



SOUTH CENTRAL SAFE COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP TRAFFIC SAFETY SUMMIT 2012 September 27, 2012 @ Houma Terrebonne Civic Center

Minutes and Recommendations

In Attendance: 113 Safety Partners and 13 high school students
See attached registration sheets for full list of attendees

OVERALL SUMMARY:

This year's Traffic Safety Summit 2012 was held on September 27th at the Houma Terrebonne Civic Center. It's the 12th time that SCPDC has organized it. It was attended by **113 safety partners** which was an **increase of 18%** from last year's attendance of 95. It was running a little behind at the beginning but it caught up with its original timeframe after the opening ceremony. It was quite a history-breaker that both DOTD Secretary LeBas and LHSC Executive Director LeBlanc graced our summit. Both delivered their welcome remarks and shared updates on legislation, statewide achievements, challenges, future plans, funding, etc. and how these factors would impact our regional scope of planning and implementation.

Also, for the first time, around **15 high school students** came to attend the breakout sessions on the ill effects of drunk driving and substance abuse. Teen drivers are involved in crashes in unbelted and alcohol-related crashes, so they ought to get the safety message across as well. (Thanks to LSU Ag Center Terrebonne, Houma Police Department and Assumption High School for the push.) **For next year, we hope to bring in more teen drivers to get our safety message across.**

There were a plenty of breakout sessions which talked about these topics—nighttime seatbelt enforcement, child passenger safety, DWI search warrant procedures, bike safety, safety for older drivers, Sudden Impact Program, distracted driving and road safety assessment. We had brought in great speakers and picked very relevant topics but there weren't enough people going to each room. **To gain better attendance for each breakout session, it was proposed that the number of sessions be reduced to only two at a time and making the event duration shorter, like from 9 AM to 2:30 PM.**

The attendees enjoyed the outdoor safety demos on bike safety patrol, fatal vision, LPSO mobile command center tour, Wal-Mart truck, seatbelt rollover simulator, and motorcycle police scenarios. It was the hope of other attendees that these outdoor demos didn't conflict with the indoor breakout sessions so that they would have an opportunity to check them out. **To showcase these demos in a more strategic and significant way, it was proposed to schedule them all at one time—for about an hour—where attendees can all witness altogether and get done with them before lunch hour. It would help if these demos were not on the same schedule as the breakout sessions.**

Although not everyone stayed until the closing ceremony (which happens yearly anyway), it was another successful summit that SCPDC has put together. Food was pleasantly good but the catering service could be better.

OPENING CEREMONY:

SCPDC Regional Transportation Safety Coordinator Rudynah Capone introduced the Safe Community Partnership Chairman Greg Hood, Sr. who served as the official summit moderator. Chairman Hood then called the session to order, followed by the Opening Prayer by Josephine Rodrigue (MADD) and the Presentation of Colors by Thibodaux PD, LPSO, Houma PD, TPSO and APSO. Emily Huddleston, a 6th grader from St. Matthews Episcopal School sang the Star-Spangled Banner.

SCPDC CEO Kevin Belanger formally opened the event and thanked all the coalition partners for their efforts. He also acknowledged the Transportation Division staff for all the hard work they have put forth to organize the summit.

DOTD Secretary Sherri LeBas gave her speech, with emphasis on how the state has been doing so far. She mentioned about the state's mission of reaching Destination Zero Deaths. "One death is too many," she said. She pointed out that over a four-year period, the fatalities decreased from 993 in 2007 to 677 in 2011. Last year, Louisiana won the AASHTO Safety Award. DOTD has strategically been looking where to put the centerline cable barriers on the interstate (where it makes sense) to prevent head-on crashes. They have also installed 50 new IT cameras to facilitate communications and rumble strips. Besides working on access management, they have also been implementing roundabouts. *Recommendations: Assert to educate the people on the use of centerline cable barriers. Change the culture/mindset of people about why we're doing what we're doing...communicate, communicate and communicate!*

LHSC Executive Director John LeBlanc expressed his gratefulness for the local efforts that we've continuously been doing. He said that LHSC expected to continue supporting existing grant programs, including Safe Communities, with additional focus on distracted driving and DDACTS (data-driven approaches to crime and traffic safety). He mentioned about the new highway bill -MAP-21. LHSC is focused on impaired driving, occupant protection, speeding/aggressive driving, and special waves (holiday campaigns). He emphasized that they're heavy on checkpoints and saturation patrols as well as child passenger safety efforts. Other non-traditional programs include underage drinking enforcement, DWI courts, DA's training and outreach, MADD, Sudden Impact, Safe Communities, and Think First. He shared important legislative updates on processing impaired drivers and DWI offenders, sobriety court program policies, driving privileges, safety belt violations, etc. *Recommendations: Check when the next funding cycle opens and encourage local agencies to apply. Explore more on how to obtain distracted driving and DDACTS grants. Continue existing efforts.*

DOTD Highway Safety Administrator Dan Magri did a presentation on Strategic Highway Safety Plan's (SHSP) accomplishments and plans. He made it clear that SHSP was put together by a lot of safety advocates and agencies, not by DOTD or any agency alone. It's a collaborative effort. MAP 21, the new highway bill, supports the department's aggressive safety agenda. It increases Louisiana's budget from \$18 million to \$45 million and strengthens links between HSIP and NHTSA programs. The MAP 21 for SHSP requires updates and expands list of stakeholders, and that the HSP should be in line with SHSP's goals. He echoed LeBas' words on "one death is too many" and encouraged all to be working towards Destination Zero Deaths. Our goal in 2030 is 483 fatalities. As of 2011, it's down to 677 fatalities, so we're getting there. He also shared that DOTD believes that working closely with regional coalitions is vital. At the end of the day, we all want to save lives. He encouraged that all safety coalitions across the state should develop their version of SHSP where local involvement and local knowledge are instrumental. There is funding available. *Recommendations: Check on the SHSP funding application process via www.destinationzerodeaths.com or contact DOTD Highway Safety Section. Encourage agencies to develop local projects relevant to the South Central Regional Transportation Safety Plan and apply for funding.*

LTRC Director Dr. Marie Walsh presented on the Local Road Safety Program and Road Safety Assessment projects done in our region. She said there might be more opportunities in LTAP and LRSP for locally owned roads. LTAP can provide data analysis, problem ID and technical assistance with low-cost safety improvements up to \$500,000 per sponsor. LTAP also provides Impaired Driving classes and workshops. For SCPDC region, it's scheduled on October 10, 2012. She informed that intersection study, intersection improvements and traffic study have been done in the City of Thibodaux. RSA has been conducted in Lafourche and another one is scheduled on October 24 in Thibodaux.

