

Northeast Safety Scanning Tour

June 24-29, 2007

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In recent years an emphasis has been placed on highway safety at the national and state levels. Goals have been set nationally and in the State of Missouri to focus efforts on decreasing the number of fatalities and serious injuries on our highways. In order to meet these goals, it is imperative for safety advocates in Missouri to look outside the state borders. Traffic Safety expertise exists across the country; among the leaders in safety engineering, enforcement and education are the states of Maryland and Pennsylvania.

In June 2007, MoDOT's Traffic and Highway Safety Divisions led a team to these states to learn and incorporate new ideas into Missouri's safety efforts. This scanning tour report provides a toolbox of best practices gathered from a scan of these two states' safety programs.

Scanning Team Composition

The five scan team members offered a range of expertise in traffic operations, safety engineering, data analysis, human behaviors, local issues, and academic research. The study benefited from the backgrounds of each team member on the scan. Team members included:

- Brian Chandler, Missouri DOT, Traffic Division
- Leanna Depue, Missouri DOT, Highway Safety Division
- Matt Myers, Missouri DOT, Central District Traffic
- Heath Pickerill, Missouri Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP)
- Derek Vap, University of Missouri – Columbia, Graduate Student in Civil Engineering

Key Findings

The purpose of this report is to bring ideas from other states back to Missouri safety professionals for discussion and implementation. These innovative practices, if incorporated into Missouri's safety efforts, could greatly impact safety in the state.

1. Formal Road Safety Assessment programs
2. Safety corridor programs combine engineering solutions, public information, and enforcement to improve safety on severe crash corridors
3. Incident/Emergency Management Innovations
 - a. Information sharing among DOTs, emergency management, media, and the public
 - b. Virtual Reality technology utilization for incident management training
4. Tools to promote safety data analysis at the local level
5. Roadway Design Innovation
 - a. Roundabouts for intersection safety
 - b. Median J-turns for high-speed expressway safety
6. Cooperative Research
 - a. Relationships between DOT and university research staff

INTRODUCTION

In recent years an emphasis has been placed on highway safety at the national and state levels. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) have adopted a goal to reduce fatalities on the nation's highways to 1.0 per 100 million vehicle miles traveled by the year 2008.

In Missouri, the Coalition for Roadway safety has established a goal of 1,000 or fewer highway fatalities in the State of Missouri by that same year. In 2006 Missouri had a total of 1,096 traffic fatalities and is on track to reach the goal of fewer than 1,000 in 2008. In order to meet that goal, the Coalition developed Missouri's Blueprint for Safer Roadways. The Blueprint is a focused document utilizing a partnership approach to outline explicit opportunities to reduce fatalities and serious injuries on our roadways.

To increase safety on Missouri's roads, it was deemed imperative to look outside the state borders. Traffic Safety expertise exists across the country. Previous safety scan tours have given Missouri safety professionals the opportunity to learn from peers in Minnesota, Iowa, Washington and Oregon. These successful events prompted MoDOT to review Maryland and Pennsylvania's safety efforts.

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Key Areas

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- Innovative Safety Programs (Road Safety Assessments, Corridor Safety Programs)
- Incident/Emergency Management Innovation
- Data Analysis Tools
- Engineering Innovations (Roundabouts, J-turns)
- Cooperative research between DOT staff and the universities

INNOVATIVE SAFETY PROGRAMS

The State of Maryland had a total of 651 fatalities in 2006, far fewer than Missouri, with similar vehicle miles traveled (VMT) to Missouri. Maryland has a significant problem with alcohol and drug related traffic fatalities; alcohol/drugs result in approximately 39% of traffic fatalities in the state. Maryland is a state with a primary safety belt law and a 93% safety belt usage rate. Maryland's Highway Safety Office has created nine task forces for dealing with their safety issues including diversity, impaired driving, motorcycle safety, pedestrian safety, occupant protection, young drivers, traffic records, and county task forces.

