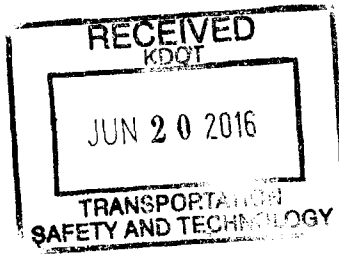




U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
**National Highway  
Traffic Safety  
Administration**



1200 New Jersey Avenue SE  
Washington, DC 20590

June 13, 2016

Michael King  
Secretary of Transportation  
Governor's Representative for Highway Safety  
700 SW Harrison  
Topeka, KS 66603-3754

Dear Mr. King:

I am pleased to submit the final report of the Kansas Occupant Protection Program Assessment conducted during the week of April 3-8, 2016. I am delighted that Kansas was able to utilize this technical assessment tool and that the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) Headquarters was able to serve as the facilitator and to assemble a team of experts who have demonstrated leadership and expertise in the occupant protection program.

In addition to providing guidance to the State, each team member also gained a great deal from the assessment and appreciated the opportunity to both contribute and learn. I hope that the assessment process and report will contribute positively to the future of the Kansas occupant protection program.

Please extend my thanks and appreciation to your staff for their effort in assisting in this process. If I can be of further assistance, please feel free to contact me or Janice Hartwill-Miller of my staff at (202) 366-2684.

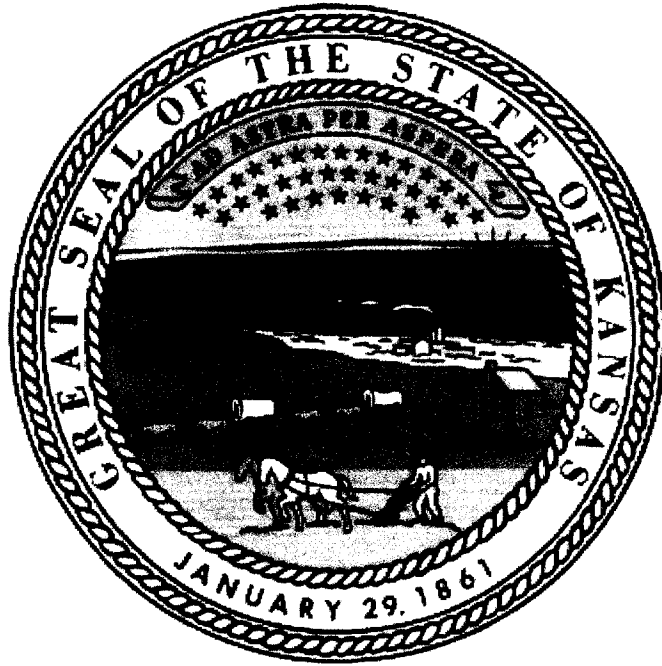
Sincerely,

Maria Vegega, Chief  
Occupant Protection Division

Enclosure

cc: Susan DeCourcy, Regional Administrator, NHTSA Region 7  
Chris Bortz, Traffic Safety Manager, Kansas Bureau of Transportation Safety & Technology





# KANSAS

Occupant Protection Program Assessment

April 4 - 8, 2016

## ***ASSESSMENT TEAM MEMBERS***

***Marian S. Adams***

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## INTRODUCTION

Kansas, nicknamed the Sunflower State, was admitted to the Union as the 34<sup>th</sup> state on January 29, 1861. Kansas has a land mass of 81,758 square miles, the 15th largest state. The State is bordered on the north by Nebraska, on the east by Missouri, on the south by Oklahoma and on the west by Colorado and is located equidistant from the Pacific and Atlantic oceans. The Kansas capital is Topeka, which has served as the state capital since 1861 and its largest city is Wichita, Kansas. Other major cities include Kansas City, Overland Park, and Olathe. U.S. Census Bureau 2010 estimates 2.9 million persons live in Kansas. Approximately 71 percent of Kansans reside in urban clusters. Kansas has 105 counties and 627 incorporated cities. Of those, the 10 most populated counties include Sedgwick, Johnson, Shawnee, Wyandotte, Douglas, Leavenworth, Reno, Riley, Butler, and Saline counties. The 95 remaining counties have populations under 50,000; of those, 62 have populations under 10,000. Statewide, the White population comprise 83.8 percent of the population, Blacks or African Americans make up 5.9 percent, American Indians and Alaska Natives make up 1.0 percent, Asians make up 2.4 percent and 3.9 percent claimed some other race or ethnicity. Hispanics or Latinos of any race make up about 10.5 percent.

Commerce and industry in Kansas are varied, but they are dominated by the aircraft industry and agriculture-related enterprises. Kansas is the world leader in the production of general aviation aircraft, with over approximately 45,000 workers employed by six major aircraft companies. Kansas is also one of the leading agricultural states in the country with over 50 million acres of Kansas land devoted to farming. Kansas is the leading state in wheat production and ranks second in beef processing and production.

Kansas has approximately 140,653 miles of public road miles of which 127,675 miles are rural roadways and 12,978 miles are urban roads. Kansas has approximately 874 miles in interstate highways. Interstate Highways 35, 335 and 135 run north/south and Interstate Highway 70 runs east/west. Kansas has approximately 2.4 million registered vehicles and 2 million registered drivers.

The Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT), Bureau of Transportation Safety and Technology, Traffic Safety Section strives to improve the quality of life for the traveling public by reducing the number of motor vehicle fatalities, injuries, and crashes. The Bureau influences human behavior by identifying problems and implementing effective educational and enforcement programs focusing on prevention.

In 2014, the United States suffered 32,675 lives lost in traffic crashes. Among the fatally injured, almost half (49 percent) were unrestrained at the time of the crash. The lack of proper restraint use therefore remains a serious highway safety, public health, and societal issue. Kansas' traffic statistics at a glance for 2014 and 2015 indicate the following:

- In 2014 there were 385 fatalities in the State. This number is higher than in 2013 by 35 fatalities.
- The number of unrestrained fatalities increased from 146 in 2013 to 150 in 2014.

- The 2015 seat belt use survey results showed that pick-up trucks, which account for a little more than one in five vehicles observed, produce a substantially lower belt use rate (78 percent) than other vehicles (90-91 percent). Male pick-up truck drivers are the lowest single category of belt users (75 percent). The State's overall 2015 seat belt use rate is 82 percent, down four percentage points from 2014.

Occupant protection is the foundation of any sound traffic safety program. Wearing a seat belt is the single most effective habit that can protect drivers and passengers in motor vehicle crashes. KDOT, in cooperation with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and an expert team of evaluators, has undergone a comprehensive assessment of the occupant protection component of Kansas' highway safety program.

The key recommendations presented in the first section of this report are those found to be the most critical for improving the State's occupant protection program. While Kansas has many initiatives in place to increase occupant protection, there is room for growth. All recommendations presented in this report are intended to help the State to carry out its life-saving mission.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The assessment team would like to acknowledge and thank Kansas Secretary of Transportation, Mike King; Kansas Department of Transportation, Bureau of Transportation Safety & Technology Chief, Mike Floberg; State Highway Safety Engineer, Steven Buckley; and Traffic Safety Section Manager, Chris Bortz, for their support, level of effort, and obvious commitment to occupant protection in Kansas. A special note of appreciation goes to Phyllis Marotta and Roberta Bradbury for their logistical support and assistance to the team.

The team would also like to acknowledge the dedication and hard work of all those individuals who took time out of their schedules to participate in the assessment process and interviews. By sharing their knowledge, experience, and expertise, Kansas' occupant protection program will save lives. Many thanks to these and others committed to saving lives on Kansas' roadways.

This assessment also benefitted from the guidance and technical assistance provided by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration headquarters and regional staff: Highway Safety Specialist Janice Hartwill-Miller and Regional Program Manager Randy Bolin; and support from their supervisors, Occupant Protection Division Chief Maria Vegega and Regional Administrator Susan DeCourcy. Special recognition and appreciation also goes to the team's administrative consultant, Belinda Oh, for her able assistance throughout the assessment process and in producing this report.

Each member of the team appreciates the opportunity to have served and hopes that consideration and implementation of the proposed recommendations will enable Kansas in continuing to make strides in increasing its occupant protection use rates and decreasing its number of unrestrained fatalities.

### Notes:

The information included in this document has been collected from a variety of sources including interviews, official documents, websites, and other materials. Sources may not be consistent. Some copyrighted material has been used under the "Fair Use" Doctrine of the U.S. copyright statute.

## ASSESSMENT BACKGROUND

The purpose of the Occupant Protection Program Assessment is to provide the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT), Bureau of Transportation Safety and Technology (BTST), Traffic Safety Section (TSS) with a thorough review of its statewide occupant protection program through the identification of programmatic strengths and accomplishments, the identification of challenge areas, and recommendations for enhancement or improvement. The assessment is intended to serve as a tool for occupant protection program planning, development, and implementation purposes, and for making decisions about how to best prioritize programs and use available resources. The assessment process provides an organized approach for gathering program information and measuring progress.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) headquarters and regional office staff facilitated this Occupant Protection Program Assessment. Working with KDOT, NHTSA recommended a team of five individuals with demonstrated subject matter expertise in the areas of Program Management; Legislation, Regulation, and Policy; Enforcement; Communication; Occupant Protection for Children; Outreach Programs; and Data and Evaluation. The assessment team conducted the assessment process based on the guidelines provided by the *Uniform Guidelines for State Highway Safety Programs, Highway Safety Program Guideline No. 20, Occupant Protection* (November 2006). The final report format follows the guidelines and each section of this report reflects this guiding document. The U.S. Department of Transportation developed the guidelines in collaboration with the states to support technical guidance for the states.

The Occupant Protection Program Assessment uses established criteria against which statewide and community programs are measured. The assessment examines significant components of the State's occupant protection program. All states, in cooperation with their political subdivisions, should have a comprehensive occupant protection program that educates and motivates its citizens to use available motor vehicle occupant protection systems. A combination of use requirements, enforcement, public information, education, and outreach is necessary to achieve significant, lasting increases in seat belt and child restraint use, which will prevent fatalities and decrease the number and severity of injuries.

This assessment consisted of a thorough review of State-provided occupant protection program briefing materials and interviews with state and community-level program directors, coordinators, advocates, traffic safety partners, law enforcement personnel, and KDOT staff. The conclusions drawn by the assessment team were based upon, and limited by, the facts and information provided in the briefing materials and by the various stakeholders who presented information to the assessment team.

Following the completion of the presentations, the team convened to review and analyze the information presented. The team noted the occupant protection program's strengths and challenges, as well as recommendations for improvement. The recommendations provided are based on the unique characteristics of the State and what the assessment team members believe the State, its political subdivisions, and partners could do to improve the effectiveness and comprehensiveness of their occupant protection activities.

This report is a consensus report. The assessment team recognized the commendable and committed work conducted throughout Kansas in the area of occupant protection. It is not the intent of this report to thoroughly document all of these successes, nor to give credit to the large number of individuals at all levels who are dedicated to traffic safety. By its very nature, this report focuses on areas that need improvement. The report should not be viewed as criticism. Rather, it is an opportunity to provide assistance and encourage improvement, which is consistent with the overall goals of these program assessments.

On the final day of the assessment, the team briefed KDOT on the results of the assessment and discussed major points and recommendations. This report belongs to KDOT; it is not a NHTSA-owned document. KDOT may use this assessment report as the basis for planning occupant protection program improvements, assessing legislative priorities, providing for additional training, and evaluating funding priorities. The final report is provided to KDOT and NHTSA.