Looking into the future, she recommended that we need to do a better job in getting data on local roads and measuring the problems. LTAP is working on identifying where crashes are happening in rural roads (esp. curves). There's available funding for this. Roundabouts are also being funded by the state. *Recommendations: We need to have more and better projects on local roads since more funding available. Work closely with public works, government agencies and law enforcement. Think about striping and simple road signs. Follow up Lafourche RSA recommended projects for LRSP inclusion. Identify those areas where we can have the biggest impact.*

Thibodaux PD's Detective Jacob Thibodeaux and Lt. John Sutton, Jr. presented on Data-Driven Approaches to Crime and Traffic Safety. He announced that there's an in-depth DDACTS workshop scheduled in January 2013 in Lake Charles. He made it clear that people shouldn't be afraid to be out on the streets; their job is to catch criminals. He defined DDACTS as an operation model that uses location-based crime, traffic and enforcement data to establish effective and efficient methods for deploying law enforcement and other resources. DDACTS is a tactic that reduces social harm such as shootings, burglaries and vehicular crashes. Why do DDACTS? Detective Thibodeaux shared that crimes and crashes often occur in close proximity and crimes often involve a motor vehicle.

He enumerated the guiding principles of DDACTS such as partner participation, data collection and analysis, strategic operations, info sharing and outreach, and evaluation. With DDACTS, they're looking at where crashes are happening and why they're happening. DDACTS is a newer addition to the existing data-driven models that law enforcement agencies use such as CompStat, Intelligence-Led Policing, Evidence-based Policing, etc. He shared different strategic, tactical, problem-oriented and intelligence approaches to the program. He then showed maps that featured where crashes were happening and which ones were related to alcohol, speed and sign or lighting. DDACTS puts a renewed emphasis on traffic safety. By going out there to enforce traffic laws is actually deterring the occurrence of crimes. He said that DDACTS delivers return of investment because of its cost-effective approach, fewer calls for services, targeted high-visible patrols, increased deterrence and field contacts, and reduction of social harm.

Lt. John Sutton, Jr. continued the DDACTS presentation. He said that when they started DDACTS initiative in the City of Thibodaux and after they mapped out the data, they realized that the locations where crimes were happening reflected high crashes. He showed the city's demographic data as their based information in DDACTS approach. Thibodaux PD attended the DDACTS workshop in Lafayette in February 2011 and began implementation a month after. It was relatively quick to kick the initiative off in March 2011. Some of the challenges they encountered were limited capacity of retrieving data and limited mapping capabilities, They started using Google Maps and eventually advanced to Microsoft Mappoint. He emphasized that an agency didn't need a lot of funds to start the initiative. They started with zero cost in their department. Another challenge was the officer's mindset.

Once hot spots are identified, an officer is assigned into the normal patrol grid with no overtime. The officer records data such as traffic stops, arrests and citations. These are reviewed afterwards. Community involvement is vital in implementing DDACTS, so it is presented to local residents through meetings and presentations. It also entails buy in from businesses. After TPD did their first DDACTS, they found that the proactive policing increased while the calls for service decreased. "Home Safe for the Holidays" was another initiative TPD did in conjunction with DDACTS.

To do proactive policing, TPD made a few changes in the department and established their Top 10 quality services. Burglar alarms were majority of the calls. He showed some hot spots they've identified and worked on effectively. In Hot Spot 1, for instance, an officer was out on location for 2 hours a day for 16 weeks. After such period, TPD saw a reduction of 64% in crashes, 85% in burglaries, 65% in thefts and 34% in criminal damage. Another approach TPD did was instead of writing tickets while out there, the officers combined citations. They're currently working on their Hot Spot 2, where it's been on for 32 weeks now, 2 hours daytime and 2 hours nighttime.

Typically in DDACTS, the number of warnings should be higher than citations. Every week, results are analyzed. DDACTS enhances DWI enforcement. It resulted to an increase of DWI arrests—from 27 arrests in 2010 to 183 in 2011. In 2012, their goal is 200 arrests, and they're already at 196 arrests as of September 27, 2012. TPD didn't have to use any extra manpower to do DDACTS, no extra cost for the City of Thibodaux. *Recommendations: Identify which law enforcement agencies are interested in implementing DDACTS and find out about workshop opportunities and funding sources to make it happen in their area.*

Breakout Session: 10:30 AM to 11:30 AM at Room 1
Benefits of Nighttime Seatbelt Enforcement
Speaker: Capt. Jamey Fontenot, Special Operations Commander, Thibodaux PD

J. Fontenot presented on the benefits of seatbelt enforcement during nighttime operations. He said that in 2010, out of 6 million crashes a year, there were 2.5 million injuries and 42,000 deaths from non-seatbelt usage. In Louisiana, there were 426 unbelted fatalities out of 721 fatality crashes.

He emphasized that seatbelt usage saves lives. Enforcing it is very beneficial to the community and families. More of the unrestrained deaths occur at night; the percentage of seatbelt use goes down nighttime. He shared some of the components to consider in nighttime seatbelt enforcement. NHTSA did an observational survey on the results of night enforcement, and as a conclusion, it declared that the programs to enforce seatbelt law, when coupled with publicity, can be effective for increasing nighttime seatbelt use and decreasing drinking and driving.

By having checkpoints at night, we're able to apprehend other violations such as DWI and drug possession. He shared some of the enforcement strategies that Washington State that may be used in Louisiana such as: putting officers in strategic locations for overtime enforcement to get better results; contact officers should work in full uniform and operate their assigned patrol vehicles; and violators are stopped and given the appropriate enforcement. Some more strategies that other states are using were also presented.