Maryland's Impaired Driving Coalition

The Impaired Driving Coalition is composed of nearly 300 members from expertise areas such as law enforcement, advocacy groups, local and state government agencies, health divisions, the alcohol industry, and community traffic safety programs. Different committees are formed within the coalition to set 18-month goals to reduce impaired driving fatalities. Focused enforcement and increased training for both officers and judges are main objectives in the Checkpoint Strikeforce program to reduce impaired driving. DUI checkpoints dedicated to victims of impaired driving crashes as well as education, awareness, and alternative driving (Topsy?Taxi!, SoberRide) campaigns are all aspects of the Checkpoint Strikeforce program.

Maryland's Occupant Protection Program

As mentioned above, Maryland has a primary safety belt law that generates a 93% usage rate, and if violated, carries a fine of \$25. Maryland has a great response to overtime checkpoints and saturation patrols from their law enforcement officers. As part of their occupant protection program, Maryland State Highway Administration hosts a Chief's Challenge. The program does not include overtime pay; officers are encouraged to mix in the occupant protection enforcement during their daily duties. Officers respond favorably to incentives (including specially-designed teddy bears) and the recognition received is promoted in a public service announcement.

Maryland's Traffic Safety Awareness For Employers (T-SAFE) Project

T-SAFE is an investment program that protects Maryland employers' most important asset, their employees, by reducing traffic-related fatalities, injuries and their associated costs through traffic safety programs. The T-SAFE program has 448 active employers and companies ranging from 5 employees to companies with over 3,000 or more employees. Public events are held, including a program to promote safe driving while working for commercial drivers, where companies involved give and listen to presentations promoting the effects of safe driving behavior.

Pennsylvania's Road Safety Audit (RSA) Program

PennDOT's RSA program stemmed from the need to formalize a procedure for safety evaluations to ensure consistency, so that safety is built into transportation facilities from the start. Utilizing expertise from pedestrian, bicycle, human factors, and motor carrier professionals, RSAs operate through the entire project development and formal reviews are conducted at various stages. RSAs ensure to check the safety of a project such as adequacy of roadways, intersections, access management, and roadside equipment. A \$2 million, 5-year open-ended contract is set up through special funds for the district to use to contract the RSAs.

Pennsylvania's Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP)

Pennsylvania's LTAP is PennDOT managed, but contracted to the Pennsylvania State Association of Supervisors, who then contract work out to engineers for maintenance, engineering, and traffic safety. \$2.6 million is allotted over 3 years. LTAP does mostly local low-cost improvements, but they also work with state engineers. Marketing for LTAP is done by the 15 MPOs and 7 RPCs in the state and a needs survey is sent to municipalities for local educational and training courses. There are 17 people on the LTAP advisory committee from all over the state who meet quarterly to help direct the program.

Pennsylvania's Roosevelt Boulevard Safety Corridor

Home to the 2nd and 3rd "most dangerous intersections" in the nation, a spike in pedestrian fatalities led to the development of the Roosevelt Boulevard Task Force. A Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC) study was performed to inform the Roosevelt Boulevard Task Force of solutions to this corridor. The corridor is approximately 8 miles in length with over 180,000 people living within one half mile of the Boulevard. The roadway has an AADT of approximately 80,000. From 2001-2005, 133 pedestrian crashes occurred, resulting in 13 fatalities. Roosevelt Boulevard is a 12-lane facility with six local and six express lanes serving both local and regional traffic. The road includes 11 mid-block pedestrian crosswalks and 40 traffic signals within the study area.



Roosevelt Boulevard was designated a Safety Corridor, and improvements were initiated to reduce pedestrian crashes and red light running incidents. Improvements were numerous:

- Roadway redesign
- Signal timing adjustments and coordination
- Speed limit reduction and speed display signs
- Public education
- Increased enforcement, including photo enforcement of red light running
- Legislation changes
- Pedestrian countdown signals
- Posted pedestrian crossing information
- Improved crosswalk demarcation
- Signalized mid-block crosswalks
- Police/Emergency pull-off areas.

