



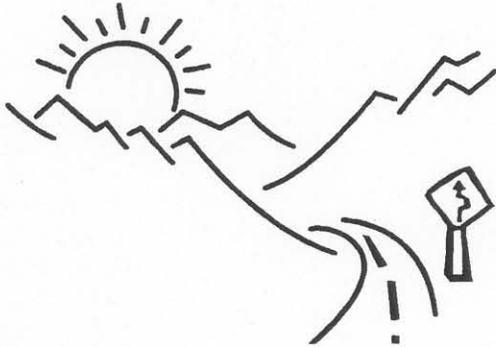
HIGHWAY SAFETY STRATEGIC PLAN

NEW YORK STATE GOVERNOR'S TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

George E. Pataki, Governor

Richard E. Jackson, Jr., Chair

2000



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

The fundamental goals of New York State'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 provides leadership and support for the attainment of these goals through its administration of the federal 402 program and the various TEA-21 incentive grants awarded to the state, and through the coordination of state and local initiatives directed toward the state's highway safety priorities.

Two of the top priorities of Governor Pataki's year 2000 highway safety program are occupant protection and recidivist drinking drivers. Convincing drivers and passengers to buckle up is the single most important factor in reducing deaths and injuries on our highways. Efforts to increase seat belt compliance include both aggressive enforcement and heightened public awareness. Promoting proper child restraint use to ensure the safety of younger vehicle occupants is another important component of the state's efforts.

The recidivist drinking driver is also a persistent problem in traffic safety. With the vigorous enforcement of the DWI laws in New York, a growing number of people arrested for impaired driving are repeat offenders. Continuing efforts to increase public awareness of the seriousness of impaired driving remain essential.

Other initiatives include the state's efforts to expand the *Motorcycle Rider Education Program*; efforts to reduce aggressive driving, including behaviors such as speeding, running red lights, and changing lanes unsafely; and efforts to increase awareness of the dangers of driver fatigue.

The 2000 Highway Safety Strategic Plan 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.

STATEWIDE HIGHWAY SAFETY PROGRAM



The Governor's Traffic Safety Committee (GTSC) leads the state's traffic safety community in a performance based planning process to identify goals for the statewide highway safety program. In recognition that the overall goals of the Section 402 Highway Safety Program are shared by the Motor Carrier Safety Assistance Program (MCSAP), steps have been taken to expand the communication between GTSC and the administrators of the MCSAP grant program in New York State. This sharing of information will result in better coordination of safety efforts and more efficient and effective use of the available resources.

NEW YORK STATE CRASH, FATALITY, AND INJURY MEASURES 1994-1997

| | 1994 | 1995 | 1996 | 1997 | 2000 Goal | 2004 Goal |
|--|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------------|--------------|
| Fatalities | 1,669 | 1,670 | 1,590 | 1,630 | 1,550 | 1,460 |
| Fatal Crash Rate/ 100 million VMT | 1.35 | 1.35 | 1.23 | 1.24 | 1.20 | 1.15 |
| Mean Severity of Injury (MSI) | 1.332 | 1.331 | 1.312 | 1.306 | 1.240 | 1.175 |

Over the four years, 1994 to 1997, an average of 1,640 people died each year as a result of motor vehicle crashes in New York State. Between 1994 and 1997, the fatal crash rate per 100 million vehicle miles traveled (VMT) remained consistently below the national level. New York's fatal crash rate declined from 1.35 in 1995 to 1.23 in 1996, and remained at approximately the same level (1.24) in 1997. The Mean Severity of Injury (MSI) is the average severity of motor vehicle injuries; as indicated by the decrease in the MSI, the severity of injuries suffered in crashes declined steadily between 1994 and 1997.

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. A comprehensive approach will be undertaken 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



Drivers impaired by alcohol and other drugs pose a serious threat on New York's roadways and continue to be the focus of one of New York's most vigorous, widescale campaigns to improve highway safety. New York's long-term commitment to reducing impaired driving through a combination of aggressive enforcement and persuasive public information has produced very positive results. The *Special Traffic Options Program for Driving While Intoxicated* (STOP-DWI) continues to be the cornerstone of New York's impaired driving program. New York's network of highway safety partners plays a crucial role in raising public awareness of the dangers of impaired driving and promoting messages that encourage the public to take personal responsibility for their behavior on the roadways. Members of this network include federal, state, and local agencies; citizen groups and community organizations; public interest and advocacy groups; and private sector companies and organizations.