Creative, aggressive and well-publicized nighttime seatbelt enforcement can make a significant difference in seatbelt use rates during dangerous hours of vehicle occupants.

He shared the different tactics such as seat belt checkpoints, combined alcohol-belt checkpoints, safety enforcement zones and mini-cades. Other tactics are unsigned enforcement spotters, saturation patrols and routine patrols. He said that an officer's job is to educate the public to buckle up.

He also emphasized the different considerations with nighttime enforcement—seat belt types, physical and monetary resources, support the community, and geography and population. It's also important to know why these enforcement activities are planned and how, when and where they'll be conducted.

The idea is not to surprise anyone. He also made mention about how some officers are reluctant towards enforcement and they don't fully understand about how night enforcement is done.

He shared the benefits of nighttime seatbelt enforcement. It can be used to reduce fatalities and injuries at night. It may reach motorists not influenced by daytime programs. The public develops a perception that officers are out at all hours of the day and night. Also, nighttime seatbelt enforcement is something new for the media to cover and that it is a crime deterrent.

Questions were raised by attendees and answered by J. Fontenot. Issues encountered during night enforcement were discussed which include roadway lighting and lack of funds to cover officer's overtime. It was brought to the attention of everyone that there's FLEX money that funds overtime enforcement hours. The more funds available, the more officers can be put out there to do all these enforcement activities.

Recommendations: Encourage law enforcement partners to implement more nighttime seatbelt checkpoints. Combine efforts to do seatbelt and alcohol enforcement altogether! Consider other tactics—safety enforcement zones, mini-cades and saturations patrols. Explore on other funding opportunities for overtime enforcement.

Breakout Session: 10:30 AM to 11:30 AM at Room 2

Keeping the Little Ones Safe: Child Passenger Safety and Booster Seat Updates, Product Recalls & Issues

Speaker: Crystal Pichon, Executive Director, Lexlee's Kids

C. Pichon began her presentation by getting two volunteers dress up the baby dummies and buckling them up on the car seats. She shared information on Louisiana's child passenger safety laws and how different they are from what NHTSA recommends. It's so confusing.

She recommended that parents should delay child safety seat transitions as long as they can. Infants should ride in rear facing until they are 2 years of age or until they reach the highest weight or height allow by the car seat manufacturer. Every time, the kids graduate to the next type of car seat, the lesser safe they are.

There was an interaction on why some of the parents put their children forward facing too soon (before 2 years old). She discussed how a baby's body proportions correspond to their position in the vehicle and how their development goes.

Children 2 years or older or who have outgrown rear-facing limit should use a forward facing car seat with a harness for as long as possible. While this is recommended, not everyone can afford a high-weight harness seats. She told that children ages 1 to 4 years have a 71% reduction in serious injury risk when correctly placed in forward facing car seat versus a seat belt alone. She said she doesn't usually talk numbers to parents. She added that the tether needs to be of the top priorities as it reduces forward movement. Booster seats are for those children whose weight and height is above the forward-facing limit. Typically, when kids reach 4'9" and are 18-12 years old, they can use the adult seat belt and they should use a lap shoulder belt for optimal protection.

She also informed the attendees about product recalls which happen often enough, so she encouraged all CPS techs to be updated. Price isn't always a factor to determine a car seat's quality. Just because it's expensive, it doesn't necessarily mean it's the safest. Non-regulated products (those that don't come with the car seat) are not crash tested and shouldn't be hung around baby's seat. They could injure your child.

She also reminded participants that it's not safe to leave a baby unattended in or around a vehicle, not even for a moment. They could suffer heat stroke, be entrapped, entangled or kidnapped. The issue on technicians not showing up at CPS events especially on weekends was brought up. Ms. Pichon suggested that our coalition should start looking for mommy groups to become technicians.

Recommendations: Try to tap mommies to become certified techs. Consider having a refresher course for all CPS techs in our region.

Breakout Session: 10:30 AM to 11:30 AM at Room 4
Bike to the Future: Putting Bike Safety at the Forefront of Regional Planning
Speaker: Dan Jatres, Pedestrian and Bicycle Program Manager, New Orleans RPC

D. Jatres started by giving an overview on New Orleans bicycle and pedestrian program, a joint program between LADOTD And Nola RPC that started before Hurricane Katrina. He shared the goals of this program, of which the most important one is to reduce pedestrian and bicycle related crashes. Also, it hopes to encourage the use of non-motorized transportation and promote Complete Streets policy.

Part of their initiative includes providing design, ADA and bicycle commuter workshops as well as law enforcement training, media and outreach campaigns, resource initiatives and technical assistance.

They have an upcoming Designing Streets for Pedestrians & Bicyclists Workshop on November 12-14 in Lake Charles. This course is a mix of lecture and field work and it targets private and public sector employees. They also hold Designing Pedestrians Facilities for Accessibility Workshop, which lasts for one and a half days. It's focused on ADA standards and best practices. Next one is on November 15-16 in New Orleans. The date might change.

Another training opportunity is for law enforcement officers. It's been pilot-tested here in Louisiana. They've developed materials for outreach to officers unable to attend full training. Media campaign is another important element in pedestrian and bicycle program. They hope people remember the message they are giving them via radio and print ads as well as word of mouth. They have also created some fun print materials and radio commercials.

He shared that they've partnered with University of New Orleans to help quantify some of the data and what kind of impact they're having. They came up with Pedestrian Audit Tool to analyze the crash data and look at real-world conditions, and later identify what aspects of the identified roadway sections are contributing to the crashes.

One of their newer programs is the Bicycle Commuter Workshop which uses an established curriculum from the League of American Bicyclists. It was launched in 2011. They work with community groups, schools, business and neighborhood organizations to help people become more comfortable and confident in using their bicycle for transportation. The only challenge is that there is a lack of League Certified Instructors in NOLA; there are only 5 LCI's the entire state of Louisiana. Their goal is to train 8 to 16 instructors initially and have them commit to 3 workshops in first year.