Since installation of red light running cameras, one intersection has seen a two-thirds decrease from 1500 violations per month to 500.

DVRPC's Regional Safety Action Plan

The Delaware Valley RPC, like the Mid-America Regional Council in Kansas City and East-West Gateway in St. Louis, is a bi-state planning commission (New Jersey and Pennsylvania). The DVRPC's regional safety action plan is a long-range effort to reduce crashes, injuries and fatalities on the region's roadways. A number of strategic work programs have been put in place to improve safety in the region.

- Road Safety Audits
- Regional roundabout analysis
- Traffic Incident Data Management System
- Safe Routes to School planning
- Pedestrian safety and accessibility
- Regional transportation safety program
- Congestion and crash site analysis
- Bus stop studies
- Traffic calming
- Regional "road diet" program

New Jersey's Diversity Traffic Safety Program

Due to an immigrant influx adding to established minority populations, sharing the message of traffic safety with African-, Latino- and Asian-Americans has become an ever growing challenge. NHTSA is looking to individual states to deliver programs tailored for these diverse populations. A DOT cannot rely solely on government entities such as law enforcement or government subdivisions for initial programs to disseminate the message, or to enlist participation. Enforcement will only be effective when accompanied by education and proper engineering. New Jersey has developed a "Partnering for Traffic Safety" program to begin addressing this need. The program has nine centers providing traffic safety education and reduced-cost car seats to the Hispanic community in seven counties throughout the state.

New Jersey finds individuals in these counties who are interested in helping and who have credibility in their neighborhood. Teaching traffic safety concepts to these community leaders has proven more effective than attempting to affect the culture with traditional methods.

"It's not just about translating our existing messages into Spanish."

INCIDENT/EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Incident Management was one of the most impressive topics the scanning tour participants learned about on the trip. It was evident that incident and emergency management were important safety attributes of the roadway systems in Maryland the Pennsylvania.

University of Maryland's Center for Advanced Transportation Technology Lab (www.cattlab.umd.edu)

The CATT Lab at the University of Maryland has a number of innovative projects, both active and in development. The scan team learned about three particular efforts: RITIS, 3-D Visualization Tools, and Innovative Training Software.

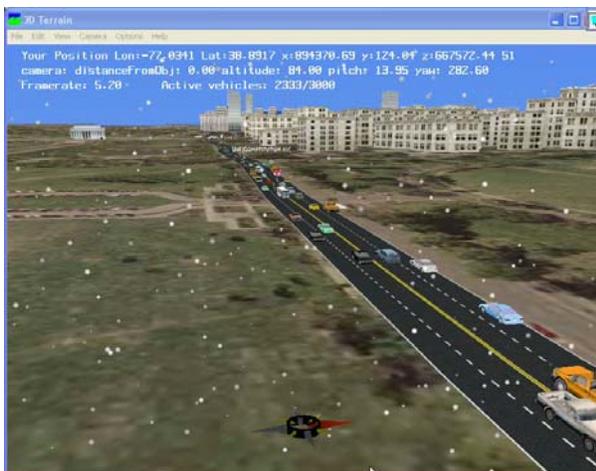
Regional Integrated Transportation Information System (RITIS)

The CATT Laboratory has developed a Regional Integrated Transportation Information System (RITIS). RITIS improves transportation efficiency, safety, and security through the integration of existing transit and transportation management data in Virginia, Maryland, and Washington D.C. The emphasis of RITIS is on data fusion and standardization, and their relationship to data collection, regional transportation systems management, regional traveler information dissemination, and systems evaluation. RITIS combines, translates, and standardizes data obtained from multiple agencies in the region to provide an enhanced overall view of the region's transportation network. Participating agencies are able to view regional traffic information and use it to improve operations and emergency preparedness. RITIS also uses regional standardized data to provide traveler information, including web sites, paging systems, and future 511 systems.