Enactment of legislation has also played a key role in reducing the incidence of impaired driving. Proposed by Governor Pataki, the zero tolerance law, which took effect November 1, 1996, makes it illegal for drivers under age 21 to drive with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .02 percent or higher. Two additional measures signed into law by Governor Pataki prohibit the possession of an open container of alcohol in a motor vehicle and establish license sanctions and other penalties for persons under age 21 who use a fraudulent driver's license or non-driver identification to purchase alcohol. Governor Pataki proposed, and will sign into law, legislation that would encourage sellers of alcoholic beverages to purchase and install scanning devices that read the bar code or magnetic strip on the back of the driver's license to validate a purchaser's age and detect tampering.

ALCOHOL-RELATED FATALITIES AND INJURIES IN NEW YORK STATE* 1994-1997

| | 1994 | 1995 | 1996 | 1997 | 2000 Goal | 2004 Goal |
|-----------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------------|--------------|
| Alcohol-Related Fatalities | 405 | 448 | 361 | 322 | 310 | 260 |
| Alcohol-Related Injuries | 11,107 | 10,933 | 10,467 | 10,415 | 10,125 | 9,650 |

* *Police-reported crashes*

Between 1995 and 1997, the number of alcohol-related fatalities decreased by nearly 30%, from 448 in 1995 to 322 in 1997. The rate of alcohol involvement in fatal crashes in New York State continues to be substantially below the national average; in 1997, 19% of fatal crashes in New York State were alcohol-related, compared to the national rate of 39%. Over the four-year period, 1994-1997, injuries from crashes involving alcohol steadily decreased from 11,107 to 10,415, a drop of approximately 6%.

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, increasing police referrals to the State Liquor Authority for violations of the underage alcohol purchase laws, conducting training for prosecutors, and

raising public awareness of the dangers of drinking and driving. Measures that target underage drinking drivers, drivers 21 to 34 years of age, and repeat offenders will be emphasized.

POLICE TRAFFIC SERVICES



Research shows that a combination of highly visible enforcement and public information and education is needed to achieve and sustain significant results in highway safety. Enforcement has the added benefit of encouraging positive behavior such as safety belt use. Highly publicized selective enforcement efforts targeting impaired driving, seat belt use, and more recently, aggressive driving, have been effective in New York.

Although traditional enforcement strategies are successful with the general driving population, new approaches must be identified for certain populations. One of these groups is drivers who drive with suspended or revoked licenses, known as aggravated unlicensed operation of a motor vehicle. Another area of concern is uninsured vehicles and the resulting costs to society when vehicles involved in crashes are not properly insured.

NEW YORK STATE MOTOR VEHICLE CRASHES, 1994-1997

| | 1994 | 1995 | 1996 | 1997 | 2000 Goal | 2004 Goal |
|--|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------------|--------------|
| Total Crashes | 259,184 | 253,136 | 250,521 | 263,604 | 250,000 | 243,000 |
| Rate (crashes/ 100 million VMT) | 230 | 220 | 212 | 218 | 209 | 200 |

Analysis of data related to motor vehicle crashes indicates that the total number of reportable crashes decreased in 1995 and 1996, and then increased in 1997 to 263,604 crashes. In 1997, the Department of Motor Vehicles changed its accident classification procedures; as a result, the 1997 number is not comparable to earlier data. Although the crash rate per 100 million vehicle miles traveled (VMT) showed a modest increase in 1997, the rate was still below that for 1995, and considerably below the rate for 1994.

SPEED ENFORCEMENT

The speed at which a vehicle is traveling contributes directly to the severity of the crash, since the energy expended and the forces of the crash increase geometrically with increases in speed. The increased speeds on some highways have been attributed to a "spillover" effect; after leaving a roadway with a higher posted speed limit, drivers may continue to drive at higher speeds. Even modestly elevated speeds can result in significant increases in the crash forces and the severity of the outcome to the vehicles and occupants. These factors emphasize the importance of enforcing posted speed limits in reducing crashes and their severity.