The NOLA RPC is trying to promote/support the Complete Streets Policy. They established the Citizen Advisory Committee, with members from each of the 7 Parishes of RPC, to get public input. This group meets quarterly and goes over local projects and policy issues. The Complete Streets Policy implements a comprehensive, integrated and connected transportation network for all users. DOTD adopted it in July 2010.

He shared their regional progress on completed and funded bicycle facilities. Since 2005, the bicycle fatalities have gone down by 27% while pedestrian fatalities have dropped by 15%. In Louisiana, there's only 2.5% of the population that walk and .50% that bike. New Orleans is the 9th in the nation.

Their programs are replicable anywhere. He ended by encouraging the participants that if there's an element of their program that they're interested in bringing back to their local community, the RPC is happy to share resources and talk further in details. Questions concerning funding for PSA's, training support, etc. were raised and answered accordingly.

Recommendations: Perhaps tap RPC to do Design, ADA and technical assistance workshops in our area? Conduct a Walking Audit locally. Incorporate some program elements into our SCPDC Bike & Pedestrian Plan. Bike safety should be a big component in our plan. Check on the pedestrian crash data in the SCPDC six parishes and see if this can be a 5th emphasis area to our SHSP-SCRTSP. Explore on the possibility of holding LCI seminars in our area (minimum number of participants is 10. Master LCI Chris Daigle of Lafayette can teach it.)

Breakout Session: 12:30 - 1:30 PM at Room 1
LOL No More: Teen Driver Safety thru Sudden Impact Program
Speaker: Bridget Gardner, Program Director, LA Passenger Safety Task Force

B. Gardner started by introducing Melissa Matey, PIO of LSP Troop B, as her partner in doing the Sudden Impact Program. Unintentional injury/trauma is the number one problem in the US. She made it clear that LSU Level 1 Trauma Center has the commitment to prevent or lessen the number of injuries.

She shared the criteria for the Sudden Impact Program such as the frequency and seriousness of event, effect on society, age appropriateness, resources and manpower, etc. They initially started teaching Sudden Impact to senior high school students but now to sophomores which seem to be working very well. It takes multiple disciplines to get to the goals set.

The first step in the program is to select the target injury population, which in this case are the teens. Collecting and analyzing the data is next, The big challenge in doing Sudden Impact is coming up with an approach that's different from what these teens already know -such as by simply telling them to Buckle Up and Don't Drive Under the Influence (DUI). Looking for resources and partners is also vital.

She specified that the Sudden Impact is a 6-hour program that has different disciplines all day long wherein sophomores are brought to the hospital to experience it hands-on. The Sudden Impact Team will give the teen participants a realistic approach as to the interests involved in the vehicle crashes. The teens will be exposed to the unfamiliar trauma atmosphere. Emphasis is given on seatbelt use. They begin with a pre-test. They do interactive medical and state police presentation, followed by testimony of a trauma victim. They let them visit the ICU and emergency departments. They are brought a foot away from in-patient and given a head-to-toe assessment. We make sure that by the time they leave the hospital, they carry the message—attitude change towards driving with safety. The participants are given the chance to experience a field sobriety test and driving drunk thru the use of the fatal vision goggles. They are also taken through a ride through hospital patients—from the time of the crash, details of the crash and factors causing it, all the way down to the medical side. They are exposed to the actual patients.

Texting behind the wheel is also touched in the Sudden Impact Program. Distracted driving is a pressing issue among teens.

In our region, Chabert Medical used to do Sudden Impact but not anymore. (Terrebonne General has expressed interested in doing the program.) One good approach in implementing the program is by doing mock crashes and trials in high schools participated by juniors and seniors. The mock crash is broken down into 9 scenes. All participants have wireless microphones on. It's a lot of time and resources entailed but the end-product is long-term. A mock crash for parents is also another approach done wherein a mock trial is incorporated as well.

She said that LSU Level 1 Trauma Center is part of the Strategic Highway Safety Plan's (SHSP) Young Drivers and Alcohol Emphasis Area efforts.

Just at LSU Level 1 Trauma, they started with just one school once a week 14 years ago, and they've built to 13 schools every Tuesday and Thursday in partnership with LSP Troop Commanders. M. Matey of Troop B told that just last year, there were around 10, 000 to 12,000 teens who have gone through the program, including the mock crashes and trials at schools. She gave a suggestion to take a light-hearted approach when dealing with teens, or they will tune us out.

B. Gardner encouraged that we start implementing the program slow, with one school and eventually build it up to more. It's a work in progress. Getting on to have staff to be able to consistently do the program is important. It entails a lot of commitment from the schools.

Recommendations: Create a Sudden Impact Team from amongst the SCSCP members. Get with Troop C and tap a hospital to partner with to get this program started in our region. Schedule a meeting with Terrebonne General and re-launch the program for Year 2013.

Breakout Session: 12:30 - 1:30 PM at Room 2

Ticketing the Impaired: No Refusal Policy and DWI Search Warrant Procedures to Stop Impaired
Speaker: Norma Broussard, Assistant DA, Jefferson Parish

N. Broussard started by saying that there's a huge impaired driving problem in Louisiana. DWI is a crime and it needs to be corrected. She told that implied consent was created to help law enforcement officers get impaired drivers off the road; it wasn't designed to help the defendant. It assumes that every motorist agrees to blood or a breath test to determine if one is impaired and in return, the state gives drivers a privilege of driving. Refusal to submit to a test would mean suspension of driver's license. The reason why offenders refuse is to avoid or reduce sanctions.

Louisiana used to have one of the highest rates of refusal; 31% of offenders refuse to submit to a test. That's why the No Refusal Initiative was developed.

So how does No Refusal Policy work? After an officer pulls over a driver and suspects he might be impaired, he does the arrest. If the suspect refuses to submit to a test, the officer faxes the judge an affidavit detailing probable cause for the stop and arrest. Then, the judge administers an oath to the officer via phone and makes his determination of probable cause based on the officer's sworn affidavit. He then issues a warrant, after which, the officer may proceed to obtaining blood evidence. If the officer pretty much has sufficient probable cause for arrest, you have sufficient reason for an arrest. This process probably takes about 30 minutes.