3-D Visualization

Three-dimensional software allows traffic management professionals to fly in a helicopter-like scenario to view real-time traffic data on a Google Earth-type interface. This software uses a combination of OpenGL and other modeling techniques to develop a scalable, highly interactive 3-D model using available GIS data and other transportation information. The system interacts with real-time traffic databases to show animated traffic (volume and speed) along with weather conditions and incident data (accident locations, lane closures, responding agencies, vehicles involved, etc.). The program also allows users to monitor and interact with traffic control devices such as Dynamic Message Signs, CCTV traffic cameras, traffic sensors, and even view the location of state



vehicles equipped with GPS transceivers.

The prototype system is currently operational for the entire state of Maryland, Northern Virginia, and the District of Columbia. Since the system uses standard GIS data and standard transportation databases to derive traffic measures, the system is scalable to other states and agencies.

Innovative Training via Online Gaming

The CATT Lab is working with the I-95 Corridor Coalition and Forterra Systems Inc. to create an intensive training program that uses three-dimensional, multi-player computer gaming technology and distance-based learning technologies to test, validate, certify, and reinforce the dissemination of best incident management practices across the Coalition region.

A virtual incident management training program is being developed. The program will present typical incident situations and allow participants to play out their normal roles in what is essentially a highly structured and recorded video game. Traffic management personnel and incident responders can experience a wide array of realistic scenarios, analyze the impacts of their decisions, and be trained about appropriate responses and communication (as well as the consequences of inappropriate responses and communication breakdowns).

The software will enable practical, scenario-based, interactive, real-time incident management training for up to 500 responders, trainers and “victims” simultaneously at a variety of locations. Participants include state, county, and local transportation departments, toll road authorities, law enforcement agencies, fire departments, emergency service providers, medical examiners, hazardous materials handlers, towing companies, the media, and other



operating agencies and entities across the Corridor. The training program can be accessed from any location with an Internet connection, enabling increased participation. The program is designed to educate and validate quick clearance practices and related incident management techniques, but it is also designed to promote communication, coordination and cooperation among organizations involved in incident management.

DVRPC's Regional Incident Management Task Force

PennDOT asked DVRPC to form a prototype Incident Management Corridor in order to improve coordinated incident management response, foster interaction among incident management stakeholders, identify and address critical incident management needs, and to give other organizational perspectives. The main corridor that is managed is the I-76/I-476 corridor in a large area within Philadelphia. Successes of the task force have been more cooperation and communication between traffic management centers, enforcement agencies, and first responders throughout the region, updated ramp designation signs, noise wall access along the freeways, and an incident management policy and procedures manual. This manual provides responders uniform operational guideline for safe operations at the scene of an incident. The overall goal of this manual was to improve the overall traffic incident management process, which will then improve emergency responder safety, reduce secondary incidents, and minimize the amount of apparatus and personnel responding to the incident. Over 60 Nextel phones were purchased by PennDOT and given to 15 different agencies to increase communication during the incident management process. The DVRPC also provides training sessions for emergency responders in incident management.

Pennsylvania Evacuation Routes

PennDOT has installed an extensive network of emergency evacuation routes the public can use whenever an incident or catastrophe may occur. Four different colored routes marked on the interstates and at exits indicate the direction of travel in the event of an evacuation.

DATA ANALYSIS

PennDOT's CDART Software

Crash reporting is a significant part of transportation safety, and an efficient system provides the DOT with better resources to ensure their roadway system's safety. Once a crash report is filled out by the officer and sent to the DOT it is filed into a crash master database. PennDOT has developed the Crash Data Analysis and Retrieval Tool (CDART). CDART makes extensive use of GIS technology, allows users to tailor input data into reports or map making, summarizes data to allow for quick and easy data recovery, and allows for limited data mining. CDART is user-friendly enough that it does not require data analysis experience to generate reports or crash maps.