SPEED-RELATED CRASHES IN NEW YORK STATE, 1994-1997

| | 1994 | 1995 | 1996 | 1997 | 2000 Goal | 2004 Goal |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Drivers Involved in a Crash Where Speed Was a Contributing Factor | 21,517 | 20,537 | 21,067 | 21,715 | 20,100 | 19,000 |

Between 1994 and 1997, the proportion of drivers involved in crashes where speed was listed as a contributing factor was between 5% and 6%.

AGGRESSIVE DRIVING

Aggressive driving is a term used today to describe actions which have been observed for many years, such as tailgating, unsafe lane changes, running red lights, and other unsafe behaviors at intersections. However, the incidence of these unsafe actions seems to have increased dramatically. These actions, which in themselves often cause crashes, may be accompanied by other negative driver-to-driver interactions, such as shouting and obscene gestures. Sometimes these incidents escalate into "road rage," where one driver intentionally seeks to cause harm to another driver or another driver's vehicle. To address these problems, Governor Pataki proposed legislation to increase the penalties for these dangerous driving violations.

A major initiative to curb these dangerous driving behaviors is the New York State Police Aggressive Driving Enforcement program. This program seeks to reduce the number of deaths and injuries which result from aggressive driving behaviors through a combination of public education and enforcement. Enforcement teams will continue to use unmarked vehicles and fixed wing aircraft for surveillance of aggressive drivers. In addition, the State Police have developed a "low-profile" patrol vehicle specifically for aggressive driving enforcement.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

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

MOTORCYCLE SAFETY



Motorcyclists are among the most vulnerable motorists on the roadways, operating at the same speeds and on the same roads as other motorists but without the protection provided by other types of vehicles. In 1997, New York undertook a major initiative to address driver inexperience and lack of training by establishing a motorcycle rider education program. Created through legislation signed by Governor Pataki, this program provides instruction and field training to improve the riding skills of motorcyclists in the state. The program, which is operated by the Motorcycle Association of New York State (MANYs), now offers training at 12 sites around the state. Further expansion of the program is planned for future years.

MOTORCYCLE CRASHES IN NEW YORK STATE, 1994-1997

| | 1994 | 1995 | 1996 | 1997 | 2000 Goal | 2004 Goal |
|----------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------------|--------------|
| Motorcycle Crashes | 3,916 | 3,753 | 3,492 | 3,534 | 3,250 | 2,900 |
| Motorcyclists Killed | 87 | 92 | 99 | 114 | 92 | 82 |

The number of motorcycle crashes in New York State declined from 1994 to 1996, and then showed a small (1%) increase in 1997 to 3,534 crashes. Although motorcycles account for less than 2% of the registered vehicles in New York, they are involved in 8% of the fatal traffic crashes. In 1997, 114 motorcyclists were killed in crashes.

Young motorcycle operators are overrepresented in fatal and personal injury motorcycle crashes: in 1997, 11% of the motorcyclists involved in crashes were under 21 years of age, but less than 1% of the licensed operators are in this age group; 37% of motorcyclists involved in crashes were aged 21-29, but only 9% of the licensed operators are between the ages of 21 and 29.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The primary goals in the area of motorcycle safety are to reduce the number of motorcycle crashes and fatalities. Objectives designed to accomplish these goals include continued support for the expansion of motorcycle rider education opportunities and examining the issues related to the characteristics of motorcycle crashes and unlicensed operators. The strategies that will be used include public information and education, and research and evaluation initiatives. Research and evaluation efforts will focus on identifying trends and problem areas related to the characteristics of fatal motorcycle crashes and the operators in these crashes, and assessing the extent to which persons continue to operate motorcycles without the proper license.

PEDESTRIAN, BICYCLE, AND IN-LINE SKATING SAFETY



The use of various non-motorized modes of transportation on New York's streets and roadways continues to increase in popularity. The increased number of bicyclists and in-line skaters, coupled with high levels of pedestrian traffic, especially in the state's urban areas, creates a significant population of highly vulnerable highway users.