N. Broussard then proceeded by sharing the legality side of No Refusal. She shared laws on searching a person for bodily samples, warrant issued upon oral testimony, etc.

Many believe that No Refusal violates a person's 4th Amendment right to be free from unreasonable searches and seizures. But to survive this scrutiny, a blood test must be conducted pursuant to a warrant based on probable cause. Implied consent is an exception to this 4th Amendment scrutiny. If somebody consents, you don't need a search warrant.

All 50 states agree that implied consent is a necessary state restriction on an individual's driving privilege because of the government's need to prevent alcohol-impaired driving. She shared a few cases dealing with search warrants and refusal.

The first No Refusal implementation in Jefferson Parish was in Memorial Day of 2010. A lot of Parishes in Louisiana are doing the No Refusal. You don't have to wait for DA to get this policy implemented; some DA's are not necessarily on board. Any police officer could do it anywhere in the state. As long as a judge signs the warrant, then it's good.

She then shared cases from other states dealing with reasonable use of force in executing a search warrant. There are not a lot of cases in Louisiana.

Recommendations: Gather No Refusal Policy results from agencies that are implementing it to gauge the effectiveness of it. See if we can do an in-depth No Refusal Policy Workshop for our partners.

Breakout Session: 12:30 - 1:30 PM at Room 4

The Blinker Situation & More: Safety for Older Drivers

Speaker: Paul Wade Hebert, District Coordinator, American Association of Retired Persons (AARP)

*No audio recording was captured.
Ask feedback from speaker and participants.*

Breakout Session: 1:45 - 2:45 PM at Room 3

Select and Correct: Strategic Actions in Road Safety Assessments

Ron Whittaker, Strategic Highway Safety Plan and RSA Consultant, LADOTD

R. Whittaker presented on strategic actions involved in Road Safety Assessments. RSA is a multidisciplinary, data-driven process. The RSA Team may include engineers/public works, law enforcement, local officials, road users and regional safety coalitions.

The aim of the RSA is simple, which is to determine what elements of the road may present safety concerns and what opportunities exist to eliminate these concerns.

He said that observation information is helpful. The problem is that it is time-consuming. Crash data, on the other hand, is a tremendous resource gathered very quickly and they are used to analyze problems and evaluate effectiveness of safety projects. Just keep in mind that crash data have limitations but DOTD and HSRG are working towards the improvement of crash data collection. Police officers and road users are good sources of observational data because they're out on the roads a lot; they see what works, what doesn't.

Law enforcement involvement is crucial. Officers give a unique perspective and they do understand the crash reports and help identify issues not contained in the crash data.

He walked everyone through the RSA Process—which begins with obtaining the crash data. (LTAP is working on collecting data on local roads.) Then, the pre-site visit, on-site visit and post-site visit meetings are scheduled. After which, the report and recommendations are presented, which entail determining the funding sources. Lastly, safety improvements are implemented. When doing the actual site visits, it's good to drive around and get out of the vehicle so you can get a clear picture of what's going on.

He showed a few pictures of low-cost safety improvements around the state which featured striping, STOP signs and multiple safety design features (advanced sign with 2 stop signs). He reiterated that RSA is simply a systematic, data-driven multidisciplinary process to identify safety enhancements that can be made to roadways.

Recommendations: Conduct more RSA's in the region. Get the help of LTAP in assessing local roads. Be on the lookout for funding sources to implement safety improvements.

Breakout Session: 1:45 - 2:45 PM at Room 4
Distracted Driving: What Research Shows and What We Can Do
Betsey Tramonte, Safety Program Coordinator, Federal Highway Administration

B. Tramonte did a presentation on distracted driving, what is it and what we can do about it.

She shared that driver distraction is defined as driver inattention to the driving task at hand, resulting from internal and external events or actions. She said that there are three types of distraction - visual, manual and cognitive. Activities such as talking to passengers, eating, using a cellphone, eating, talking to passengers, reading and changing the radio station are distractions. But texting is the one distraction which is the perfect storm of visual, manual and cognitive distraction types. It is dangerous.

As far as statistics, NHTSA reported that there were 3,092 killed and 416, 000 injured in "distraction affected" crashes. But 13% of these fatalities and 6% of injury crashes report cellphone as the distraction. She also shared how drivers aged 20 and 20-29 years old are the most distracted ones. Drivers using cellphones are 4 times more likely to get into injury crashes. Capturing the data on distraction and inattention is a tough thing to do.

She also pointed out some simulator studies that found drivers using cellphone may show greater impairments than those who are legally intoxicated because reaction time is slowed by 8.4%. That drivers conversing on a hands-free cellphone were found to have slower response to random braking.

LSU did a study and found that 9.2% of drivers use a cellphone and 90% of reported cellphone usage on crash reports was for driver at fault. She talked largely about the effects of texting on young driver performance. Text messaging is 23.2 times higher risk of crash according to a study involving heavy vehicles and trucks.

After texting was banned in Louisiana, there was an increase in young driver crashes. Conversing with a passenger topped the list among non-driving activities that involved driver's interaction with internal sources. Numerous studies show that performing another cognitive task while driving substantially degrades driving performance.

She shared the human factors common to all road users. One is vision. In visual field, attention window shrinks with age. Information processing is another one wherein road users perform best under moderate levels of demand. The overload or under load of info tends to degrade performance. Drivers have limitations—perceive 2 or more events per second, make 1 to 3 decisions per second, and take 30 to 120 actions per minute...commit at least one error every 2 minutes. There's an average of 1 crash every 6 years. If you a lot going on in your mind, you're driving and texting, it makes it more complicated to process all the information on the roadway.

Text messaging while driving has gone up by 600% in the past years. She encouraged we should look at our 3 E's engineering, education and enforcement strategies and countermeasures to lessen distracted driving problem. Designing our highways for distracted drivers is one good strategy. A lower driver workload is going to bring less decisions, less errors and less crashes. Techniques such as roundabouts and corridor reconfiguration are being promoted by the state. Supporting programs aimed at distracted driving is also another approach. Look into the Strategic Highway Research Plan 2 (SHRP2), High visibility enforcement is also vital; we need stronger, enforceable laws for law enforcement.