One piece of data missing from CDART is the link-node system for local roads. Consequently, there are limited analysis capabilities for local road crashes. As a solution to this problem, PennDOT plans to upgrade GIS next year to include local road networks.

ENGINEERING INNOVATIONS

Engineering features that were discovered on field visits during the scan tour may be transferred to Missouri if the right situation arises. Maryland and Pennsylvania provided engineering innovations such as signalized roundabouts, J-turns, single point urban interchanges (SPUI), nearside left-turn signals, innovative warning devices at exit ramps, and collector-distributor lanes.

Roundabouts

Maryland is a leader in roundabout installation, many of which are at interchange ramps. At one particular ramp location a problem had emerged due to the efficiency of the roundabout design. Mainline volumes had grown to the point that the constant flow of traffic caused ramp vehicles to back up into the freeway.

A signal was installed with ramp detection to alleviate this problem. This signal can give ramp traffic an “artificial gap” to enter the roundabout if vehicles back up on the ramp. This gives the intersection enough time to clear the ramp queue before allowing the roundabout to work in its normal operation again.



J-turns

The J-turns that we saw were located on a rural four-lane high-speed expressway (55 mph speed limit). Collector side roads were not allowed to make a left-hand turn at the main intersection, but instead were forced to make a right, travel to the next J-turn, and then turn around to head left. This design virtually eliminates right angle crashes (the most severe at this type of intersection). Acceleration lanes were also provided in order to allow for ample time to enter the flow of traffic.

Single Point Urban Interchanges

Single point urban interchanges are good alternatives to the traditional diamond interchange, but must be properly warranted. The advantages to a SPUI are less signal phases and a single point for vehicles to make through movements, a left onto the interstate, or a left off of the interstate. All other movements (namely right turns) do not pass through the traffic signal.

Near-side Left Turn Signals

Many times a left turn signal was provided on the back of the opposing traffic signal mast arm. These nearside signals are advantageous when traveling behind a larger vehicle and the left turn signal ahead cannot be easily seen.

Exit Ramp Warning Devices

Some interesting pavement markings and warning signs were seen ahead of and on exit ramps. Larger, brighter curve signs with a speed limit placard were often seen, sometimes with a truck rollover caution, accompanied by rumble stripes in the pavement to warn motorists to slow down.

Collector-Distributor lanes

Collector-Distributor (C-D) lanes are a good practice when there are closely spaced sets of entrance and exit ramps instead of intermittently adding and dropping lanes. Instead of a positive barrier (concrete, guard rail, or cable) between the mainline lanes and the Collector-Distributors, these C-D lanes are delineated with only pavement marking and rumble strips. These markings and lanes are designed to prevent the motorist from crossing between the C-D and mainline lanes.

COOPERATIVE RESEARCH

University of Maryland's ATTAP Center (<http://attap.umd.edu>)

An Applied Technology and Traffic Analysis Program (ATTAP) was jointly initiated by the Office of Traffic and Safety at the Maryland State Highway Administration and the Traffic Safety and Operations Laboratory at the University of Maryland - College Park. Together, the University of Maryland and the State Highway Administration collaborate to formulate practical research ideas to be performed at the ATTAP center. Many different research areas in Traffic engineering are performed at the ATTAP center, including microscopic simulation and unconventional arterial/interchange design. The results of the research projects are used continuously by the State Highway Administration to improve their own analysis and design.

Two interesting projects available on their website are an Unconventional Arterial Intersection Design (UAID) Web Interface and a Critical Lane Volume Analysis Program. The UAID allows the user to choose from many different intersection designs using various criteria. A drop down menu provides alternative innovative intersection/interchange designs based on those criteria. Once an intersection type is chosen, the user can view a design description, a visual animation, the evolution of the design, studies and research of the intersection type, lessons learned from the type of intersection, and locations across the country where the intersection type can be found.