To better focus the attention of the highway safety community on pedestrian, bicycle, and in-line skating issues, the New York Coalition for Transportation Safety, with funding from the Governor's Traffic Safety Committee, prepared a resource guide with the advice and support of the NYS Safety Management System's Pedestrian, Bicycle, and In-Line Skating team. New York is promoting pedestrian, bicycle and in-line skating safety through a number of public information and education efforts, such as the *Share the Road Safely* campaign and the *Saved by the Helmet* program. For the first time this year, the New York Bicycling Coalition is implementing a community safety program in three counties, with a grant from the Governor's Traffic Safety Committee.

PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

PEDESTRIANS KILLED AND INJURED IN NEW YORK STATE, 1994-1997

| | 1994 | 1995 | 1996 | 1997 | 2000 Goal | 2004 Goal |
|----------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------------|--------------|
| Pedestrians Killed (NYS) | 408 | 428 | 397 | 374 | 360 | 350 |
| In New York City | 223 | 236 | 213 | 222 | 205 | 190 |
| Pedestrians Injured (NYS) | 20,671 | 20,214 | 19,462 | 18,830 | 18,250 | 17,100 |

The number of fatal pedestrian crashes declined in 1996 and again in 1997; injury crashes have declined steadily since 1994. In 1997, 374 pedestrians were killed in traffic crashes and 18,830 were injured. Over the four-year period, 1994-1997, 71% of the pedestrian/motor vehicle crashes and 56% of the pedestrian fatalities occurred in New York City.

BICYCLE SAFETY

Over the four-year period, 1994-1997, the number of bicyclists killed has fluctuated from a low of 44 to a high of 51. The seasonal nature of bicycle riding and the lack of information on annual travel by bicycle, in addition to the relatively small numbers, make it difficult to draw conclusions about the data. New York State's law requiring children under age 14 to wear a helmet when riding a bicycle was implemented to mitigate the severity of injuries suffered. In addition, efforts to prevent bicycle accidents through education and increased public awareness for both bicyclists and motorists will continue.

BICYCLISTS KILLED AND INJURED IN NEW YORK STATE, 1994-1997

| | 1994 | 1995 | 1996 | 1997 | 2000 Goal | 2004 Goal |
|---------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------------|--------------|
| Bicyclists Killed (NYS) | 47 | 51 | 44 | 49 | 40 | 35 |
| In New York City | 15 | 20 | 16 | 20 | 15 | 12 |
| Bicyclists Injured (NYS) | 8,491 | 9,290 | 9,074 | 9,109 | 8,400 | 7,800 |

In 1997, 46% of the bicyclists killed or injured in motor vehicle crashes were under 20 years of age; another 43% were bicyclists between the ages of 20 and 44. Over the past four years, more than half (57%) of the bicycle/motor vehicle crashes and 37% of the bicycle fatalities occurred in New York City.

IN-LINE SKATING SAFETY

In-line skating continues to increase in popularity in New York State. Although primarily considered to be a recreational activity, it is also used by messenger/delivery services, particularly in the New York City metropolitan area. Since January 1996, when legislation signed by Governor Pataki became effective, children under age 14 have been required to wear

a helmet when skating. In July 1996, the police crash report was revised to collect information on in-line skating crashes, including the type of safety equipment used by skaters. Currently, the number of crashes involving an in-line skater is too small to allow meaningful analyses.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The primary goals of the pedestrian, bicycle and in-line skating safety programs are to reduce the number of pedestrians, bicyclists, and skaters killed and injured. These goals will be accomplished by providing pedestrian, bicycle, and in-line skating safety education to both the general public and specific target groups, developing and evaluating engineering solutions to address these safety problems, and expanding helmet distribution programs. Community-based programs will play a major role in these efforts. The strategies identified to accomplish the goals include public information and education, and networking and program development at the local level. Also included will be research and evaluation activities to assess program effectiveness and assist in defining the scope and nature of the various safety issues and potential countermeasures.

OCCUPANT PROTECTION



In May 1996, New York State launched the *Buckle-Up New York* campaign spearheaded by First Lady Libby Pataki. Since then, efforts have continued at both the state and local levels to encourage more New Yorkers to buckle up. The most recent statewide seat belt surveys indicate that there has been an increase in the usage rate in New York from 73% in 1996 to 75% in 1998.

