-of-way, following too closely or unsafe speed to be a contributory factor remained constant; failure to yield the right-of-way was a factor in approximately 16% of the crashes, following too closely was a factor in 14% of the crashes, and unsafe speed was a factor in approximately 11% of the crashes.

**CONTRIBUTING FACTORS IN FATAL AND PERSONAL INJURY CRASHES IN
NEW YORK STATE, * 2003-2005**

	2003	2004	2005	2008 Goal	2012 Goal
Police-Reported Crashes	142,287	133,314	128,581		
Unsafe Speed	15,319	14,615	14,244	13,600	12,800
Failure to Yield the Right-of-Way	23,462	21,987	20,714	19,500	17,500
Following Too Closely	19,331	18,470	17,780	17,000	15,000

* Police-reported crashes

Distracted driving is another factor that contributes to a large number of fatal and personal injury crashes in New York. With the exception of hand-held cell phone use, these types of behaviors are not prohibited by law; consequently, the dangers of distracted driving need to be addressed through educational efforts funded under Community Traffic Safety Programs.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The primary goal of the police traffic services program is to decrease the number and severity of motor vehicle crashes by deterring aggressive driving and other risky behaviors, including speeding. In addition to routine and selective enforcement approaches, training programs will be conducted for police officers, probation officers, judges, and prosecutors. Additional initiatives targeting specific issues, such as reckless or aggressive drivers, scofflaws, unlicensed drivers, and commercial vehicle operators will also be explored.



MOTORCYCLE SAFETY

Motorcycles provide a fuel efficient and economical means of transportation and their popularity for recreation, touring, and commuting continues to grow in New York. Since 1996, the number of motorcycle registrations has increased by 77 percent, reaching 289,096 in 2006. With the increased price of gas and steady motorcycle sales, this growth trend is expected to continue.

New York's Motorcycle Safety Program, in existence for the past ten years, provides instruction and field training to improve the riding skills of motorcyclists. The program, which is administered by the Motorcycle Association of New York State (MANYS), now offers rider education at 20 public training sites and nine military or police facilities around the state. The program also includes a public information and education component aimed at heightening awareness of motorcycles among all motorists.

New York is using its Section 2010 funds received in FFY 2006 and 2007 to develop programs that will augment the MANYS program and to conduct conferences, workshops, seminars and other outreach modes that enhance the coordination of programs and training. Opportunities to expand the network of training providers beyond the MANYS program to reach new geographic areas or increase access in high demand areas are also being explored. In addition, the GTSC continues its efforts to encourage motorists to be aware of the presence of motorcycles on the roadways.

Motorcycle crashes have been on an upward trend since 2003; between 2003 and 2005, crashes involving a motorcycle increased from 4,284 to 4,892 and preliminary data for 2006 indicate that the number of motorcyclists killed in crashes increased from 153 in 2003 to 190 in 2006. Unsafe speed was the contributing factor most commonly reported in motorcycle crashes.

MOTORCYCLE CRASHES IN NEW YORK STATE, 2003-2006

	2003	2004	2005	2006*	2008 Goal	2012 Goal
Motorcycle Crashes	4,284	4,509	4,892	n/a	4,300	4,000
Motorcyclists Killed	153	148	162	190	148	130

* Preliminary data based on cases completed as of June 2007

In 2005, young motorcycle operators continued to be overrepresented in fatal and personal injury motorcycle crashes: 8% of the motorcyclists involved in fatal and personal injury crashes were under 21 years of age, but less than 1% of the licensed operators are in this age group. In addition, 29% of motorcyclists involved in fatal and personal injury crashes were 21-29 years of age, but only 7% of the licensed operators are in this age group.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The primary goals in the area of motorcycle safety are to reduce the number of motorcycle crashes and fatalities. Objectives include continued expansion of motorcycle rider education opportunities, increased motorist awareness of motorcyclists on the roadways, and the identification of motorcyclist behaviors that are contributing to crashes. The strategies that will be used include public information and education and research initiatives. Public information and education activities will stress the need for the motoring public to be aware of motorcyclists. Research efforts in the next year may include assessments of the extent to which persons continue to operate motorcycles without the proper license and the extent to which unsafe driving behaviors, such as speeding and impaired driving, are contributing factors in crashes.



PEDESTRIAN, BICYCLE, IN-LINE SKATING, NON-MOTORIZED SCOOTER, AND SKATEBOARDING SAFETY

Pedestrians, bicyclists, in-line skaters, non-motorized scooter operators, and skateboarders are among the most vulnerable roadway users. When involved in crashes with motor vehicles, these highway users almost always suffer more serious injuries than vehicle occupants. Crashes involving pedestrians account for approximately one-quarter of all fatal crashes and approximately 10 percent of all injury crashes. The injuries sustained in these crashes often require extensive medical treatment and/or lengthy rehabilitation. Treatment and rehabilitation for older injured pedestrians may be even more protracted, resulting in increased costs. For these reasons, GTSC continues to identify Pedestrian Safety as a priority for FFY 2008.