## **KEY RECOMMENDATIONS**

*(Note: Key Recommendations are **BOLDED** in each individual section)*

### **1. PROGRAM MANAGEMENT**

- Conduct a functional analysis of traffic safety operations to determine optimal organizational location, number of employees, and allocation of job responsibilities for the traffic safety program.
- Enhance highway safety planning and implementation for occupant protection by:
  - Including a step to research and generate new projects, considering recommendations in this assessment report and projects conducted by other states.
  - Combining injury and fatality data, observational use rates, population, and other relevant data points to establish a rank order of regions, counties, and communities to establish priority areas of the State.
  - Accessing carry-forward funds to spread projects statewide and to pilot additional projects.
  - Reviewing the allocation of funds to ensure the primary target audience for occupant protection is being addressed.
  - Using a logic model as a tool to develop a specific plan for occupant protection.

### **2. LEGISLATION, REGULATION, AND POLICY**

- Allow primary enforcement of occupant protection for all ages in all seating positions.
- Increase the fine for a seat belt violation commensurate with the seriousness of the violation (For example, a first conviction for littering in Kansas may result in a fine between \$250 and \$1,000. Second conviction: fine between \$1,000 and \$2,000. Third conviction: fine between \$2,000 and \$4,000.).
- Require proper occupant protection use for all vehicle occupants as a provision under Kansas Graduated Driver Licensing law.

### **3. LAW ENFORCEMENT**

- Engage the Kansas Association of Chiefs of Police (KACP) in occupant protection programs and the Data-Driven Approach to Crime and Traffic Safety (DDACTS) model through a partnership with the law enforcement liaisons at the Chief's annual conference and/or through the recently implemented KACP regional training sessions.

## **KEY RECOMMENDATIONS** *(continued)*

### **3. LAW ENFORCEMENT** *(continued)*

- Increase Nighttime Seatbelt Enforcement Program grant funding to larger agencies. Nighttime enforcement is difficult in rural Kansas where traffic is minimal, yet this can be effectively implemented in major cities, where identification of violators is easier due to better lighting conditions. Consider offering equipment incentives for surpassing target enforcement goals similar to the model used in the Special Traffic Enforcement Program.
- Engage the Kansas Department of Transportation Public Information Officers and the Kansas Highway Patrol Public Resource Officers to develop occupant protection safety messaging and post on digital messaging signs strategically throughout the year.

### **4. COMMUNICATION**

- Develop and implement a comprehensive statewide strategic communications plan to promote occupant protection messages including paid, earned, and social media with specific emphasis on all high-risk and low belt use populations.
- Identify non-belt users and develop targeted messages and programs appropriate for these audiences to bring about behavioral change.
- Conduct focus groups and/or surveys to better understand males 18-34 and pick-up truck drivers' attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors as well as what will motivate them to buckle up. Develop campaigns and outreach materials with these messages and evaluate their effectiveness on behavioral change.
- Involve the Hispanic and Latino communities in the development and delivery of culturally-appropriate Spanish language occupant protection materials.

### **5. OCCUPANT PROTECTION FOR CHILDREN**

- Require an educational component for parents who violate the child passenger safety (CPS) law to attend either a court-based CPS training or visit an inspection station to learn how to properly restrain their child(ren).
- Expand the *Boosters to Belts* program to additional rural areas of the State and expand the *Seatbelts Are For Everyone* (SAFE) program to middle schools.

## **KEY RECOMMENDATIONS** *(continued)*

### **5. OCCUPANT PROTECTION FOR CHILDREN *(continued)***

- Create and implement a process to electronically enter all data from Car Seat Checkup Forms so useable data may be obtained, such as types of misuse or numbers of child safety seats correctly or incorrectly installed.
- Implement a statewide citation system, where each law enforcement agency uses the same citation, preferably an e-citation, so data and enforcement numbers can be obtained.

### **6. OUTREACH PROGRAM**

- Recruit champions from diverse communities to serve on the Executive Safety Council and the occupant protection Emphasis Area Team.
- Implement new programs, campaigns, and partnerships that focus specifically on adult seat belt use, especially for high-risk non-belt users and pick-up truck drivers.

### **7. DATA AND EVALUATION**

- Conduct additional studies on pick-up truck occupants. Examine factors related to belt use behavior by pick-up truck drivers and passengers. Determine who, when, where, and why pick-up truck drivers and passengers in Kansas do not buckle up and what is most likely to affect their behavior. Use focus groups to develop and test messaging. Place a priority on funding projects that include a pick-up truck emphasis.
- Develop and use criteria to evaluate proposed projects that incorporate specific occupant protection performance and evaluation measures. Specify that grants will be reviewed both administratively and using outcome results.
- Conduct an independent evaluation of the effectiveness of the *Seatbelts Are For Everyone* (SAFE) program. Use an experimental versus control group study design of sufficient sample size to evaluate the current program statewide. Use research staff unaffiliated with the SAFE program.
- Conduct nighttime observational surveys at a minimum in areas of heavy enforcement for manageable amounts of time. Find solutions to safety issues for the observers so that the benefit of this evaluation data can be realized.

## 1. PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

### GUIDELINE:

*Each state should have centralized program planning, implementation and coordination to achieve and sustain high rates of seat belt use. Evaluation is also important for determining progress and ultimate success of occupant protection programs.*

- *Provide leadership, training and technical assistance to other State agencies and local occupant protection programs and projects;*
- *Establish and convene an occupant protection advisory task force or coalition to organize and generate broad-based support for programs. The coalition should include agencies and organizations that are representative of the State's demographic composition and critical to the implementation of occupant protection initiatives;*
- *Integrate occupant protection programs into community/corridor traffic safety and other injury prevention programs; and*
- *Evaluate the effectiveness of the State's occupant protection program.*

### 1A. STRENGTHS

#### Leadership

- The Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT), Bureau of Transportation Safety and Technology (BTST), Traffic Safety Section (TSS) serves as the lead organization for occupant protection (OP) in Kansas. TSS staff members are recognized by federal, state, and local partners for their support, cooperation, and collaboration.

#### Planning

- TSS is responsible for preparation and execution of the *Highway Safety Plan* (HSP). The HSP documents the planning steps, problem identification, and funding allocations for various highway safety program areas, including OP.
- Coordination of the *Strategic Highway Safety Plan* (SHSP) and HSP occurs within the BTST. Both plans use a five-year moving average of data to plan programs, establish goals, and track progress.
- The SHSP is updated annually. As part of the SHSP planning process, KDOT has formed Emphasis Area Teams, including one for OP. The Emphasis Area Teams develop performance measures, set objectives, select strategies, and identify resources needed, including funding, legislation, staff, and lead agencies.

- The Executive Safety Council (ESC) of the SHSP is composed of representatives from 20 agencies. The ESC has selected an overall traffic safety goal of zero fatalities. The motto for this philosophy in Kansas is *Drive to Zero*.
- The SHSP has incorporated ambitious goals to increase OP in Kansas. These include:
  - Influence policymakers to pass laws that will increase seat belt use in Kansas.
  - Create data-driven safety programs that promote, through media, education, and law enforcement, the use of restraints by everyone.
  - Collaborate with state and local partners to promote a consistent message regarding restraint use.
  - Develop tactics to get all law enforcement officers and other local/state government employees to use seat belts.
  - Provide funding and other forms of support for law enforcement efforts to uphold OP laws.
  - Use data to target efforts in areas in Kansas where restraint use is low.
- In 2014, KDOT began creating a new network of safety coalitions, one for each of seven Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) regions. These coalitions will be sub-committees of the existing KDHE healthcare coalition structure. Small amounts of KDOT funding may be made available to coalitions to assist them in developing and implementing regional traffic safety plans.
- The Destination Safe coalition of the Mid-America Regional Council (MARC) is a model for the State's regional safety coalitions. Destination Safe establishes its region's transportation safety priorities, coordinates the region's safety planning, and implements coordinated efforts that improve transportation system safety.
- A significant amount of federal traffic safety funding has been committed to Fiscal Year (FY) 2016 OP programs. These amounts include:

<b>Federal Source</b>	<b>FY 2016 Planned Amount</b>
Section 402 OP	\$ 250,000
Section 2011 CPS	\$ 120,000
Section 405 OP	\$ 125,000
Section 405(b) OP	\$ 2,500,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 2,995,000</b>

Source: *FY 2016 Highway Safety Plan*

These amounts do not include projects that support OP, such as selective traffic enforcement, that are funded from other federal funded accounts, nor do they include major amounts that are contributed from private funds, matching amounts, or other sources.

- Federal traffic safety funds are expended in a variety of projects that represent education, enforcement, and media. These include, but are not limited to:

<b>Project</b>	<b>FY 2016 Planned Amount</b>
Public Information & Education	\$ 130,000
Child Safety Seats	\$ 100,000
OP Assessment	\$ 20,000
Observational Surveys	\$ 295,000
Booster Seat Awareness	\$ 350,000
Child Passenger Safety (CPS) Outreach	\$ 350,000
CPS Paid Media	\$ 100,000
Safe Kids Buckle Up	\$ 45,000
Kansas Traffic Safety Resource CPS	\$ 275,000
OP Initiatives	\$ 400,000
Nighttime Seatbelt Enforcement	\$ 330,000
OP Advertising	\$ 600,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 2,995,000</b>

Source: *FY 2016 Highway Safety Plan*

- The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration document, *Countermeasures that Work*, is considered a valuable tool to determine the potential of projects for the HSP.
- Observational OP use data is used extensively to select areas of the State to receive enforcement and education emphasis.

#### Staffing and Training

- TSS staff includes a designated OP coordinator. This staff member works with all OP partners, serves as a member or lead on several OP coalitions and teams, and serves as a point of contact for managing highway safety-funded OP projects.
- Each year, KDOT conducts a Transportation Safety Conference for all traffic safety partners. Concurrent sessions are planned for law enforcement personnel, government officials, safety advocates, emergency medical services, and others.
- The Kansas Traffic Safety Resource Office (KTSRO) has implemented an online system to provide easy access to meetings, webinars, and statewide communication.
- KTSRO maintains a shared calendar on their website, enabling partner organizations and agencies to promote trainings, meetings, and conferences.

## Monitoring and Evaluation

- TSS-funded law enforcement liaisons (LELs) serve as important conduits of information between TSS and law enforcement agencies. LELs are highly experienced law enforcement professionals who assist in determining enforcement performance and helping resolve any problems that may arise.
- Overall evaluation of the OP program statewide is determined by statewide seat belt and CPS observational survey results and tracking unrestrained fatalities reported in traffic crash reports.
- KDOT has approved an information technology project to implement an online e-grants system for highway safety grants. This system would incorporate all grant processes, from start to finish, for all types of highway safety grants.

## 1B. CHALLENGES

- Kansas' Traffic Safety Program operates with a staff of six, with one vacancy. The Program resides five organizational levels below the Secretary of Transportation, who serves as the Governor's Highway Safety Representative (GR). At one time, the office operated with a staff of nine employees.
- The position of OP coordinator does not focus solely on OP issues and program planning, development, implementation, and evaluation; the coordinator must cover several other tasks and activities.
- OP projects in the HSP are not all well-defined. It is unclear how a considerable amount of the available OP funds are intended to be spent.
- The existing HSP planning process does not provide the steps to proactively generate projects for the OP program. There appears to be a gap in planning between problem identification and project development. Projects appear to be selected and funded based primarily on historical involvement and previous expenditures.
- Unrestrained vehicle occupants in Kansas tend to be hardcore non-users composed primarily of males with a strong belief in "personal rights" and individual freedom.
- The OP Emphasis Area Team is composed of members primarily from state-level organizations. Partners representing education, rural and diverse populations, the target audience, and local law enforcement do not appear to be included.
- Development and implementation of an e-grants system will require time, funds, and garnering the participation and cooperation of all highway safety partners.