Recommendations: Identify if distracted driving is an issue in our region using available data and integrate proven education, engineering and enforcement solutions. Check www.distraction.gov for more literature.

Teen Drivers Breakout Sessions: 2:00 PM to 3:30 PM at Room 1
The Consequences of Substance Abuse and Driving While Intoxicated
Speaker: Jill Robichaux, ADAC

J. Robichaux begins her presentation by asking the teenagers a simple question, “How is alcohol made?” Alcohol is created through fermentation, which is the rotting of fruits and grains. She then asks “What is in alcohol?” She explained that ethanol, which is a gas, is in alcohol. J. Robichaux informs the teenagers that there are four types of drinking behaviors which include the following: Abstinence, Ritual, Social, and Compulsive drinkers. Abstinence drinkers do not consume alcohol, Ritual drinkers consume alcohol due to religious reasons, social drinkers, which most Americans consider themselves, consume alcohol during gatherings, and compulsive drinkers consume alcohol as a way of attempting to cope with problems.

She then covers short term effects of alcohol. Once consumed, alcohol travels to the brain within minutes and impairs your movement, speech and your vision. Your liver breaks down alcohol as it cleans your blood which amounts to only one drink per 90 minutes. An individual is intoxicated if he/she consumes more than one alcoholic drink per 90 minutes. Long term affects include weight gain, fatty liver, hepatitis, cirrhosis and cancer of the liver. She noted that one can of beer contains approximately 150 empty calories.

J. Robichaux then shows a video to the 16 teenagers of a girl name Jacqueline Saburido; she was hit by a drunk driver at the age of twenty and lived to tell her story. Two passengers were pronounced dead at the scene of the crash and two were rescued. Within minutes of the crash, the car caught fire. Jacqueline was pinned in the front seat on the passenger’s side. Over 60% of her body was burned—she lost her hair, her ears, her nose, her left eyelid and much of her vision. The drunk driver, Reggie Stephey was convicted of two counts of intoxication manslaughter for the deaths of Jacqueline’s two friends. He was sentenced to seven years in prison and fined \$20,000.00. He was the impaired driver, yet, he has not one single scratch on him. Reggie also speaks on the video and states that, because of his choices, he ruined so many lives. He further states that seven years is nothing compared to the life sentence he will live with because the consequences of his actions.

Drunk Driving: A Life Changing Testimony from a Victim’s Wife
Speaker: Josephine Rodrigue, MADD

J. Rodrigue begins her life changing testimony with the history of how her and her husband, Elgin Lirette, fell in love and created a family. She speaks of their 33 years of marriage and their last anniversary together on May 2, 2008. Throughout her presentation, she shows pictures of her, her husband, and the family they created together. She also shows the last picture of Elgin Lirette taken before the horrific day that changed her life forever. On Mother’s Day in 2008, a 21 year old drunk driver struck Elgin Lirette’s Ace work truck head on, which caused the vehicle to explode. She goes on to explain how the explosion burned Elgin’s body beyond recognition.

She shows a before crash picture and after crash picture of Elgin’s truck. J. Rodrigue informed the teenagers that their 12 year old grandson, Mitchell, was supposed to be with his grandfather that day; however, J. Rodrigue told her husband that it was Mother’s Day and that Mitchell should spend it with his mother. Continuing her testimony, she shows a picture of Elgin’s service and explains how she was unable to purchase a coffin for her husband because she could not afford one. Her children and she went to Hobby Lobby and purchased a treasure chest to hold the remains of her husband, which had to be cremated because she could not afford the funeral. Next, is a picture drawn by her 9 year old grandson, Elgin Lirette. In the picture there is a small boy standing in front of a coffin, in the background, a rainbow with clouds of rain and lightning pouring out, and a sun under the hump of the rainbow. The sun is crying in the picture; her grandson told her that even the sun cried the day grandpa was killed. She also shows a picture of a shadow box filled with the remains that flew from Elgin’s truck during the explosion. There is part of his wallet, a piece of his cell phone cover, and in a Ziploc bag there is a piece of the shirt Elgin was wearing when he was killed. The owner of the vehicle found the piece of the shirt; it was glued to the steering wheel.

J. Rodrigue then shows a picture that was taken at the scene of the car crash. It was a picture of the drunk driver’s truck, a Toyota Tundra, which was mostly gone. She reminds the teenagers that the boy that killed her husband was only 21 years old. She also reminds them that it was Mother’s Day and that the police officers had to contact the mother of this young boy to tell her that her son was dead, and that he had killed an innocent man. Showing a before crash picture of the young driver that killed her husband,

Drunk Driving: A Life Changing Testimony from a Victim's Wife continued

J. Rodrigue then shows the picture of the boy at the scene of the car crash. Because of the severity of the burns on this young man's body, the only way one would realize that this was a person is because of his arm, which J. Rodrigue points out to the young students. She goes further to show the picture of her husband that was taken at the scene of the crash. She points out that one can still see the place where his hand was gripping the steering wheel. She painfully explains that this is the last memory she has of her husband because someone chose to drink and drive.

Seconds before this horrific crash had taken place; J. Rodrigue states that she had spoken to her husband. It took the police seven hours to identify Elgin's body. At three o'clock in the morning, J. Rodrigue tells the audience that she heard a knock at her door. She seen the State Trooper and figured he was looking for a neighbor, but instead he asked her if she had a son named Elgin Lirette that drove a truck. She told him yes, and he told her that her son had been in a fatal crash. She attempted to call her husband to inform him that their son had died in a fatal crash, but her husband did not answer his phone. She tearfully recalled how she could not believe her husband did not answer his phone, because he was always known to answer his phone. She then called her daughter to inform her that her brother had been killed and she wanted her daughter to go to her son's home before the police would get there to notify his wife.