Responsibility for pedestrian, bicycle and wheel-sport safety is shared among several state agencies and there have been many examples of collaborative efforts in recent years. For example, three Creating Walkable Communities conferences were held at various locations in 2001, 2004, and 2007. The purpose of these conferences is to promote the safe and healthy use of the state's transportation systems by people walking and bicycling.

PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

The number of pedestrian fatalities remained fairly constant between 2003 and 2005, decreasing to 316 in 2006. In all four years, nearly half of all pedestrian fatalities occurred in New York City. The number of pedestrians injured has been on a downward trend between 2003 and 2005; 15,392 pedestrians were injured in New York State in 2005.

PEDESTRIANS KILLED AND INJURED IN NEW YORK STATE, 2003-2006

	2003	2004	2005	2006*	2008 Goal	2012 Goal
Pedestrians Killed (NYS)	327	328	328	316	305	290
In New York City	162	155	159	156	150	135
Pedestrians Injured (NYS)	16,665	15,678	15,392	n/a	14,785	14,000

* Preliminary data based on cases completed as of June 2007

BICYCLE SAFETY

Over the three-year period, 2003-2005, there was a steady upward trend in the number of bicyclists killed in motor vehicle crashes from 38 to 47, followed by a leveling off at 46 in 2006. New York State's law requiring children under age 14 to wear a helmet was implemented in 1993 to mitigate the severity of injuries in bicycle crashes. Additional discussion and data analysis are warranted to determine whether mandatory helmet use should be extended to other groups, such as bicycle messengers. Efforts to prevent bicycle crashes through education and increased public awareness for both bicyclists and motorists will continue.

BICYCLISTS KILLED AND INJURED IN NEW YORK STATE, 2003-2006

	2003	2004	2005	2006*	2008 Goal	2012 Goal
Bicyclists Killed (NYS)	38	41	47	46	38	30
In New York City	16	15	21	18	15	10
Bicyclists Injured (NYS)	5,581	5,690	5,680	n/a	5,360	5,050

* Preliminary data based on cases completed as of June 2007

IN-LINE SKATING SAFETY

In-line skating remains a popular activity in New York State. Although primarily considered to be a recreational activity, it is also used by messenger/delivery services in the New York City metropolitan area. Since January 1996, children under age 14 have been required to wear a helmet when skating. In July 1996, a revised police crash report was distributed to enforcement agencies to allow for the capture of information on in-line skating crashes, including the type of safety equipment used by skaters. At this time, the number of crashes involving in-line skaters is too small to allow meaningful analyses. Many localities are beginning to track the data and have expanded their traffic safety programs to include in-line skating safety issues.

NON-MOTORIZED SCOOTER SAFETY

The increasing popularity of scooters in New York State in recent years has been paralleled by a substantial rise in scooter-related injuries. Since July 1, 2002, it has been illegal for persons under 14 years of age to operate a scooter or ride as a passenger on a scooter without wearing an approved bicycle helmet.

The growing problem with scooter safety centers on the devices that are motorized, but are not equipped to be registered as motor vehicles. Currently, it is illegal to ride these types of scooters on New York's roadways and in areas used by pedestrians and bicyclists. To address the issue of scooter safety, the GTSC continues to support many statewide wheel sport safety programs. These programs generally include a helmet distribution component and instruction in the proper fit for helmets for persons operating or riding on non-motorized scooters.

SKATEBOARDING SAFETY

Effective January 1, 2005, New York's Vehicle and Traffic Law was amended to require skateboard riders under age 14 to wear an approved helmet. Skateboard safety is also promoted through the many statewide wheel-sport safety programs the GTSC continues to support.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The primary goals of the pedestrian, bicycle, in-line skating, non-motorized scooter safety and skateboarding programs are to reduce the number of pedestrians, bicyclists and participants in other wheeled sports killed and injured in crashes. These goals will be accomplished by providing safety education to both the general public and specific target groups, developing and evaluating engineering solutions, and expanding helmet distribution programs. Community-based programs will play a major role in these efforts. Research and evaluation activities will be undertaken to assist in determining the nature and scope of the pedestrian crash problem, especially with respect to location of the crashes, and in crashes involving alcohol, whether the driver or pedestrian was impaired.



OCCUPANT PROTECTION

Since New York passed the nation's first mandatory seat belt law more than 20 years ago, nearly every other state has followed New York's lead. Because of the life-saving benefits of occupant restraints, efforts to increase their use have been a national priority for many years. After the initial jump in seat belt use immediately following the implementation of New York's law, the use rate continued to increase at a gradual pace until it leveled off in the mid-1990s at about 75 percent. It was at that point that highway safety professionals rallied behind a new program, *Buckle Up New York*. *BUNY*, as it has come to be known, is a high-visibility enforcement and education (PI&E) campaign. The national "Click It or Ticket" slogan was added to the *Buckle Up New York* program in 2002 in conjunction with New York's participation in the national seat belt mobilization.