- Though use of seat belts by teen occupants has risen, results of the *2013 Kansas Youth Risk Behavior Survey* support results from other data sources by identifying the primary non-using population as young males. (See table below.)

<b>Q: Never Or Rarely Wore A Seat Belt (when riding in a car driven by someone else)</b>			
	<b>Grade</b>	<b>2013 (%)</b>	<b>2013 (N)</b>
<b>Total</b>	Total	7.4	1,928
	9th	7	654
	10th	5.3	468
	11th	8.4	478
	12th	8.9	310
<b>Female</b>	Total	4.9	1,004
	9th	5.4	362
	10th	1.4	226
	11th	8	260
	12th	5.1	151
<b>Male</b>	Total	9.7	921
	9th	8.5	292
	10th	9.2	242
	11th	8.8	218
	12th		158

- Regional traffic safety coalitions are not yet operating in most parts of the State, so there is limited local engagement in OP planning or program development, particularly in rural areas.
- Not all highway safety program managers or project managers have had the advantage of available highway safety program management training, such as *Managing Highway Safety Programs*, *Data-Driven Approaches to Highway Safety Planning*, and *Managing National Highway Traffic Safety Administration Grant Funds*.
- KDOT operates six district offices plus numerous field offices throughout the State; yet this potential resource appears to be little used for behavioral highway safety programs.
- An organizational review of KDOT is planned. What this review will consist of or implications of results are unknown.

## 1C. RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Conduct a functional analysis of traffic safety operations to determine optimal organizational location, number of employees, and allocation of job responsibilities for the traffic safety program.**



- **Enhance highway safety planning and implementation for occupant protection by:**
  - **Including a step to research and generate new projects, considering recommendations in this assessment report and projects conducted by other states.**
  - **Combining injury and fatality data, observational use rates, population, and other relevant data points to establish a rank order of regions, counties, and communities to establish priority areas of the State.**
  - **Accessing carry-forward funds to spread projects statewide and to pilot additional projects.**
  - **Reviewing the allocation of funds to ensure the primary target audience for occupant protection is being addressed.**
  - **Using a logic model as a tool to develop a specific plan for occupant protection.**
  
- Expand the occupant protection Emphasis Area Team to include broader representation from diverse populations, education, rural areas, and the identified target audience.
  
- Continue to develop and implement an e-grants system for the highway safety program.
  
- Continue the development of regional traffic safety coalitions with funding support to develop and implement regional traffic safety plans.
  
- Provide highway safety management training to state and local program and project managers with a focus on using data to develop, implement, and evaluate projects.
  
- Review Kansas Department of Transportation district resources as part of the agency organizational review, and identify resources which can be made available to support the State's traffic safety program and occupant protection efforts.

## 2. LEGISLATION, REGULATION, AND POLICY

### GUIDELINE:

*Each state should enact and vigorously enforce primary enforcement occupant protection use laws. Each state should develop public information programs to provide clear guidance to the motoring public concerning motor vehicle occupant protection systems. This legal framework should include:*

- *Legislation permitting primary enforcement that requires all motor vehicle occupants to use systems provided by the vehicle manufacturer;*
- *Legislation permitting primary enforcement that requires that children birth to 16 years old (or the State's driving age) be properly restrained in an appropriate child restraint system (i.e., certified by the manufacturer to meet all applicable Federal safety standards) or seat belt;*
- *Legislation permitting primary enforcement that requires children under 13 years old to be properly restrained in the rear seat (unless all available rear seats are occupied by younger children);*
- *Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) laws that include three stages of licensure, and that place restrictions and sanctions on high-risk driving situations for novice drivers (i.e., nighttime driving restrictions, passenger restrictions, zero tolerance, required seat belt use);*
- *Regulations requiring employees and contractors at all levels of government to wear seat belts when traveling on official business;*
- *Official policies requiring that organizations receiving Federal highway safety program grant funds develop and enforce an employee seat belt use policy; and*
- *Outreach to state insurance commissioners to encourage them to persuade insurers to offer incentives to policyholders who use seat belts and child restraints. Insurance commissioners are likely to have significant influence with insurers that write policies in their states.*

### 2A. STRENGTHS

- There is a statewide "Buckle Up Coalition" that has worked to increase the adult fine for non-compliance of the adult seat belt law. The coalition is composed of dedicated and persistent traffic safety leaders, advocates, government officials, and traffic safety specialists. Under the coordination of AAA Allied Group, the Coalition and legislative partners have succeeded in passage of a fine increase through the State Senate.
- The Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT), Traffic Safety Section, completed a political risk analysis regarding potential changes in occupant protection law. Long-range plans include changes in state law to increase the basic fine and provide a tiered fine system for repeat seat belt violations. This risk analysis highlights pertinent issues for advocates and supporters to address when considering and developing talking points for the legislature.

## Kansas Safety Belt Law<sup>1</sup>

- The Kansas safety belt use act (§8-2503) requires occupants in motor vehicles above the age of 14 to have a safety belt properly fastened while the vehicle is in motion.
- The safety belt use act allows primary enforcement for front seat passengers.
- Occupants between the ages of 14 and 18 may be fined \$60 for failing to properly buckle up.

## Kansas Child Passenger Safety (CPS) Law

- The Kansas child passenger safety act (§8-1344) requires every driver to properly restrain a child up to the age of eight weighing less than 80 pounds or less than 4 feet 9 inches tall in an “appropriate child passenger safety restraining system.” A child between the ages of eight and 14 weighing more than 80 pounds or more than 4 feet 9 inches tall shall be in a safety belt.
- The fine for violating the child passenger safety act is \$60 which may be waived upon proof of purchase or acquisition of an appropriate and approved child passenger safety restraining system.
- Kansas law (§8-157a) prohibits a child under the age of 14 to ride on any portion of a vehicle “not designed or intended for use of passengers,” which would include the cargo area of pick-up trucks.

## Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL)

- For teen drivers, Kansas GDL provides a three-tiered licensing system – permits (instruction and farm), restricted license, and full licensure – with restrictions for hours and passengers.
- Penalties for violating the State’s GDL restrictions can include:
  - First conviction – driver license suspension for 30 days
  - Second conviction – driver license suspension for 90 days
  - Third or subsequent conviction – driver license suspension for a year

## Public Opinion

- According to the *2015 Safety Perceptions Survey*, a majority of survey respondents supports a significantly higher fine for a safety belt violation than current law allows.

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<sup>1</sup> Kansas law most frequently uses the term “safety belt.” Therefore, “safety belt” shall be referenced in this section of the assessment report.

Thirty-two percent of residents felt that a safety belt fine would have to be \$26-\$50 to be fair, reasonable, and effective; and 22 percent felt a safety belt fine would have to be \$51-\$100 to be fair, reasonable, and effective.

- When asked “Are you in favor of or opposed to the Kansas Primary Safety Belt Law?” over 70 percent of survey respondents indicated they were in favor of the primary belt law.

## Policies

- According to KDOT’s Standard Operating Manual (SOM) 1.10.3:

All persons operating or riding in State-owned or leased vehicles or equipment shall use seat belts and shoulder harnesses when such devices are provided in the vehicle or on the equipment. Persons who operate vehicles or equipment shall operate them in accordance with State law, the Maintenance Manual, and all KDOT SOMs.

Employees shall not ride or work from the bed or tailgate of pick-ups, on trailers, or on/in the back of dump trucks that are moving in any direction.

- Kansas Administrative Regulation (K.A.R.) 1-17-3 requires all state employees to comply with all traffic laws when using a state-owned, leased, or private vehicle.
- Law enforcement agencies receiving highway safety funds are required to have a seat belt policy for their employees.
- Employee seat belt policies appear to be widespread in Kansas, though the extent of compliance is unknown.

## 2B. CHALLENGES

- Strongly held beliefs within the State that government in general is overly intrusive create barriers to change the existing occupant protection law or increase fines.
- The Kansas safety belt use act prohibits primary enforcement for back seat adult occupants.
- The fine for violating the seat belt law is only \$10 for those 18 years of age or older with no court costs nor impact on a driver license. Court costs are also prohibited for a seat belt violation for those between the ages of 14 and 18.

- It is not a violation of the child passenger safety act if there are more children in a vehicle than available seating positions and all children possible are restrained.
- There is only one CPS violation regardless of how many children are unrestrained in a vehicle.
- The CPS law is not consistent with American Academy of Pediatrics and National Highway Traffic Safety Administration guidelines.
- The prohibition of children under age 14 from riding on any portion of a vehicle not intended for passengers includes an exemption if the child is an employee performing work “within truck bodies in space intended for merchandise or cargo.”
- Adjudication of occupant protection citations varies considerably across the State. Citations are often dismissed or fines remain unpaid.
- Under Kansas GDL, teen drivers may
  - receive a driving permit at a young age (14)
  - receive a restricted license at age 16 without completion of an approved driver education program
  - be eligible for an unrestricted license at age 16 ½
  - receive an unrestricted license at age 17 with only 50 hours of supervised driving, 10 hours driven at night
- There is no impact on a teen or adult driver license for violating State occupant protection laws.
- Not all traffic safety grantees are required to have an agency seat belt policy.
- The extent to which hospitals have a discharge policy that supports the safe transportation of children seems to vary considerably, from hospitals with no policy to hospitals which will refuse to discharge a child without safe transportation. A hospital may have a discharge policy for newborns, but it is unknown whether hospitals have a policy for older children.

## 2C. RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Allow primary enforcement of occupant protection for all ages in all seating positions.**
- Amend Kansas Statutes Annotated 8-1345 (a) to allow for multiple violations and fines if more than one child is unrestrained in a vehicle.

- **Increase the fine for a seat belt violation commensurate with the seriousness of the violation (For example, a first conviction for littering in Kansas may result in a fine between \$250 and \$1,000. Second conviction: fine between \$1,000 and \$2,000. Third conviction: fine between \$2,000 and \$4,000.).**
- Ensure the child passenger safety law is consistent with American Academy of Pediatrics and National Highway Traffic Safety Administration guidelines.
- Allow municipalities to charge normal court costs to adjudicate seat belt citations.
- Provide information to judges stressing the personal and financial impact of failing to use occupant protection.
- Require “proof of acquisition” of a child safety seat to include documentation from a certified child passenger safety (CPS) technician that the child safety seat acquired is appropriate and properly installed in order to waive the fine for a CPS law violation.
- **Require proper occupant protection use for all vehicle occupants as a provision under Kansas Graduated Driver Licensing law.**
- Implement hospital discharge policies that support the safe transportation of children of all ages upon release from the hospital.
- Require all traffic safety sub-grantees and contractors to have and implement a seat belt policy for their employees.
- Remove the legal exemption that allows child employees to ride on any portion of a vehicle not intended for passengers.
- Conduct a National Highway Traffic Safety Administration-facilitated Driver Education Program Assessment for Kansas.