She explained that the police officer gave her a number to call so she could learn of how her son had died. She called the number and the person on the other end of the line explained to her that her son had died in a fatal crash on his route to make a delivery to Port Fouchon. At that moment, J. Rodrigue stated that she realized it was not her son because he was not a delivery driver, but a Boat Captain. She repeated the words she said that night, "It's not my son, it's not my son." "My son is not dead, my son is alive." She then asked the person on the other end of the line, how old this boy was. The individual stated that the person was born in 1956. She tearfully tells the teenagers that this was the moment that she realized this person was telling her that her husband was dead. She hanged up on the person and called her children to inform them that their father was dead.

J. Rodrigue was informed through the police report that the driver (Elgin) applied his brakes and left a 229 foot brake mark. She stated that this information told her that Elgin saw the driver cross the center lane and knew he was going to get struck. She read out an excerpt of the Coroner's report to the teenagers. It stated that the male body received severe charring, multiple fractures, and the skull had been severely fractured and cerebral content was spilling out. She explains that, on that day, Elgin was delivering two and one half tons of offshore equipment when he was struck head on. When the vehicles collided, the two and one half tons of equipment did not stop. That equipment slammed into the back of his cab and split his head open.

She echoes that this is the memory she has of her husband because someone made a choice to drink and drive. J. Rodrigue goes further to state that many individuals call it an accident, but explains that an accident is an unforeseen or unintentional event from which a person could not plan. She states that everyone knows that drinking causes impairment and that is why this should not be called an accident. She shows the teenagers her treasure box with her beloved husband's remains and states that her husband's death is a result of someone else's choice to drink and drive. That other person's choice robbed Elgin and his family of his life. J. Rodrigue informs the teenagers that she attended the young boy's funeral and was told how good of a boy he was. She reminded the teens that good people make bad choices and repeated that this was a choice. She ended by stating that the teens have the power to make their own choices, whether that choice is good or bad. J. Rodrigue stated that each teen could choose to live life to the fullest or he/she could end up a memory in a box.

Drunk Driving: The Loss of a Son, Fiancée, and Friend
Speaker: Ava Fontenot, MADD

A. Fontenot begins her testimony by showing a picture of her 25 year old son, Lindsey, and his 21 year old friend, Raymond, to the teenagers in the audience. She explains that, on July 2, 2010, they were killed on their way home from a club, Last Call, in Thibodaux, Louisiana. Raymond was the designated driver that night because Lindsey had consumed an alcoholic drink before leaving the house.

She informs the teens that both, Lindsey and Raymond drank Coca Cola at the bar that night. On their drive home, they were struck by a drunk driver in Gray, Louisiana. She states that both vehicles lost control and all three of the individuals, Lindsey, Raymond, and the drunk driver, were killed instantly.

A. Fontenot tells the teenagers a little about Lindsey and how he was a great person. She states that her son enjoyed spending time with his friends and his fiancée, Jessica. Lindsey was the type of person that was determined to accomplish every goal that he would set for himself. She states how he had set his goals for his life and how he was well on his way of making his dreams come true, until the night of this fatal crash. He and his fiancée purchased property together in hopes of one day building their dream home. Until that day would come, they decided to start with a small starter home. She shows pictures of Lindsey's senior trip to Cancun and his second love, his truck.

She goes on to explain that her son and his fiancée had their whole lives set out in front of them until a drunk driver decided to take that away. The drunk driver and his friend decided to go out and drink at three different bars that day. A. Fontenot states that the drunk driver's choice affected everyone's lives that day. Raymond was driving a 2007 Toyota Tacoma that night. She shows what was left of the vehicle, which was very little. Lindsey's cause of death was that left ventricle to his heart busted. Once hit, Raymond lost control of the vehicle and slammed into two trees. She then shows pictures of Lindsey's friends at his funeral and explains how, even after two years, it is difficult to cope with his death. She echoes Ms. Josephine's statement that that drunk driver had a choice that day and because of his choice, everyone's lives changed. She pleads with the teenagers to have a plan before you start drinking, so this does not happen to anyone else.

Closing Ceremony

HSRG's System Analyst Mark Verret did a presentation on crash data reporting. He said that HSRG started in 1994. They are in charge of collecting, maintaining, storing and analyzing crash data captured from law enforcement agencies across Louisiana. Crash reports are captured by them electronically (<http://hsrg.lsu.edu>). They do interactive web data analysis for SHSP. They produce a book every year—Crash Fact Book. PDF copies can be obtained online. Using Business Intelligence tools, HSRG created a Report Builder application allowing partners to building their own crash data reports. He then walked everyone through the dashboard to support SHSP (www.lashspdata.lsu.edu) wherein partners can customize their data collection and reporting. It's a more interactive website that gives you freedom & flexibility of what you're trying to find. HSRG is continuously developing tools to make the site more accessible and comprehensive such as the Agency Web Portal, Agency GIS Web Portal, etc. Its agency web portal tool is still on its early stages. It is meant to be a singular resource for communications between law enforcement agencies and the HSRG. They released the GIS Web Portal last year. This application allows an agency to see their reported crash data on the map. It will assist agencies with analyzing their crash data visibly, which may also help in determining problem areas. The HSRG frequently receives request for crash data from multiple agencies. These requests are received via email. The HSRG is looking into using Excel with Pivot Tables or PowerPivot to disseminate data. HSRG is working with DOTD and TRCC on collecting local road data.

(Recommendations: Use the Report Builder by visiting <http://datareportsdev.lsu.edu/ReportBuilder.aspx> and navigate around the crash data dashboard. Get with HSRG to request for graphical and Excel report on crash data for SCPDC parishes.

The SCRTSP Team Leaders (TL) gave their quick updates on where we are on our efforts to implement the South Central Regional Transportation Safety Plan (SCRTSP). It's a living document that mirrors the SHSP.