This year, New York State is mounting a major three-year campaign of aggressive enforcement and education to bring seat belt use to unprecedented levels in New York State. The *Buckle Up New York* campaign is striving to achieve a goal of 85% usage. Periodic intensive waves of seat belt and child restraint enforcement will be accompanied by public information and education efforts. New incentive grant programs established by the TEA-21 legislation will also be used to support and expand New York's efforts to increase occupant restraint use.

Several child passenger safety issues will continue to be addressed, including the availability of child safety seats to all segments of the population, the high incidence of incorrect installation and use of child safety seats, and potential injuries to children following deployment of passenger side air bags. In April 1998, the Child Passenger Safety Task Force was established in New York State. Co-chaired by the Governor's Traffic Safety Committee and the Department of Health, the Task Force has taken the lead in seeking solutions to the issues that have been identified. New educational programs and updated materials will be developed to ensure that the public is aware of these issues and can apply this knowledge to improve the safety of the children they transport.

PROPORTION OF OCCUPANTS OF VEHICLES COVERED BY NEW YORK STATE'S SEAT BELT LAW KILLED OR SERIOUSLY INJURED IN CRASHES 1994-1997

| | 1994 | 1995 | 1996 | 1997 | 2000 Goal | 2004 Goal |
|-------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----------|-----------|
| Fatalities | .21% | .21% | .20% | .19% | .18% | .16% |
| Serious Injuries | 2.83% | 2.80% | 2.66% | 2.42% | 2.40% | 2.25% |

The effectiveness of New York's occupant restraint program is reflected in decreases in the proportions of occupants covered by the seat belt law who have been killed or seriously injured in crashes. Since 1994, the percentage of occupants killed has decreased from .21% to .19% and the percentage of occupants injured has decreased from 2.83% to 2.42%.

MEAN SEVERITY OF INJURY (MSI) FOR OCCUPANTS OF VEHICLES COVERED BY NEW YORK STATE'S SEAT BELT LAW, 1994-1997

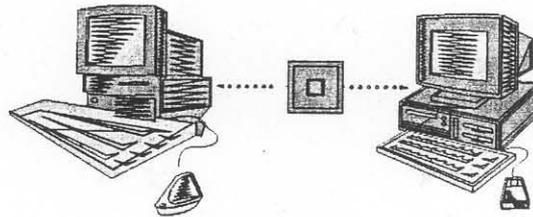
| | 1994 | 1995 | 1996 | 1997 | 2000 Goal | 2004 Goal |
|--|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----------|-----------|
| | 1.296 | 1.295 | 1.280 | 1.273 | 1.225 | 1.175 |

The Mean Severity of Injury (MSI) measure also indicates a decrease in the severity of injuries suffered by the occupants of vehicles covered by the seat belt law. 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. Between 1994 and 1997, the MSI declined from 1.296 to 1.273.

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. This will be accomplished by encouraging seat belt use and enhancing the safety of young passengers by increasing the number of children under 12 who ride in the back seat and the number of children who are properly restrained in child safety seats. The strategies identified for accomplishing these goals include 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



The widespread use of performance-based program planning to develop traffic safety initiatives has increased the need for accessibility to traffic records data by agencies at all jurisdictional levels. An accurate, timely, and comprehensive traffic records system is of paramount importance in identifying the nature and location of traffic safety problems so that appropriate countermeasures can be developed. A variety of information is needed, including data on crashes and injuries, arrests and convictions for traffic violations, and highway engineering. Increasing demands for data analysis support, coupled with the availability of improved information technologies, has prompted New York to make some dramatic changes in the way it maintains and uses its automated traffic records systems.

One of the first major steps toward the reengineering of the state's traffic records systems was taken in 1995. A multi-agency effort led by the Governor's Traffic Safety Committee and the Institute for Traffic Safety Management and Research resulted in the development of New York's Strategic Plan for Traffic Records Improvements. This plan identified major opportunities for improving the accident and ticket records systems maintained by the Department of Motor Vehicles and the strategies necessary to implement these improvements.