### **3. LAW ENFORCEMENT**

#### *GUIDELINE:*

*Each State should conduct frequent, high-visibility law enforcement efforts, coupled with communication strategies, to increase seat belt and child safety seat use. Essential components of a law enforcement program should include:*

- *Written, enforced seat belt use policies for law enforcement agencies with sanctions for noncompliance to protect law enforcement officers from harm and for officers to serve as role models for the motoring public;*
- *Vigorous enforcement of seat belt and child safety seat laws, including citations and warnings;*
- *Accurate reporting of occupant protection system information on police accident report forms, including seat belt and child safety seat use or non-use, restraint type, and airbag presence and deployment;*
- *Communication campaigns to inform the public about occupant protection laws and related enforcement activities;*
- *Routine monitoring of citation rates for non-use of seat belts and child safety seats;*
- *Use of National Child Passenger Safety Certification (basic and in-service) for law enforcement officers;*
- *Utilization of Law Enforcement Liaisons (LELs), for activities such as promotion of national and local mobilizations and increasing law enforcement participation in such mobilizations and collaboration with local chapters of police groups and associations that represent diverse groups (e.g., NOBLE, HAPCOA) to gain support for enforcement efforts.*

#### **3A. STRENGTHS**

- Kansas has a primary seat belt law for front seat occupants and children, which allows law enforcement officers to stop motorists when they observe violations.
- There is effective leadership and direction from the Kansas Highway Patrol (KHP) Colonel to the troop level for prioritizing seat belt enforcement and education. Enforcement of occupant protection laws is a high priority in the KHP and enforcement is sustained throughout the year. Since the primary seat belt law was passed in 2010, troopers have averaged 24,054 occupant protection citations per year, even as staffing levels have significantly decreased. By comparison, troopers wrote 16,409 occupant protection citations in 2009.
- KHP has a seat belt use policy that requires all personnel to wear their seat belts while on-duty. State law does not exempt law enforcement officers from having to wear seat belts.
- The Kansas Department of Transportation's (KDOT) Traffic Safety Section (TSS) provides funding to Kansas law enforcement agencies for sustained enforcement through

the Special Traffic Enforcement Program (STEP) which is readily utilized to improve seat belt use in some jurisdictions, primarily during national mobilizations including *Click It or Ticket* (CIOT). In 2015, 123 law enforcement agencies participated in STEP.

- STEP provides traffic safety equipment incentives for law enforcement agencies when an average of two occupant restraint citations is written per hour by an agency over a two-week enforcement period. These incentives are also available for participating agencies that are not authorized overtime, yet work the May CIOT Campaign on regular patrol time.
- TSS provides STEP grantees with a model seat belt use policy.
- Of the 628 Child Passenger Safety (CPS) Technicians in the State, 230 are law enforcement officers, of which 48 are state troopers.
- KHP has a strong public relations program at headquarters and at each troop office with dedicated troopers assigned as Public Resource Officers available to work with local media on occupant protection messaging. These troopers, all trained as CPS Technicians, are very active on social media through Facebook and Twitter. The troopers provide occupant protection education at major sporting events throughout the State and within the school system.
- KHP and other law enforcement agencies participate in the *Seatbelts Are For Everyone* (SAFE) program in high schools. This peer-to-peer program is now in 142 high schools in 62 counties and is documented as successful in increasing teen seat belt use.
- The SAFE program's enforcement component has been implemented by 70 law enforcement agencies throughout the State near middle schools during Child Passenger Safety Week. TSS provides occupant protection materials and sample press releases to these schools and encourages the school districts and law enforcement agencies to announce the enforcement campaigns.
- KDOT has four Law Enforcement Liaisons (LELs) contracted by the TSS to actively promote occupant protection safety programs and deliver information about the STEP program to local law enforcement agencies statewide.
- Troopers and local law enforcement officials partner with other traffic safety professionals statewide through Operation Impact sessions to collaborate on enforcement and education priorities related to occupant protection.
- TSS and its LELs hold multiple luncheons throughout the State to promote occupant protection enforcement, STEP, and to recognize high-performing traffic safety officers and community members. TSS has recently introduced a training component at these luncheons. Seventeen luncheons are scheduled in 2016.



- The LELs partner with AAA Allied Group on the Community Traffic Safety Awards Program. This is a program designed to recognize communities for their efforts to improve local traffic safety. Thirty-two awards were presented to community members, including top performing Kansas law enforcement officers, in 2015.
- The Kansas Law Enforcement Training Center provides a two-hour occupant protection block of instruction as part of the state-mandated curriculum. Additionally, recruits receive instruction on how to properly complete the state traffic accident report, specific to occupant protection and restraint use.
- The Kansas Sheriffs' Association endorses and promotes STEP throughout the State. LELs provide information on occupant protection programs at the new Sheriffs orientation training.

### **3B. CHALLENGES**

- Kansas' adult seat belt law has a nominal fine of \$10.00.
- KHP has been operating with an approximate 20 percent decrease in state troopers over the last several years.
- CIOT citations by STEP grantees have been rapidly decreasing every year since 2012. Citations have decreased from 19,832 in 2012 to 15,681 in 2015, a decline of 21 percent.
- The rural areas of Kansas have a significantly higher rate of unrestrained fatalities than the more populated areas of the State.
- The Kansas Association of Chiefs of Police (KACP) has not been an active partner with TSS and has not been significantly involved in STEP.
- There is not a *Saved by the Belt* community program established in the State to recognize survivors of motor vehicle crashes.
- TSS does not require agencies participating in STEP to interact with the media during the mobilization campaigns. Interaction with the media and/or press releases is only encouraged.
- Nighttime Seatbelt Enforcement Program (NSEP) grants have decreased by more than half in the years since its inception, from 22 to 10 in 2015.
- KDOT and KHP do not use interstate digital messaging signs for safety messaging other than during national mobilization campaigns. The system is primarily utilized for emergency messaging.

### 3C. RECOMMENDATIONS

- Engage a broad base of community stakeholders and data analysts to effectively convince state legislators to increase the seat belt fine to a level that is at least where it was prior to the change in law from secondary to primary enforcement (\$30.00).
- Continue to recruit top-quality Trooper Cadets to fill existing vacancies within the Kansas Highway Patrol.
- Continue to engage law enforcement agencies, particularly local law enforcement agencies, through the Law Enforcement Liaison training programs, Special Traffic Enforcement Program funding, and partnership with the Kansas Association of Chiefs of Police.
- Increase the number of Special Traffic Enforcement Program participating agencies, especially smaller local law enforcement agencies and sheriffs' offices located in very rural and less populated regions of Kansas.
- **Engage the Kansas Association of Chiefs of Police (KACP) in occupant protection programs and the Data-Driven Approach to Crime and Traffic Safety (DDACTS) model through a partnership with the law enforcement liaisons at the Chief's annual conference and/or through the recently implemented KACP regional training sessions.**
- Develop and implement a *Saved By the Belt* program that can be coordinated through the law enforcement liaisons in partnership with stakeholders such as the Kansas Sheriffs' Association, Kansas Association of Chiefs of Police, or AAA Allied Group.
- Require that participating Special Traffic Enforcement Program grantees provide a minimum of one media release during mobilization campaigns. This can be done formally, or through social media.
- **Increase Nighttime Seatbelt Enforcement Program grant funding to larger agencies. Nighttime enforcement is difficult in rural Kansas where traffic is minimal, yet this can be effectively implemented in major cities, where identification of violators is easier due to better lighting conditions. Consider offering equipment incentives for surpassing target enforcement goals similar to the model used in the Special Traffic Enforcement Program.**
- **Engage the Kansas Department of Transportation Public Information Officers and the Kansas Highway Patrol Public Resource Officers to develop occupant protection safety messaging and post on digital messaging signs strategically throughout the year.**

## 4. COMMUNICATION

### GUIDELINE:

*As part of each State's communication program, the State should enlist the support of a variety of media, including mass media, to improve public awareness and knowledge and to support enforcement efforts to about seat belts, air bags, and child safety seats. To sustain or increase rates of seat belt and child safety seat use, a well-organized effectively managed communication program should:*

- *Identify specific audiences (e.g., low belt use, high-risk motorists) and develop messages appropriate for these audiences;*
- *Address the enforcement of the State's seat belt and child passenger safety laws; the safety benefits of regular, correct seat belt (both manual and automatic) and child safety seat use; and the additional protection provided by air bags;*
- *Continue programs and activities to increase the use of booster seats by children who have outgrown their toddler seats but who are still too small to safely use the adult seat belts;*
- *Capitalize on special events, such as nationally recognized safety and injury prevention weeks and local enforcement campaigns;*
- *Provide materials and media campaigns in more than one language as necessary;*
- *Use national themes and materials;*
- *Participate in national programs to increase seat belt and child safety seat use and use law enforcement as the State's contribution to obtaining national public awareness through concentrated, simultaneous activity;*
- *Utilize paid media, as appropriate;*
- *Publicize seat belt use surveys and other relevant statistics;*
- *Encourage news media to report seat belt use and non-use in motor vehicle crashes;*
- *Involve media representatives in planning and disseminating communication campaigns;*
- *Encourage private sector groups to incorporate seat belt use messages into their media campaigns;*
- *Utilize and involve all media outlets: television, radio, print, signs, billboards, theaters, sports events, health fairs;*
- *Evaluate all communication campaign efforts.*

### 4A. STRENGTHS

- Kansas supports the *Click It or Ticket* (CIOT) campaign and participates in national mobilizations and safety weeks by supporting state and local media, enforcement, and educational activities.
- The Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT), Traffic Safety Section (TSS) has identified males ages 18-34, with additional emphasis on pick-up truck drivers, as target high-risk audiences for seat belt messaging during their CIOT campaign.

- To support branding of national and state-level campaigns, TSS and its media contractor utilize National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) CIOT materials available on their TrafficSafetyMarketing.gov website as well as their own creative content.
- TSS is now working with an experienced advertising agency to help develop campaigns, place paid media, plan press events and obtain earned media for occupant protection (OP) issues. This new media contractor will negotiate CIOT ad placement ensuring value-added spots focusing on traditional media, social media, digital, and video buys. The agency plans to geo-target males ages 18-34 through social media and is assisting TSS with the development of videos featuring first responders for use on TV, radio, and social media outlets. The agency is meeting personally with media outlets, including newspapers, TV and radio stations, to develop relationships and negotiate value-added media buys.
- Digital messaging signs are used to communicate OP messages during major mobilizations.
- The Kansas Traffic Safety Resource Office (KTSRO) manages a website that serves as the primary resource for OP information by providing links to partnering websites, information on programs and laws, training and continuing education unit opportunities, and order forms to obtain state resources.
- The Kansas Dashboard Report is available on the KTSRO homepage and provides up-to-date traffic crash data with a link to a complete annual report including regional statistics.
- TSS contracts four Law Enforcement Liaisons (LELs) who communicate with Kansas law enforcement agencies on messaging, campaigns, and the enforcement of OP laws.
- KDOT, the Kansas Highway Patrol (KHP), KTSRO, and Safe Kids Kansas meet quarterly to coordinate media outreach and discuss upcoming campaigns and calendars.
- KDOT funds an annual attitudinal survey to measure the awareness of law enforcement activity, safety messaging, and driving behavior.
- KHP and local law enforcement agencies have strong working relationships with media partners who generally report seat belt use and non-use when providing motor vehicle crash details to the public.
- Kansas has adopted a *Drive to Zero* campaign slogan to be used as an umbrella for all traffic safety messaging. TSS hired a short-term contractor to develop the logo and place radio spots for the *Drive to Zero* campaign.
- TSS has recently hired a sports marketing contractor to take a strategic approach to paid sports marketing placements. The contractor is using a behavioral health engagement

approach and logic model by systematically visiting sporting venues to capture first-hand the traffic flow, game-day experience, signage capabilities, corridors fans enter and exit from, ticket options, seating, and social media and online opportunities. Venues under consideration for alcohol and CIOT messages have been assessed based on affinity for the sport among males ages 18-34 whose risk behaviors include heavy beer drinking. Sporting venues will be required to provide reports on the number of impressions and engagement during the event and any related online and social media placement.