SCAN TOUR AGENDA

Monday, June 25 – Hanover, MD

Meeting Location: State Highway Office of Traffic & Safety

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|----------|--|---------------|
| 8:00 AM | Introductions
Overview of Maryland DOT | Saed Rahwanji |
| 8:30 AM | Maryland Safety Programs | |
| 12:00 PM | Lunch & Travel to University of Maryland | |
| 2:00 PM | ATTAP Research Facility tour and safety project discussion | |
| 5:00 PM | Travel to Hotel / Review Day 1 Events | |
| 7:00 PM | Dinner | |

Tuesday, June 26 – Hanover, MD

Meeting Location: State Highway Office of Traffic & Safety

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|----------|---|---------------|
| 8:00 AM | Safety & Operational Field Checks
▪ Roundabouts
▪ J-Turns
▪ Red Light Cameras
▪ Single Point Urban Interchanges (SPUI)
▪ Continuous Green Intersections (“Maryland T”) | Saed Rahwanji |
| 12:00 PM | Lunch | |
| 1:00 PM | Continue Field Checks | |
| 4:00 PM | Travel to Harrisburg, PA / Review Day 2 Events | |
| 6:00 PM | Dinner | |

Northeast Safety Scanning Tour

Wednesday, June 27 – Harrisburg, PA

Meeting Location: Commonwealth Keystone Building

8:00 AM	Introductions Overview of PennDOT <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Organizational Structure• Crash data storage, analysis• Relationship between engineering and human factors	Gary Modi
8:30 AM	Data Analysis <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Screening process• Products developed	Bill Hunter
9:30 AM	Road Safety Audits	Sesny/Peddicord
10:00 AM	Local Transportation Assistance Program (LTAP) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Local Data Tom G.• Programs, Training, Materials, etc.	Stacy Gary Modi Pennoni
11:30 AM	Lunch with Traffic Engineering / Safety staff	
12:30 PM	Missouri Topics System-wide safety efforts <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Smooth Roads Initiative• Median cable barrier Affecting Department Policy <ul style="list-style-type: none">• MoDOT Practical Design Guidelines• Engineering Policy Guide	Brian Chandler
1:00 PM	Human Behavior <ul style="list-style-type: none">• NHTSA Grant Process (E-Grant)• Education, Public Information• Enforcement• Partnerships (SHSP, etc.)	
2:30 PM	Intersection Safety, etc.	Tom Bryer
3:30 PM	Field Visits <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Intersection Treatments• Innovative Safety Solutions	Sesny/Peddicord

Northeast Safety Scanning Tour

Thursday, June 28 – Philadelphia, PA

Meeting Location: Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission

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| 7:30 AM | Continental Breakfast | |
| 8:00 AM | Welcome & Introductions | John Ward |
| | Delaware Valley RPC Overview & Safety Efforts | |
| | ▪ MPO Role in SHSP development | Rosemarie Anderson |
| | • Regional Safety Task Force | |
| | • Regional Safety Action Plan | |
| | ▪ Cluster Finder/Plan4Safety | Kevin Murphy |
| | ▪ Regional Incident Management Task Force | Chris King |
| 10:00 AM | Diversity Traffic Safety Program | Edward O'Connor |
| 10:45 AM | Roosevelt Boulevard Safety Program | |
| | ▪ Photo Red Light Enforcement | Chris Vogler |
| | ▪ Pedestrian Safety | David Anderson |
| | ▪ Education Campaign | Stacy Bartels |
| 12:00 PM | Lunch | |
| 1:00 PM | Roosevelt Blvd. Safety Program | Chris Vogler, David Anderson |
| | ▪ Field Visit | |
| | ▪ Philadelphia Parking Authority Operations | |
| 3:00 PM | Philadelphia Historical Tour | |
| 6:00 PM | Dinner | |

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