Major reengineering initiatives involving the crash and ticket records systems are underway. It is anticipated that as these projects near completion, attention will shift to identifying and prioritizing potential improvements to the system components that collect and maintain information on vehicles, injuries, drivers, and roadways.

Expansion of data transfer capabilities to provide better and more timely access to information will also be a priority. Research and evaluation are essential components of the highway safety planning process, and a variety of research and evaluation initiatives will be supported at both the state and local levels.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The primary goals of the efforts undertaken in the area of traffic records are to continue the reengineering of the DMV accident and ticket records systems, improve data linkage capabilities among traffic safety-related data systems, and assist with the coordination and direction of efforts to upgrade the state's various traffic safety-related data systems. This will be accomplished through support for the implementation of new technologies by agencies at the state level, as well as by local police agencies. The strategies for accomplishing these goals include continued involvement in the state's Safety Management System, increased use of technology for data collection and dissemination, and the development and use of linked data bases. Another important strategy includes research and evaluation initiatives to support problem identification and the development and evaluation of countermeasures in various areas of highway safety.

DROWSY DRIVING

To document more fully the scope of fatigue as a highway safety problem in New York State, the state's Task Force on Drowsy Driving continues to collect and disseminate information on drowsy driving. The Task Force includes representatives from state agencies, the medical community, the National Sleep Foundation, the trucking industry, and private citizens, and promotes activities to increase public awareness of the dangers of fatigue and driving.

In 1997, 32 fatal crashes and 2,075 injury crashes were attributed to a driver who "fell asleep." Because evidence to support a finding that drowsy driving was a contributing factor in a crash is limited, it is widely believed that the prevalence of drowsy driving is underreported. To address the issue of underreporting and to provide more complete data on drowsy driving crashes, the police accident report form was changed, effective July 1, 1996, to capture both "fell asleep" and "drowsy driving" as contributing factors in crashes. More accurate data on the involvement of fatigue in crashes will be available in future years.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The primary goal in the area of drowsy driving is to reduce the number of fatal and personal injury "fell asleep" motor vehicle crashes. This will be accomplished by continuing public information and education efforts of the Task Force on Drowsy Driving and by developing drowsy driving programs at state and local levels that focus on youth and shift workers.

COMMUNITY TRAFFIC SAFETY PROGRAMS



Community Traffic Safety Programs combine strategies from several traffic safety program areas to address local highway safety problems. To qualify for funding, communities within a county must cooperatively develop a strategic plan which identifies and documents the county's highway safety problems; establishes performance goals, objectives, and measures; and proposes strategies that target the problems identified. Because of the integral role local programs play in achieving the statewide highway safety goals, expanding the number of counties participating in the program continues to be a priority. In FFY 1997, 30 counties developed strategic plans; the number of counties submitting strategic plans increased to 39 in FFY 1998, and to 43 in FFY 1999. To encourage additional participation, a mini-grant program has been introduced to assist counties in preparing their strategic plans.

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 addressing problems identified through the analysis of traffic safety data, the strategies in this area include the further development of inter-organizational and target group coalitions, the provision of public information resources, and training for community program managers and staff.



HIGHWAY ENGINEERING

Responsibility for the 115,000 miles of roadways in New York State is shared by the state, counties, towns, and municipalities. Highway agencies have traditionally met their responsibilities through the application of roadway standards and the implementation of specific safety improvements at known or potential crash locations.

Two types of sites where remedial and preventative treatment could be most beneficial are sites with fixed objects along the roadside and train crossing sites. The number of fatal and injury crashes with a fixed object decreased to 22,919 in 1997. Engineering solutions at railroad grade crossings are also key to preventing crashes between motor vehicles and trains.

MOTOR VEHICLE CRASHES INVOLVING COLLISION WITH FIXED OBJECTS OR TRAINS IN NEW YORK STATE, 1994-1997

| | 1994 | 1995 | 1996 | 1997 | 2000 Goal | 2004 Goal |
|--|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------------|--------------|
| Fatal and Injury Crashes with Fixed Objects | 22,175 | 23,710 | 23,453 | 22,919 | 22,700 | 22,200 |
| Train Crashes | 29 | 33 | 20 | 24 | 18 | 16 |

Over the four-year period from 1994 to 1997, approximately 12% of fatal crashes and 11% of personal injury crashes occurred on limited access highways. In comparison, 59% of fatal crashes and 39% of injury crashes occurred on state, county, and town roads, and 29% of fatal crashes and 50% of personal injury crashes occurred on municipal streets.