Sgt. Matt Trahan, TL for Impaired Driving Emphasis Area (EA), informed that 11 programs were developed. The No Refusal Policy weekends have been successful. The Lafourche SO has a 24 by 7 No Refusal. Terrebonne also has this program. The Sudden Impact Program was done in the past but has been put on hold due to budget concerns with Chabert Medical for now but we hope to get it going again. Troop C's PIO will get with some of the local schools to get their students together and bring them to the hospitals to go through this program. This is a very effective program; it was done in Vandebilt High and South Lafourche. Talks are made with Terrebonne General to partner with us on this program. Our region has been continuing to do the Zero for December Program. It's a media and enforcement effort that has proven to have dramatically reduced fatalities during Thanksgiving & Christmas seasons a good bit. It's a media and enforcement effort. We're getting local business to put out some posters and get the word out. A press conference is scheduled in November. Another program is the Fatal Vision Goggle Demonstration. Troop C's PIO teams up with local agencies and go inside the schools to talk about impaired driving and effects of alcohol and allow them to ride the golf carts wearing the goggles. NSU has the "Think Before You Drink Program" which uses the fatal vision goggles to educate the college students and get them to feel how it is to be driving drunk. The "Get in the Zone Program" by ADAC has also been pretty successful and popular. Other cities come by and try to use it as a model to what they want to do in their area. A pretty brand new effort is the Apprehension, Arrest & Prosecution of Impaired Drugged Drivers Workshop on October 10, 2012 at SCPDC. It's geared specifically for police officers and prosecutors. It's a one-day workshop that'll discuss about the effective use of report writing to help in the conviction process. Our region is also trying to figure out how to obtain the DWI Van and Portable Breath Testers that may be effectively used during holiday checkpoints and saturation patrols. It speeds up the process of apprehending impaired drivers. Lastly, we're working with LTAP to get the Advanced Roadside Impairment Driving Enforcement (ARIDE) brought here locally early next year. This is a two to three-day course that gives police officers a little extra training for impaired drivers, what to look for other than alcohol, etc. This was done in the past by LSP but we're trying to bring it locally now.

On behalf of TL for Occupant Protection EA Capt. Jamey Fontenot, Sgt. Trahan gave the report on seatbelt efforts. The LSP and local agencies are still hard and heavy on occupant protection. Using the grant monies, we do daytime seatbelt checkpoints and saturation details. Seatbelt tickets have gone up while injury crashes have gone down. Our region has quite a few child passenger safety fitting stations; in fact, one of the Houma PD officers, Michael Toups, is the Regional CPS coordinator for Region C. One of the biggest things we're looking at is the nighttime seatbelt checkpoints. This does not entail a whole set of manpower. No extra money or overtime cost involved. A couple of officers working on the same shift together go out at a particular intersection to crack down on unbelted drivers. The numbers are impressive. LSP Troop C, for one, has done 54 of these one-hour checkpoints, they cited 160 seatbelt violations and did 9 DWI arrests & 9 drug arrests where 5 people were wanted felons.

Closing Ceremony, continued

One of the TLs for Young Drivers EA, Lt. Bobbie O' Bryan shared that we needed to focus on teenage drivers. Educating them is vital. Two years ago, a program called Teen CERT (certified emergency response team) was implemented, with an additional element of LA HEAT (highway endangerment awareness training). So far, 250 teenagers have been trained in the said weeklong Teen CERT camp Bunkie. Focus of this program is highway safety. He said that by putting these teenage drivers in real-world scenarios, they can gain better understanding of the safety message and be impacted more effectively. In this year's summit, he brought in over 27 high school students to attend the breakout sessions and get engaged in the safety demos (fatal vision, bike safety, etc.) for their own awareness. He brought in one of the participants to share her testimony. As a teenager about to drive, she said that the sessions and hands-on trainings opened her eyes. The more info she got, the more she realized that she should drive more safely and responsibly.

The TL for Infrastructure & Operations EA, Perry Blanchard, was unable to attend. To speak on his behalf, Terry Arabie from Lafourche Parish Government gave the updates. He shared that the IO Subcommittee has been working closely with DOTD and LTAP to do the road safety assessments on local roads. The team analyzed the crash data and came up with a prioritized list of high-crash roads to look into for improvement. The first RSA was in Lafourche. After which, recommendations were forwarded to LTAP for possible inclusion for LRSP funding. Lafourche has done some in-house funding but still awaiting more funding from the state. The next RSA is on October 24 in the City of Thibodaux. Hopefully, another RSA will be done after Thibodaux before the end of the year. Another program the team has been working on is the Safe Routes to School. Raceland Elementary and Middle School got awarded with a grant to do sidewalks. A few sidewalk and recreational projects (through Recreational Trails Program and Transportation Enhancement Program) are also in the works such as the Southdown Eastside Bike Trail & Park Avenue Sidewalks in Houma, Acadian Pedestrian Walkway in Thibodaux, etc.

SCPDC Transportation Planner II Joshua Manning presented the Regional Bike & Pedestrian Plan that SCPDC and its partners have been trying to put together for over 2 years. He gave an overview of SCPDC and the Houma-Thibodaux MPO as well as some of the transportation planning documents our region is putting together. In November 2009, the MPO Policy Committee asked us to do the bike and pedestrian plan which covers the six parishes (Assumption, Lafourche, St. Charles, St. James, St. John and Terrebonne). With the creation of Active Transportation Subcommittee, the development of this plan has been embarked. After having gone through a lot of research, brainstorming sessions and parish-by-parish meetings, we've identified existing bike & pedestrian facilities and came up with potential projects as well. He then showed the bike plan maps that were put together by Parish and now refined to give a better picture of what facilities already exist and what else can be done to improve connectivity and safety. Features such as schools, parks, state routes and railroads are reflected on the maps. Proposed projects include sidewalks around elementary & middle schools, bike trails and bike lanes, recreational loops, etc. The target date of completing the document is November 2012, which is subject to approval by the Active Transportation Committee and adoption by the MPO Policy Committee. After so, the plan will be submitted to each parish for adoption and integration into their master plans.

Troop C Commander Capt. Darrin Naquin gave the Closing Remarks. He thanked everyone for enduring and staying on for the summit. He reiterated Col. LeBlanc's remarks on how the fatality numbers were going in the right direction, and the reason for this is because all the partners in the coalition collaboratively work together. He hoped to see everyone for next year's summit.

The summit was officially adjourned at 3:59 P.M.

Meeting Minutes was approved during the SCSCP Quarterly Meeting on November 15, 2012 at LSP Troop C.