- KTSRO recently hired a social media contractor to manage KDOT's traffic safety social media posts, update the KTSRO website, and assist with KTSRO newsletters.
- Trauma hospitals are collecting and sharing morbidity data for use in local messaging, educational materials, and the identification of high-risk populations.
- KHP is a strong partner in OP enforcement and education. In addition to participating in mobilizations utilizing materials from NHTSA and KDOT, KHP also localizes its CIOT messages, adds a *Buckle Up in Your Truck* message into one of its summer press releases, and conducts pick-up truck enforcement to reach males ages 18-34 and pick-up truck drivers who have been identified as high-risk non-belt users.
- KHP has a strong presence on social media, including a remarkable following for two of their "Tweeting Troopers." Trooper Ben has approximately 16,100 followers and 13,600 tweets and Trooper Tod has approximately 6,000 followers and 4,500 tweets. These numbers surpass a number of national safety organizations in their Twitter following.
- KTSRO and OP partners are engaged in programs and activities to increase the use of booster seats by children who have outgrown their child safety seats but are still too small to safely use the adult seat belt.

#### **4B. CHALLENGES**

- Although the State is consistently coordinating media outreach across several program areas and contractors, there is no collective statewide strategic communications plan for OP issues including paid, earned, and social media.
- There seems to be limited social media coordination across partner agencies or sharing of practices to grow followers and increase engagement with KTSRO-managed social media followers.
- The KDOT Facebook page features frequent posts for their 2,555 followers; however, many posts receive little engagement.
- The Kansas Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) has a goal of *Vision Zero – Everyone Matters*. The *Drive to Zero* vision has recently been adopted and so has not been fully

incorporated into messaging and does not yet have a defined strategy.

- CIOT materials are not adequately evaluated to determine effectiveness in messaging and lasting impact on OP use.
- Limited information is available regarding why Kansas non-belt users choose not to buckle up and what would make them want to do so. It is difficult to effectively reach non-belt users with OP messages without first understanding their attitudes, behaviors, and motivators.
- Kansas has growing diversity in its culture, beliefs, population, and socioeconomics. This can be challenging when crafting messages and interventions to bring about behavioral change.
- The annual attitudinal survey does not effectively measure awareness of specific campaigns.
- TSS' prior media contractor obtained an added value that is below the NHTSA guideline of a 1:1 buy for the CIOT paid media campaign.
- Seat belt survivor and crash victim stories are limited within media and educational campaigns, and the State does not have an active *Saved by the Belt* program.
- Beyond planned CIOT radio, online, and social media buys targeting 18-34 year-old males, there is limited outreach to adult seat belt non-users and the majority of OP programs and messaging in the State tends to skew toward child passenger safety.
- Although the new sports marketing campaign is undergoing rigorous planning prior to implementation, the only measurement post-event will be the number of impressions/fans who were exposed to the message. There are currently no plans to measure the impact, recognition, and change of behavior those messages may have prompted.

#### 4C. RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Develop and implement a comprehensive statewide strategic communications plan to promote occupant protection messages including paid, earned, and social media with specific emphasis on all high-risk and low belt use populations.**
- Develop and implement a social media strategy, including partner organizations, to maximize reach of occupant protection messages and increase followers and their level of engagement.
- Evaluate reach of social media messaging and implement proven practices to increase engagement among followers.

- Develop and implement a *Drive to Zero* strategy including the consideration for the branded campaign which can act as an overall theme for the State's various traffic safety initiatives.
- Evaluate *Click It or Ticket* materials for effectiveness of messaging and lasting impact on occupant protection.
- **Identify non-belt users and develop targeted messages and programs appropriate for these audiences to bring about behavioral change.**
- **Conduct focus groups and/or surveys to better understand males 18-34 and pick-up truck drivers' attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors as well as what will motivate them to buckle up. Develop campaigns and outreach materials with these messages and evaluate their effectiveness on behavioral change.**
- **Involve the Hispanic and Latino communities in the development and delivery of culturally-appropriate Spanish language occupant protection materials.**
- Ensure the annual attitudinal and behavioral survey includes questions to measure awareness of campaign themes and to gauge effectiveness of existing and new campaigns.
- Require the new media contractor to obtain at least a 1:1 bonus for all paid media buys, implementing proven practices from other states when negotiating with stations that do not generally offer matching spots.
- Expand current efforts to recognize crash survivors by revitalizing the State's *Saved by the Belt* program.
- Evaluate sports marketing efforts beyond impressions to measure impact, recognition, and behavior change.

## **5. OCCUPANT PROTECTION FOR CHILDREN**

### *GUIDELINE:*

*Each State should enact occupant protection laws that require the correct restraint of all children, in all seating positions and in every vehicle. Regulations and policies should exist that provide clear guidance to the motoring public concerning occupant protection for children. Each State should require that children birth to 16 years old (or the State's driving age) be properly restrained in the appropriate child restraint system or seat belt. Gaps in State child passenger safety and seat belt laws should be closed to ensure that all children are covered in all seating positions, with requirements for age-appropriate child restraint use. Key provisions of the law should include: driver responsibility for ensuring that children are properly restrained; proper restraint of children under 13 years of age in the rear seat (unless all available rear seats are occupied by younger children); a ban of passengers from the cargo areas of light trucks; and a limit on the number of passengers based on the number of available seat belts in the vehicle. To achieve these objectives, State occupant protection programs for children should:*

- *Collect and analyze key data elements in order to evaluate the program progress;*
- *Assure that adequate and accurate training is provided to the professionals who deliver and enforce the occupant protection programs for parents and caregivers;*
- *Assure that the capability exists to train and retain nationally certified child passenger safety technicians to address attrition of trainers or changing public demographics;*
- *Promote the use of child restraints and assure that a plan has been developed to provide an adequate number of inspection stations and clinics, which meet minimum quality criteria;*
- *Maintain a strong law enforcement program that includes vigorous enforcement of the child occupant protection laws;*
- *Enlist the support of the media to increase public awareness about child occupant protection laws and the use of child restraints. Strong efforts should be made to reach underserved populations;*
- *Assure that the child occupant protection programs at the local level are periodically assessed and that programs are designed to meet the unique demographic needs of the community;*
- *Establish the infrastructure to systematically coordinate the array of child occupant protection program components;*
- *Encourage law enforcement participation in the National Child Passenger Safety Certification (basic and in-service) training for law enforcement officers.*

### **5A. STRENGTHS**

- **Kansas has a primary child passenger safety (CPS) law for children under the age of four, which requires them to be properly restrained in a child safety seat which meets or exceeds the standards and specifications in Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard (FMVSS) 213.**



- Kansas law prohibits children under the age of 14 from riding in the cargo areas of light trucks.
- There are 628 CPS Technicians and 28 CPS Instructors in the State. The CPS Technician recertification rate in Kansas was 58.4 percent in 2015, just slightly below the national average of 58.8 percent.
- There are 117 CPS inspection stations which provide services to 94 percent of the population within 76 counties. The remaining six percent of the population in the 29 counties without an inspection station receive CPS services from the Kansas Highway Patrol (KHP). Therefore, it appears that CPS Technicians are easily accessible to parents and caregivers throughout Kansas.
- Inspection stations are located in diverse locations including local health departments, local law enforcement and sheriffs' departments, KHP Troops, fire/emergency medical services stations, hospitals, and other service organizations.
- The Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT), through the Kansas Traffic Safety Resource Office (KTSRO), provides child safety seats and supplies to inspection stations at no cost. There are other entities that provide child safety seats to specific groups. For example, the Kansas Motor Carriers Association provides 100 car seats to KHP each year and in the past, large corporations and agencies have donated car seats to CPS partners, such as local health departments, who target minority populations.
- There are two CPS Instructors and 42 CPS Technicians in the State who have completed an additional CPS training called *Transporting Children with Special Healthcare Needs*. Safe Kids Kansas is able to obtain funding from the Emergency Medical Services for Children program to purchase child restraints for those children who have special healthcare needs, and all inspection stations are aware of these resources.
- KTSRO will conduct five National CPS Technician Certification Training Programs in 2016 and the Kansas Law Enforcement Training Center will conduct two. The number of technician training courses appears to be adequate to counter attrition.
- KTSRO keeps the CPS Technicians/Instructors up-to-date by sending out the *Car Seat Chronicle* every month. They also provide CPS Update Training the day prior to the Kansas Transportation Safety Conference. This training encompasses CPS product updates, any new technological issues relating to vehicles/child safety seats, recall information, etc. National CPS leaders are sometimes brought in to conduct the training and networking opportunities. In addition, CPS Technicians may obtain Continuing Education Units (CEUs) and opportunities to have an instructor review/sign off on their required car seat installations, both necessary for recertification. The Updates are videotaped and posted on the KTSRO website for those CPS Technicians or Instructors who were not able to attend.

- CPS Technicians/Instructors seem to work collaboratively with each other, no matter where they are employed. They partner at inspection stations, car seat checkup events, for media campaigns, and pool their resources.
- Safe Kids Kansas has made it their mission to focus on Spanish-speaking communities. Currently, there are 33 Spanish-speaking CPS Technicians in the State. There are other local health departments, sheriffs' departments, and inspection stations that also target diverse communities (e.g., Native American Tribes and Latinos). KTSRO created two-sided, bilingual public information and education materials, one side in English and the other in Spanish.
- Safe Kids Kansas conducts a three-hour *Child Care Transportation Safety Training* which covers the basics of transporting children safely for day care providers. They also provide brochures to car dealerships, which outline CPS features in new vehicles. Occasionally they coordinate a program called *Bucks for Buckles*, where drivers are rewarded with a dollar bill if everyone in their vehicle is properly restrained. Also, they have used CPS observational study data to obtain funds from KDOT to provide education and to purchase booster seats for distribution to qualifying families in low belt use rate counties.
- While KHP provides services as CPS Technicians and Instructors, they also share their CPS resources with other partners. Each Troop has a CPS trailer (equipped with child safety seats, canopies, and supplies), a Seat Belt Convincer, and a Rollover Simulator. The Public Resource Officers (PROs) transport these items anywhere in the State and partner with other CPS entities.
- KTSRO shares the *Seatbelts Are For Everyone (SAFE)* program, founded by the Senior Law Enforcement Liaison, with other law enforcement agencies to reach high school students.
- KTSRO implements a program called *Boosters to Belts* consisting of handout materials, Vince and Larry costumes, and presentations to increase booster seat use among children.
- KTSRO gives away *We Have A Little Emergency (WHALE)* stickers, and provides them to those who obtain a free child safety seat. KTSRO also provides bilingual coloring books and brochures to families. They also provide quick-reference cards containing basic CPS information to law enforcement officers to assist them when encountering children in vehicles.
- Media outlets in Kansas support public awareness of CPS issues and all of the key CPS partners consistently send the same messages out to the public about the importance of CPS.
- KHP issues most of the citations for violations of the CPS law in the State, which are electronic citations used to track enforcement data.