In 2003, the seat belt use rate in New York reached an all-time high of 85 percent where it remained for the next two years before slipping to 83 percent in 2006 and 2007. The fact that the use rate has remained relatively unchanged in the last few years suggests the need to both continue the efforts that have proven effective and to identify new approaches that can reenergize the program. One of the strategies that New York hopes will invigorate the program is the Department of Motor Vehicles' new PI&E campaign called "Get It Together New York."

Child passenger safety continues to be an important component of New York's occupant protection program. Since 2004, a Child Passenger Safety Advisory Board has taken the lead role in developing the *Child Passenger Safety Education Program (CPS)* in New York, including the identification and training of new CPS technicians. In March 2005, new legislation was implemented requiring all children ages four, five and six to be restrained in an appropriate child restraint system; booster seats are the appropriate restraint for the majority of children in this age group.

The distribution of occupants among the various injury categories remained relatively unchanged between 2003 and 2005. The proportion of occupants who were killed increased from .26% to .29% in 2004, followed by a decrease to .24% in 2005; the proportion of occupants who were seriously injured decreased from 2.70% in 2003 and 2004 to 2.58% in 2005.

**VEHICLE OCCUPANTS COVERED BY NEW YORK STATE'S SEAT BELT LAW
KILLED OR SERIOUSLY INJURED IN CRASHES,* 2003-2005**

	2003	2004	2005	2008 Goal	2012 Goal
Fatalities	0.26%	0.29%	0.24%	0.23%	0.20%
Serious Injuries	2.70%	2.70%	2.58%	2.40%	2.20%

* Police-reported crashes

The Mean Severity of Injury (MSI) measure also indicates that the severity of injuries suffered by vehicle occupants covered by the seat belt law remained relatively stable at approximately 1.25 from 2003 to 2005. In calculating the MSI, a weight of 4 is assigned to a fatality, 3 to a serious injury, 2 to a moderate injury, and 1 to a minor injury.

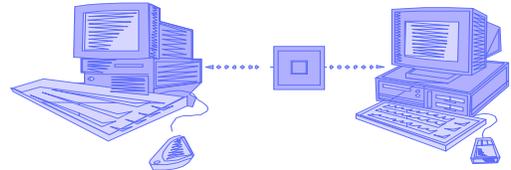
**MEAN SEVERITY OF INJURY (MSI) FOR VEHICLE OCCUPANTS
COVERED BY NEW YORK STATE'S SEAT BELT LAW,* 2003-2005**

2003	2004	2005	2008 Goal	2012 Goal
1.24	1.25	1.25	1.23	1.20

* Police-reported crashes

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The primary goals of the occupant protection program are to decrease the number of vehicle occupants killed and to mitigate the severity of the injuries suffered. Increasing compliance with the seat belt law is essential to the achievement of these goals. The strategies identified for accomplishing these goals include high visibility enforcement, research to identify target groups of motorists who do not comply with the law, public information and education, and child passenger safety training.



TRAFFIC RECORDS

To meet the challenges of identifying the nature and location of traffic safety problems and developing appropriate countermeasures, agencies and organizations involved in traffic safety at all jurisdictional levels require access to a variety of traffic records data. The traffic safety community needs data on crashes and injuries, arrests and convictions for traffic violations, and highway engineering initiatives. The need for accurate and timely data, together with an ever increasing need for data analysis support, is being addressed vigorously by New York through major improvements in the way it maintains and uses its traffic records systems.

Since the mid-1990s, New York has made significant strides in improving its various traffic records systems and data files. In 1995, under the direction of the GTSC, New York developed and implemented a strategic plan that produced tremendous advances in its accident and ticket records systems. To build on this progress, in 2005 New York developed a new multi-year traffic records strategic plan. Developed by New York's Governor's Traffic Safety Committee, with assistance from the state's Traffic Records Coordinating Council and the Institute for Traffic Safety Management and Research, the new strategic plan covers the four-year period, 2006-2009.

Using a performance-based approach, the 2006-2009 multi-year strategic plan addresses the major deficiencies noted in the state's crash, enforcement/adjudication, driver, injury surveillance, vehicle, and roadway data systems. The plan identified the limitations in these six core traffic records systems and potential improvement opportunities for those systems. Upon approval of the plan by NHTSA in August 2006, the implementation of Program Year 1 of the plan was initiated in September 2006.