Increasing traffic volume and limited resources for the construction of new highways means that other engineering solutions must be sought to decrease crashes. Technology is playing a larger role as innovative engineering solutions are applied. An important component of this process is New York's involvement in the nation's Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) initiative. Combining computer technologies, information, and telecommunications with the transportation infrastructure, ITS provides the motoring public and traffic management personnel with up-to-the-minute information related to traffic conditions.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The primary goal of the highway engineering program area is to improve traffic safety through the identification and treatment of high accident sites. This will be accomplished by collecting and reporting crash data to the DMV electronically, promoting the expansion of local highway inventory systems and local geographic information systems, and increasing the availability and accessibility of highway safety roadway and management data to all levels of government. An additional goal is to reduce the number of crashes involving collision with a train; this goal will be addressed by conducting educational programs that address highway/railroad grade crossing safety issues. Other strategies in this program area include continued involvement in the state's Safety Management System; strengthening the Department of Transportation's program to treat high accident locations; improving access for bicyclists and pedestrians and promoting their safety in the traffic mix; and re-engineering highway/railroad grade crossings wherever practical.

SCHOOL VEHICLE SAFETY



The responsibility for ensuring safe pupil transportation in New York State is shared by the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), the Department of Transportation (DOT), and the State Education Department (SED). DOT conducts semiannual inspections of all school vehicles and recently began a program to improve the maintenance of vehicles by the owners and operators. DMV oversees the certification of school vehicle drivers and SED provides training to the instructors of school bus driver programs. SED also provides educational programs for school children. DOT, DMV, and SED have formed the Tri-Agency School Bus Safety Committee to enhance communication and coordination and to provide a forum for discussing issues of mutual concern. The school bus transportation industry and other groups involved in pupil transportation participate in the Committee's activities.

In 1997, there were 1,007 crashes involving school vehicles; 687 of these involved injuries and 12 were fatal crashes. The majority of these school vehicle crashes occurred in New York City (31%) and on Long Island (29%).

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The goals in the area of school vehicle safety are to reduce both the total number of crashes and the number of fatal crashes involving school vehicles. This will be accomplished by increasing the number of tickets issued for passing a stopped school bus and monitoring owners and operators of school vehicles for compliance with regulatory requirements. The strategies include providing carrier education, promoting the active participation of carriers in safety initiatives, increasing the awareness of motorists of the issues relating to school vehicle safety, promoting the elimination of standees in school vehicles, and providing training and education programs for both school vehicle operators and passengers.



PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

The Governor's Traffic Safety Committee is responsible for coordinating and managing New York State's comprehensive highway safety program. The Governor's Traffic Safety Committee takes a leadership role in establishing the state's overall traffic safety priorities, assists in identifying priorities at the local level, and works with its partners at both the state and local level to develop programs, public information campaigns, and other activities to address the needs identified. The Governor's Traffic Safety Committee administers Section 402 highway safety funds awarded to the state, and all other incentive funds made available through TEA-21. In administering the state's highway safety program, the Governor's Traffic Safety Committee takes a comprehensive approach, providing funding for a wide variety of programs targeting crash reduction through education, enforcement, community involvement, and greater access to highway safety-related data.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Governor's Traffic Safety Committee's goals in this area are to continue to improve the effectiveness of New York's highway safety program and the efficiency of its administration. This will be accomplished by enhancing the Governor's Traffic Safety Committee's leadership role in identifying priorities and establishing goals for the statewide program, improving the coordination of programs and resources, and promoting innovative approaches to address highway safety issues. The Governor's Traffic Safety Committee will continue to assess the training needs of its partners and identify training opportunities that meet these needs. Communication and access to information and materials will be enhanced through the continuing development of the Governor's Traffic Safety Committee's Internet site and other channels.