## 5B. CHALLENGES

- The CPS law is confusing to both parents and law enforcement officers due to height, weight, and age stipulations. It is difficult for caregivers to grasp, it requires more education by CPS Technicians, and it may make law enforcement officers hesitant to cite for violations.
- It is not a violation of the CPS law if there are more children in a vehicle than available seating positions and all children possible are restrained.
- Persons who are cited for violations of not having a child safety seat are able to have their fines and costs withdrawn by regional courts if they provide a receipt showing they obtained a child safety seat, without any accompanying educational component.
- CPS enforcement is not a top priority for all law enforcement. Limited training on CPS misuse is provided to CPS cadets/recruits in the Academy.
- Attitudinal studies are not conducted with regard to CPS, so it is undetermined if and how CPS messages are received by the public.
- CPS materials are not tested prior to distribution to see how they would be received by parents and caregivers and whether they can easily read and comprehend them.
- Many parents and caregivers still do not use booster seats, even though it is the law. The CPS use rate of children, birth to four, is the highest use rate at 97 percent, but then drops to 83 percent for children in the booster seat age group, ages five to nine.
- The *Seatbelts Are For Everyone* (SAFE) Program is primarily implemented in high schools.
- Grant funding for child safety seat purchases may soon be cut, or significantly reduced, which would greatly impact seat distributions to low-income families. There are few alternative solutions to funding child safety seats purchases at this time.
- Limited data are captured from Inspection Station Car Seat Check forms making it difficult to obtain any real useable data with regard to specific misuse or numbers of properly or improperly installed seats.
- The Kansas Child Death Review falls under the Attorney General's purview. It does not have a CPS representative and it is a closed system with confidential reports. Kansas does not participate in the National Child Death Review and only limited information is shared.
- The fire service is a resource partner missing from Kansas' CPS picture. Firefighters are key in the CPS world as they are viewed as safety conscious and authority figures.

- Since there is no statewide citation form used by all Kansas law enforcement officers, collecting CPS violation data is very limited due to the difficulty in tracking citations.

## 5C. RECOMMENDATIONS

- Amend the child passenger safety law to remove the height and weight stipulations and just use age, and remove the portion of the law allowing children to be unrestrained when there are not enough belted seating positions for the number of child occupants.
- **Require an educational component for parents who violate the child passenger safety (CPS) law to attend either a court-based CPS training or visit an inspection station to learn how to properly restrain their child(ren).**
- Provide law enforcement with more child passenger safety (CPS) training during their basic Academy training and encourage more officers to become certified CPS Technicians. Also, train more command staff on the importance of enforcing CPS laws. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has a training program for administrators called *Operation Kids for Law Enforcement*.
- Conduct attitudinal surveys periodically to ascertain whether child passenger safety messages are reaching the public and what hurdles need to be crossed to gain more compliance.
- Test child passenger safety information and educational materials to ensure they are appropriate for the groups they target and are written at an appropriate reading level.
- **Expand the *Boosters to Belts* program to additional rural areas of the State and expand the *Seatbelts Are For Everyone* (SAFE) program to middle schools.**
- Find ways to raise funds to purchase child safety seats. Stipulate in the child passenger safety (CPS) law that all, or a specific portion of, the fines collected from violations of the CPS law should be used to purchase child safety seats.
- **Create and implement a process to electronically enter all data from Car Seat Checkup Forms so useable data may be obtained, such as types of misuse or numbers of child safety seats correctly or incorrectly installed.**
- Encourage the fire service personnel who are current Child Passenger Safety (CPS) Technicians to motivate other fire service personnel to become more involved in CPS. Invite firefighters from other states who are actively involved in CPS to the Kansas fire fighters conference.
- **Implement a statewide citation system, where each law enforcement agency uses the same citation, preferably an e-citation, so data and enforcement numbers can be obtained.**

## 6. OUTREACH PROGRAM

### *GUIDELINE:*

*Each state should encourage extensive statewide and community involvement in occupant protection education by involving individuals and organizations outside the traditional highway safety community. Representation from health, business, education, and diverse cultures of the community are encouraged, among others. Community involvement broadens public support for the state's programs and can increase a state's ability to deliver highway safety education programs. To encourage statewide and community involvement, States should:*

- *Establish a coalition or task force of individuals and organizations to actively promote use of occupant protection systems;*
- *Create an effective communications network among coalition members to keep members informed about issues;*
- *Provide culturally relevant materials and resources necessary to conduct occupant protection education programs, especially directed toward young people, in local settings;*
- *Provide materials and resources necessary to conduct occupant protection education programs, especially directed toward specific cultural or otherwise diverse populations represented in the State and in its political subdivisions.*

*States should undertake a variety of outreach programs to achieve statewide and community involvement in occupant protection education, as described below. Programs should include outreach to diverse populations, health and medical communities, schools and employers.*

#### **a. Diverse Populations**

*Each State should work closely with individuals and organizations that represent the various ethnic and cultural populations reflected in State demographics. Individuals from these groups might not be reached through traditional communication markets. Community leaders and representatives from the various ethnic and cultural groups and organizations will help States to increase the use of child safety seats and seat belts. The State should:*

- *Evaluate the need for, and provide, if necessary, materials and resources in multiple languages;*
- *Collect and analyze data on fatalities and injuries in diverse communities;*
- *Ensure representation of diverse groups on State occupant protection coalitions and other work groups;*
- *Provide guidance to grantees on conducting outreach in diverse communities;*
- *Utilize leaders from diverse communities as spokespeople to promote seat belt use and child safety seat;*
- *Conduct outreach efforts to diverse organizations and populations during law enforcement mobilization periods.*

**b. Health and Medical Communities**

*Each State should integrate occupant protection into health programs. The failure of drivers and passengers to use occupant protection systems is a major public health problem that must be recognized by the medical and health care communities. The SHSO, the State Health Department and other State or local medical organizations should collaborate in developing programs that:*

- *Integrate occupant protection into professional health training curricula and comprehensive public health planning;*
- *Promote occupant protection systems as a health promotion/injury prevention measure;*
- *Require public health and medical personnel to use available motor vehicle occupant protection systems during work hours;*
- *Provide technical assistance and education about the importance of motor vehicle occupant protection to primary caregivers (e.g., doctors, nurses, clinic staff);*
- *Include questions about seat belt use in health risk appraisals;*
- *Utilize health care providers as visible public spokespeople for seat belt and child safety seat use;*
- *Provide information about the availability of child safety seats at, and integrate child safety seat inspections into, maternity hospitals and other prenatal and natal care centers;*
- *Collect, analyze and publicize data on additional injuries and medical expenses resulting from non-use of occupant protection devices.*

**c. Schools**

*Each State should encourage local school boards and educators to incorporate occupant protection education into school curricula. The SHSO in cooperation with the State Department of Education should:*

- *Ensure that highway safety and traffic-related injury control, in general, and occupant protection, in particular, are included in the State-approved K-12 health and safety education curricula and textbooks;*
- *Establish and enforce written policies requiring that school employees use seat belts when operating a motor vehicle on the job; and*
- *Encourage active promotion of regular seat belt use through classroom and extracurricular activities as well as in school-based health clinics; and*
- *Work with School Resource Officers (SROs) to promote seat belt use among high school students;*
- *Establish and enforce written school policies that require students driving to and from school to wear seat belts. Violation of these policies should result in revocation of parking or other campus privileges for a stated period of time.*

#### ***d. Employers***

*Each State and local subdivision should encourage all employers to require seat belt use on the job as a condition of employment. Private sector employers should follow the lead of Federal and State government employers and comply with Executive Order 13043, "Increasing Seat Belt Use in the United States" as well as all applicable Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) Regulations or Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations requiring private business employees to use seat belts on the job. All employers should:*

- *Establish and enforce a seat belt use policy with sanctions for non-use;*
- *Conduct occupant protection education programs for employees on their seat belt use policies and the safety benefits of motor vehicle occupant protection devices.*

#### **6A. STRENGTHS**

- The Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) is recognized as a leader in traffic safety and has shown a genuine dedication to improving occupant protection (OP) use among all Kansans.
- KDOT formed the Executive Safety Council with nearly 20 members who meet quarterly and provide input toward the Kansas Strategic Highway Safety Plan. Members include the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) Regional Office; KDOT; Parsons Brinckerhoff; law enforcement liaisons (LELs); Gaches, Braden & Associates; Kansas Action for Children; AAA Allied Group; Kansas Highway Patrol (KHP); Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE); Kansas Sheriffs' Association; Children's Mercy Hospital; Safe Kids Kansas; DCCCA, Inc.; Kansas Nurses Association; and Kansas Traffic Safety Resource Office (KTSRO).
- KTSRO is a program supported by KDOT's Traffic Safety Section (TSS) and DCCCA, Inc. KTSRO's mission is to provide public information and education to protect Kansans from avoidable injury or death on Kansas roadways. KTSRO works with KDOT, KHP, law enforcement agencies, the Kansas Drivers Safety Education Association, Safe Kids Kansas Coalitions, the Kansas Family Partnership, and other agencies and community sources such as local schools and Students Against Destructive Decisions. Together with their partners, KTSRO focuses on efforts addressing novice drivers, increasing seat belt use, preventing drunken driving and underage drinking, and raising motorcycle safety awareness.
- KTSRO coordinates child passenger safety (CPS) trainings for the State and a technical update which is filmed and made available online for CPS Technicians who cannot travel to the update. In addition, KTSRO sends a bi-monthly e-newsletter, *Car Seat Chronicle*, to Kansas Technicians and Instructors to help them stay informed and up-to-date.
- KDOT supports the annual Kansas Transportation Safety Conference that provides law enforcement, judges, government officials, educators, counselors, engineers, emergency

medical services personnel, teen drivers, and advocacy groups an opportunity to receive and share information and best practices concerning all facets of transportation safety.

- KTSRO and KDOT support the annual Midwest Regional CPS Conference which provides certified CPS Technicians and CPS Instructors an opportunity to network with four neighboring states. Mini-grants are offered to Technicians who would like to attend the two-day conference in order to receive up-to-date information.
- OP is promoted to teen drivers through the comprehensive peer-led program, *Seatbelts Are For Everyone* (SAFE), with a secondary message of improving safety for all motorists. The program includes:
  - cooperation among students, teachers, law enforcement, advocacy groups, and local businesses;
  - a training video to ensure the program is delivered effectively;
  - use of motor vehicle crash survivors and victims to share personal stories;
  - peer-to-peer education;
  - evaluation using pre-, mid-, and post-surveys to observe seat belt use rates of students, teachers, and parents;
  - opportunities for students to attend the Kansas Transportation Safety Conference;
  - educational activities on a monthly basis;
  - efforts to obtain earned media through state and local outlets;
  - enforcement activities; and
  - monthly pledge cards and drawings.
- Each of KHP's seven troops has a dedicated Public Resource Officer (PRO) whose responsibilities include delivering educational programs in communities within their region. PROs conduct fitting stations, participate in car seat checks, are active partners in SAFE, teach defensive driving in schools, conduct events, and visit all of the schools in their region each year.
- All seven KHP Troop Commands have a Seat Belt Convincer, Rollover Simulator, and car seat inspection trailer to assist community groups, local Safe Kids Coalitions, and others in educating the public about the importance of proper and consistent use of seat belts and child safety seats.
- AAA Allied Group started the Buckle Up Coalition pulling together AAA, trauma nurses, Kansas Nurses Association, KDHE, KDOT, KTSRO, engineers, law enforcement, Kansas Association of Chiefs of Police, KHP, Kansas Sheriffs' Association, lobbyists, and Safe Kids to discuss legislative strategies to increase the seat belt fine and ensure revenue goes to support the expansion of SAFE into all Kansas high schools.
- Recognition of community and individual efforts to improve traffic safety, and more specifically OP, is provided through the Kansas Transportation Safety Conference's People Saving People Award which is typically awarded to three to five people per year,



and AAA Allied Group's Community Traffic Safety Awards program which offered awards to 32 recipients in 2015.