At New York's request, a Traffic Records Assessment was conducted in May 2007 by a team of experts assembled by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. The strategic plan was updated in June 2007 and submitted to NHTSA on June 15 as the key component of New York's application for Year 2 funding under Section 408; input from the Assessment team was incorporated into the plan.

The importance placed on improving the state's traffic records systems is also evident in the improvements made in the other traffic-related systems maintained by the Department of Motor Vehicles and those maintained by the Department of Transportation, Department of Health, Division of Criminal Justice Services, Division of Probation and Correctional Alternatives, and the Division of State Police. In addition, the continued expansion of electronic reporting, especially in New York City, continues to be a priority.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The primary goals of the efforts undertaken in the area of traffic records are to continue to coordinate efforts by various agencies to expand or enhance their capabilities to collect, retrieve and disseminate traffic safety data electronically on both the local and statewide levels. In addition, efforts for continued improvements in data linkage capabilities among traffic safety-related data systems at both the state and local levels will be supported. Funding will be also be available for the installation of new technologies by enforcement agencies and the courts and for the training necessary for the operation of these technologies.



COMMUNITY TRAFFIC SAFETY PROGRAMS

Community Traffic Safety Programs combine strategies from several traffic safety program areas to address local highway safety problems. Communities within a county are encouraged to cooperatively develop a strategic plan which identifies and documents the county's highway safety problems. Because of the integral role local programs play in achieving the statewide highway safety goals, increasing the number of counties participating in the program continues to be a priority.

The strategies implemented under the individual community traffic safety programs will contribute to the attainment of the goals established for the statewide highway safety program. In addition to funding local programs, the strategies in this area include efforts to promote the development of broad-based coalitions that include organizations with differing perspectives on traffic safety issues, such as private sector organizations, state and local government, the media, the business community and industry associations. Educational efforts to improve traffic safety among high risk target groups are a priority for these community programs. One example of a coalition that has developed in the past year to address the needs of specific target group is the

Capital Region Older Driver Assistance Network. The next focus will be a working group to address issues related to teen drivers.

The issue of distracted driving is another traffic safety concern that New York will continue to address through education and other approaches. The number and proportion of fatal crashes reported to involve “driver inattention/distraction” as a contributory factor is on an upward trend; approximately 11% of the fatal crashes in 2006 involved distracted driving. For the past several years, distracted driving has also consistently been a factor in 18% of the personal injury crashes.

The use of cell phones while driving has become one of the most prominent concerns with respect to distracted driving behavior. To address this issue, New York became the first state to pass a law banning the use of hand-held cell phones by vehicle operators on the state’s roadways. Legislation banning text messaging while driving has also been introduced.

“DRIVER INATTENTION/DISTRACTION” CRASHES IN NEW YORK STATE,* 2003-2006				
	2003	2004	2005	2006**
Fatal Crashes	118	119	122	143
% of all fatal crashes	8.7%	8.7%	9.3%	10.7%
Fatal Crashes Involving Cell Phone Use	1	3	1	3
% of all fatal crashes	0.1%	0.2%	0.1%	0.2%
Injury Crashes	25,586	24,169	23,221	n/a
% of all injury crashes	18.2%	18.3%	18.2%	n/a
Injury Crashes Involving Cell Phone Use	221	229	240	n/a
% of all injury crashes	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	n/a

* Police-reported crashes
 ** Preliminary data based on cases completed as of June 2007

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

The Governor's Traffic Safety Committee (GTSC) is responsible for coordinating and managing New York State's comprehensive highway safety program. The GTSC takes a leadership role in identifying the state's overall traffic safety priorities; provides assistance to its partners in problem identification at the local level; and works with its partners to develop programs, public information campaigns, and other activities to address the problems identified. In addition to the 402 highway safety grant program, the GTSC administers various incentive grant programs awarded to the state under SAFETEA-LU. In administering the state’s highway safety program, the GTSC takes a comprehensive approach, providing funding for a wide variety of programs targeting crash and injury reduction through education, enforcement, engineering, community involvement, and greater access to safety-related data.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The GTSC is committed to continuing and strengthening planning at the state and local levels and to promoting the use of the Highway Safety Strategic Plan (HSSP) as the principal document for setting priorities, directing program efforts, and assigning resources. The GTSC's role will include efforts to identify new and expand existing technology as a means of disseminating traffic safety information and improving communication with its customers, and to provide direction, guidance, and assistance to support the traffic safety efforts of public and private partners. The GTSC will also continue to coordinate and provide training opportunities for the state's traffic safety professionals and to support the use of evaluation as a tool in the state's highway safety program. To improve efficiency, the GTSC has undertaken a project to develop or acquire an integrated grant management system.

The GTSC will also continue to support the NYS Department of Transportation by participating in the development of a NYS Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) based on the requirements of SAFETEA-LU. In addition, New York has prepared a Traffic Records strategic plan to meet the application requirements for Section 408 funding under SAFETEA-LU.