- KTSRO, KDOT LELs, and KHP PROs conduct outreach to law enforcement, schools, and community partners in rural communities with low belt use rates.
- KTSRO has developed materials in English and Spanish and takes a targeted approach to planning events and classes in communities that are in need of Spanish-speaking CPS Technicians.
- Many educational programs developed through KTSRO are designed to be supplied to local advocacy groups and implemented by law enforcement and educators within the community. With limited resources and personnel, this method of program delivery has proven to be cost-effective and provides for a wider reach.
- KDOT has a very strong relationship with KHP and other law enforcement agencies and the more urban agencies tend to be supportive and engaged in OP issues. There is a high number of certified CPS Technicians among Kansas law enforcement.
- KTSRO is engaged in employer outreach, conducts presentations for Kansas employers, attends conferences to meet with area businesses, and sends a monthly e-newsletter including a message for employers and content in English and Spanish for their employees. KTSRO provides employers with NHTSA materials and Network of Employers for Traffic Safety Drive Safely Work Week Materials for implementation within their organizations.
- Local health departments work with local law enforcement, Safe Kids Coalitions, hospitals, and the United Way to conduct car seat checks, fitting stations, and educational classes within the hospitals.
- KTSRO has engaged in faith-based outreach. Following participation in a meeting of area priests, staff worked with Kansas City Blessed Sacrament on two events where the priest blessed the car seats. This public display improved the receptiveness to the seats. Additionally, a member of another local church reported that their priest blesses cars as they are leaving the parking lot once per year in the spring and reminds people to buckle up.
- KDHE has a full-time epidemiologist on staff that prepares a report of Kansas emergency department, hospital discharge, and mortality data every two years. These data are shared with KDOT and safety partners for use in program planning and messaging.
- Safe Kids Kansas has 24 coalitions covering more than 70 percent of Kansas' child population. Safe Kids partners include Kansas Nurses Association, Parents as Teachers, sheriffs' offices, police departments, fire departments, State Farm, AAA Allied Group, KDOT, KTSRO, AAP, county health departments, emergency medical services, and others.

- Safe Kids Kansas has four priority areas with established committees, one of which is focused on CPS. The CPS committee identifies and implements projects to advance OP in the State including curriculum for child care providers and outreach to car dealership salespersons to assist them with CPS resources for families purchasing a new vehicle. The committee plans to reach out to Hispanic populations in the near future.
- Each year a mailing is sent to all school districts with kindergarten, first, and second graders and to all pediatricians across the State providing them with OP educational materials. This encourages pediatricians to incorporate OP discussions into well-visits. Additionally, a booster seat poster is provided for use in waiting rooms to reach older children once their well-visits have concluded.
- Approximately 17 law enforcement luncheons are conducted across the State each year reaching more than 2,000 officers. Although the training message changes annually, a seat belt theme is always included. Nearly half of the luncheons also include four hours of training which has increased participation from officers and command staff. They encourage law enforcement to invite their mayor, members of city council, judges, high school principals who do not have a SAFE program, and prosecutors to help gain buy-in on OP issues and programs.
- The Kansas Law Enforcement Training Center incorporates two hours of OP training into their academy training and invites KDOT to present on all available OP programs in the State three times per year.
- Safe Kids Kansas, State Farm, and KDOT support the *Bucks for Buckles* campaign. Program partners select a date and location for the event which has traditionally been at an intersection, a mall parking lot, a school, or a fast-food restaurant drive-thru. The events are a chance to engage media and catch people wearing their seat belts. If everyone in the vehicle is buckled, the driver receives a dollar. If they are not all buckled, they receive an educational flier which covers State law, the effectiveness of seat belts, and educational resources for more information.

## **6B. CHALLENGES**

- Kansas has a geographic area covering 105 counties with extensive rural areas and a large number of law enforcement agencies, local health departments, and schools making it difficult to provide sufficient OP resources statewide.
- With nearly half of the state comprised of low-population communities and numerous competing interests and priorities, it can be difficult to find regional champions who are committed to improving OP.

- Many safety advocates attribute low seat belt use rates to the culture of the State (e.g., independent, rural, and individual rights oriented). Changing the culture of a state or community, especially with regard to behavior, is challenging.
- The SAFE program relies heavily on fundraising and support from local businesses and private partners leaving many small communities, with limited resources, and little ability to sustain the program.
- There is limited follow-through from Executive Safety Council members to implement programs among their member organizations.
- Organizations and leaders representing diverse populations do not appear to be presently serving on the Executive Safety Council or the OP Emphasis Area Team.
- Limited information is available regarding why Kansas' non-belt users in rural communities and pick-up truck drivers across the State choose not to buckle up and what would make them want to do so. It is difficult to effectively reach non-belt users with OP messages without first understanding their attitudes, behaviors, and motivators.
- Although OP materials and brochures are available in Spanish, they have not been developed with the assistance of the Hispanic community keeping in mind the various cultures and delivery needs within those communities.
- The SAFE program has not been thoroughly and clearly evaluated to compare non-participating schools and participating schools to determine the short-term and long-term effectiveness of the program beyond student observation surveys.
- There are few campaigns and on-going educational programs to reach adult seat belt users and non-users in Kansas.

## **6C. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Establish local coalitions and provide meeting opportunities for occupant protection partners including local and state law enforcement, local health departments, fire and emergency medical services, AAA Allied Group, Safe Kids, transportation partners, medical professionals, child care professionals, Hispanic outreach organizations, employers, car dealerships, tribes, safety councils, insurance, private and non-profit groups, media, and volunteers. Work with them to:
  - implement and support local strategic highway safety plans;
  - provide opportunities to share ideas and resources;
  - coordinate efforts and build partnerships to solve local problems to increase belt use;
  - review citation and crash data; and

- identify community leaders who can become champions in the community for occupant protection.
- Develop and execute a program partnership strategy to collect, link, and disseminate information among and within partner organizations to maximize the impact of successful programs, improve communications and reach of occupant protection messaging. For example, provide resources and occupant protection employer outreach materials to members of the Executive Safety Council for implementation within their organizations.
- **Recruit champions from diverse communities to serve on the Executive Safety Council and the occupant protection Emphasis Area Team.**
- Develop and implement a formal strategy to conduct face-to-face meetings with key stakeholders in rural communities with low seat belt use rates, incorporating the roles of Law Enforcement Liaisons, the Kansas Traffic Safety Resource Office, and Kansas Highway Patrol's Public Resource Officers.
- Continue to pursue and secure long-term funding for the *Seatbelts Are For Everyone* program.
- Conduct a full-scale evaluation on the effectiveness of the *Seatbelts Are For Everyone* program to determine the short-term and long-term effectiveness of the program beyond student observation surveys and aggregated county observation surveys which may include collective efforts of the program combined with Graduated Driver Licensing and the effects of the primary seat belt law.
- Conduct focus groups and/or surveys to better understand non-belt users' attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors, as well as what will motivate them to buckle up. Develop campaigns and outreach materials and evaluate their effectiveness on behavioral change.
- Seek feedback from members of Hispanic communities on the current Spanish occupant protection materials for any needed revisions. Allow them to provide guidance and recommendations on culturally-appropriate delivery methods and assist with program and message delivery within those communities.
- **Implement new programs, campaigns, and partnerships that focus specifically on adult seat belt use, especially for high-risk non-belt users and pick-up truck drivers.**

## 7. DATA AND EVALUATION

### GUIDELINE:

*Each State should access and analyze reliable data sources for problem identification and program planning. Each State should conduct several different types of evaluation to effectively measure progress and to plan and implement new program strategies. Program management should:*

- *Conduct and publicize at least one statewide observational survey of seat belt and child safety seat use annually, making every effort to ensure that it meets current, applicable Federal guidelines;*
- *Maintain trend data on child safety seat use, seat belt use and air bag deployment in fatal crashes;*
- *Identify high-risk populations through observational usage surveys and crash statistics;*
- *Conduct and publicize statewide surveys of public knowledge and attitudes about occupant protection laws and systems;*
- *Obtain monthly or quarterly data from law enforcement agencies on the number of seat belt and child passenger safety citations and convictions;*
- *Evaluate the use of program resources and the effectiveness of existing general communication as well as special/high-risk population education programs;*
- *Obtain data on morbidity, as well as the estimated cost of crashes, and determine the relation of injury to seat belt use and non-use;*
- *Ensure that evaluation results are an integral part of new program planning and problem identification.*

### 7A. STRENGTHS

- The Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) seeks to improve its occupant protection (OP) program through evaluation, as demonstrated by the support of this assessment.
- Kansas conducts a statewide observational survey of seat belt use annually that meets current Federal guidelines. The survey is conducted by a highly qualified researcher who has directed the survey since 2002. Field data are collected by an experienced and well-trained core staff. The survey results are reported in an easily understood format geared toward the intended user-audience.
- Kansas conducts a child OP survey annually, which is directed by the same highly qualified researcher as the statewide seat belt use survey and staff. The survey is conducted at 398 locations throughout Kansas. Sites have been selected to obtain data for age brackets corresponding to census data population (e.g., child care centers, elementary, middle, and high schools).
- The sample sizes of both observational surveys are of sufficient size and geographic coverage to provide useful county level results, with breakouts by occupant and vehicle

characteristics. The child OP survey is designed to measure restraint use for birth to four, five to nine, 10-14, and 15-17 year-olds in 20 counties of the State. The surveys serve as a valuable resource to the traffic safety partners, as evidenced by their often-reported use in targeting and planning program efforts.

- A statewide survey of public knowledge and attitudes is conducted annually. The results are used to track trends in self-reported behavior and attitudes toward traffic safety issues, including OP. Additionally, results indicating public support for components of proposed legislation have been used in testimony for strengthening OP statutes.
- The repository for crash data was moved to KDOT's Traffic Safety Section last year. A new software program is being site tested now, and will be rolled out within a few weeks. The site will be accessible, with security access layers.
- Kansas has a trauma registry that tracks morbidity data, which is shared regionally. The cost of crashes is calculated.
- Data are considered essential as evidenced by the emphasis on reporting activity and by the use of data for problem identification in local areas.
- The *Seatbelts Are For Everyone* (SAFE) program undergoes continuing evaluation through participant school observational surveys, comparison with state level observational survey results, focused control-study design research, and measures of shifts in safety culture. The concept of using these various methods to measure and document the program's success is commendable.

## **7B. CHALLENGES**

- The overall OP program uses crash data and OP data to identify local-level traffic safety needs. These data are also used for state-level planning. However, a challenge is to create a cohesive, well-coordinated, comprehensive action plan with performance measures based on these data.
- Nighttime OP enforcement is occurring in Kansas. However, no evaluation other than activity measures has been implemented.
- Observational data point to several of the high-risk non-user groups. More information is needed regarding these groups. Limited focus group research has been conducted, but the benefits of more extensive focus group research are not being exploited.
- The State has identified male pick-up truck occupants as the segment with the lowest seat belt use. The 2015 seat belt use rate for passenger car drivers and front seat outboard occupants was estimated as 90 – 91 percent statewide. However, the 2015 use rate for male pick-up truck occupants was 75 percent statewide. Little was reported regarding extensive efforts to understand the belt use behavior of this group, or to evaluate efforts

specifically focused on this group.

- Only about half of Kansas' law enforcement agencies file crash reports electronically.
- There is no single repository for OP citation data for all agencies, nor is there a uniform citation. Conviction data are not collected or reported.
- At this time, there does not appear to be a linking of trauma data with the state crash data to provide seat belt use/non-use cost analysis.
- The most recent *2015 Safety Perception Survey* has limitations due to sample characteristics biased toward women and lacking respondents over age 49.
- No evidence was provided regarding outcome evaluation for projects.
- Because the SAFE program is highlighted as one to expand and is being used as justification for statutory funding through an increase in the fine for a seat belt violation, evaluation of the program's effectiveness should be rigorous and methodologically sound. A challenge of the current evaluation methodology measuring belt use change is that it is not conducted independent of the program. Further, the study design is limited to observation at program schools with limited control site comparisons.
- The 2015 State Highway Safety Plan (SHSP), Goal 4 is "to develop tactics to get all law enforcement officers...to use seat belts." Law enforcement belt use was reported in the *2015 Kansas Safety Belt Direct Observation Survey* at 95.5 percent. Anecdotal evidence is that seat belt use is much lower on road types that are underrepresented in the statewide survey. A better estimate of law enforcement belt use is needed to support this goal.
- Data analysts and evaluators provide information and explanation of the data available, but the use of their expertise for training, workshops, or conferences is limited. The Kansas Transportation Safety Conference does not currently have a data component.

## 7C. RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Conduct additional studies on pick-up truck occupants. Examine factors related to belt use behavior by pick-up truck drivers and passengers. Determine who, when, where, and why pick-up truck drivers and passengers in Kansas do not buckle up and what is most likely to affect their behavior. Use focus groups to develop and test messaging. Place a priority on funding projects that include a pick-up truck emphasis.**
- Supplement the statewide seat belt survey with either mini-surveys or with additional statewide sample data collection to provide useful data on law enforcement seat belt use.

- Require that the sample design for the next knowledge and attitude survey reasonably reflects the driving population of Kansas and that the survey methodology is designed to yield representative results.
- **Develop and use criteria to evaluate proposed projects that incorporate specific occupant protection performance and evaluation measures. Specify that grants will be reviewed both administratively and using outcome results.**
- **Conduct an independent evaluation of the effectiveness of the *Seatbelts Are For Everyone* (SAFE) program. Use an experimental versus control group study design of sufficient sample size to evaluate the current program statewide. Use research staff unaffiliated with the SAFE program.**
- Determine and make available the estimated cost of crashes, specifically providing the relationship of injury to seat belt use and non-use. Use this type of data for educating policymakers and stakeholders regarding the economic costs of a low seat belt use rate.
- **Conduct nighttime observational surveys at a minimum in areas of heavy enforcement for manageable amounts of time. Find solutions to safety issues for the observers so that the benefit of this evaluation data can be realized.**
- Promote electronic crash reporting to all law enforcement executives.
- Implement a statewide uniform citation system, preferably electronic, with a central repository.
- Review and resolve the court processing challenges that result in an inability to track occupant protection citations and convictions.
- Add a data component to the Kansas Transportation Safety Conference.



# AGENDA

## 2016 Kansas Occupant Protection Assessment

Ramada Hotel and Convention Center

Madison Ballroom

### Sunday, April 3

5:00 PM – 7:30 PM Get Acquainted Dinner with Traffic Safety Staff/Assessment Team

### Monday, April 4

8:30 AM – 9:30 AM

#### Welcome and Program Management Discussion

Mike King	Secretary of Transportation, KDOT
Chris Herrick	Director, Division of Planning and Development, KDOT
Mike Floberg	Bureau Chief, Transportation Safety and Technology, KDOT
Steven Buckley	State Highway Safety Engineer, KDOT
Chris Bortz	Manager, Traffic Safety Section, KDOT
Norraine Wingfield	Program Director, Kansas Traffic Safety Resource Office (KTSRO)

9:55 AM – 12:00 PM

#### Legislation, Regulation, and Policy

Capt. Josh Kellerman	Public & Governmental Affairs, Kansas Highway Patrol (KHP)
Karen Wittman	Kansas Traffic Safety Resource Prosecutor
Jim Hanni	Vice President, Public Affairs, AAA Allied Group
Joel Skelley	Director of Policy, KDOT

12:00 PM – 1:15 PM

Lunch

Madison Street West Diner

1:15 PM – 2:30 PM

#### Occupant Protection Use Among Minority Populations

Tina Ortiz	MCH Program, Seward County Health Dept
Amanda Horner	Traffic Safety Specialist – Minorities, Employer Programs, KTSRO

2:30 PM – 2:45 PM

Break – “Capitol City Favorites”

2:45 PM – 4:30 PM

#### The Medical Community’s Role in Occupant Protection

Danielle Marten	NE Kansas Emergency Preparedness Coordinator
John Drees, RN, BSN	Education & Learning Services, Lawrence Memorial Hospital
Teresa Taylor, RN, BSN, CEN, CPEN	Trauma Prevention Coordinator/Outreach Educator, Stormont Vail Health
Darlene Whitlock, RN, MSN	Board Member, KS Emergency Nurses Association

Lori Haskett	Director, Injury & Disability Programs, KS Dept of Health & Environment (KDHE)
Monica Gonzalez Ortiz	Health Families, Wyandotte County Health Dept

**Tuesday, April 5**

8:00 AM – 9:40 AM	<b>KS Law Enforcement’s Role in Occupant Protection</b> David Corp Terry Parks Bob Hamilton Troy Wells Sheriff Herman Jones	KDOT Law Enforcement Liaison, SE Kansas KDOT Law Enforcement Liaison, NW Kansas KDOT Law Enforcement Liaison, NE Kansas KDOT Law Enforcement Liaison, SW Kansas Shawnee County Sheriff, Governor-at-large, KS Peace Officers Association
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10:00 AM – 12:00 PM	<b>Law Enforcement, continued</b> Sheriff John Merchant Lt. Adam Winters Alvin Sowers	Brown County Sheriff Public & Governmental Affairs/PIO, KHP Program Manager, Kansas Law Enforcement Training Center
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12:00 PM – 1:00 PM	Lunch	Madison Street West Diner
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1:00 PM – 2:35 PM	<b>Child Passenger Safety</b> Technical Trooper Tod Hileman Cheri Sage Norraine Wingfield	CPST Instructor, Public Resource Officer, KHP SAFE KIDS Director, KDHE Program Director, CPSTI, KTSRO
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2:35 PM – 3:00 PM	Break – “The County Fair”	
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3:00 PM – 4:35 PM	<b>School-Based Occupant Protection Programs (SAFE)</b> Dave Corp Norraine Wingfield Tenille Kimberlin Tod Hileman	KDOT LEL Program Director, KTSRO Records Specialist, KTSRO CPSTI, Public Resource Officer, KHP KS Driver Safety and Education Assn.
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**Wednesday, April 6**

8:00 AM – 9:40 AM	<b>Program Evaluation</b> Steven Buckley Dan Schulte Doug Ballou  Angie Williams Tenille Kimberlin Alex Weibel	State Highway Safety Engineer, KDOT Director of Evaluation Services, DCCCA Managing Director, Blue Window, LLC – DOT Sports Media Contractor JNA Advertising – KDOT Media Contractor Records Specialist, KTSRO Traffic Safety Specialist, Communications/Social Media, KTSRO
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9:55 AM – 11:00 AM	<b>Public Information, Outreach and Education’s Role in Occupant Protection</b> Alex Weibel	Traffic Safety Specialist, Communications/Social Media, KTSRO
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Phyllis Marotta	Occupant Protection Education/Media, KDOT
Technical Trooper Don Hughes	Public Resource Officer, KHP
Technical Trooper Tod Hileman	NW KS Safety Coalition, Public Resource Officer, KHP
Aaron Bartlett	Senior Transportation Planner, Mid-America Regional Council
Ann Williamson	Public Information Officer, Office of Public Affairs, KDOT
Jim Hanni	Vice President, Public Affairs, AAA Allied Group
Kandace Trapp	Driver License Examiner Specialist, KS Dept of Revenue
Alice Rose	Driver License Examiner Specialist, KS Dept of Revenue

11:25 AM – 12:25 PM Any needed follow-up with BTST Staff

12:25 PM -1:00 PM Lunch Madison Street West Diner

1:00 PM – on **Assessment Team Report Development**

**Thursday, April 7**

8:00 AM – on **Assessment Team Report Development**

**Friday, April 8**

8:00 AM – 10:00 AM **Assessment Report Out** KDOT 6<sup>th</sup> Floor Conference Room

## **ASSESSMENT TEAM CREDENTIALS**

### **MARIAN ADAMS**

[maradams1@gmail.com](mailto:maradams1@gmail.com)

Marian Adams graduated from the Pennsylvania State Police Academy in 1986 and after various assignments became the Federal Grants Manager in 1995. She managed several programs during the 11 years in this position including: the Occupant Protection, Speed Enforcement, DUI Enforcement and Construction Zone Management Programs. Later in her career, she returned to supervising patrol Troopers.

In 1995, she was trained in Operation Kids, a child passenger safety course dedicated for law enforcement officers. In 1996, she implemented the PA State Police Child Passenger Safety (CPS) Program, the first for a State Police agency. In 1997, she participated in the first NHTSA Standardized Child Passenger Safety Pilot Program and in 1998, began teaching the NHTSA Standardized CPS Course, which she continues to this day.

Marian Adams received her Bachelor of Science degree from the Pennsylvania State University. She was awarded two Governor's Highway Safety Awards for her work in child passenger safety. Also, her Department won multiple IACP Chief's Challenge awards due to her work in organizing their submissions. She has received numerous certifications and recognition for her work in law enforcement. Also, she has taught many courses including: Standardized Field Sobriety (SFST), TASER, First-Aid, CPR/AED, Aerial Reconnaissance, and TRACS (software for report-writing). She served on the National Child Passenger Safety Board for one term.

After her retirement of 26 years with the PA State Police, she worked as the Assistant Director at the York College of Pennsylvania Campus Safety for three years.

**SUSAN N. BRYANT, M.A., M.B.A.**

[leaderservices@yahoo.com](mailto:leaderservices@yahoo.com)

Susan (Sue) Bryant is currently a consultant with her own company based in Iowa after almost thirty years of employment with the state of Texas. She retired as the director of the public transportation division of the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT). As division director, she managed 180 employees and an approximately \$150 million budget of federal and state grant programs for rural and small urban transportation systems, the state's medical transportation program, and public transportation planning. Prior to public transportation division director, she served for over ten years as the director of the Texas traffic safety program.

During her career with TxDOT, she also held the positions of assistant to the deputy director for field operations, highway safety planner and traffic safety program manager. She served as secretary and member of the board of the National Association of Governors' Highway Safety Representatives (now Governors Highway Safety Association) and member of the law enforcement committee for the Transportation Research Board.

She facilitated the strategic planning process for the Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA) and completed a "How to Manual" for occupant protection for children for GHSA. She headed a project in Texas to conduct community assessments and develop local strategic plans for underage drinking prevention. In addition, she served as community liaison for the Travis County Alliance for a Safe Community, an underage drinking prevention coalition based in Austin.

She has served on 42 highway safety program assessment teams for 28 states and territories. These have included assessments for impaired driving, occupant protection, and pedestrian/bike safety. She served on the team to update the impaired driving assessment tool and on the team to develop assessment team training.

She has taught high school, college, and adults and serves as an adjunct professor in communications. She has consulted for the media in major television markets, and also teaches management to state and local officials. She was named to "Who's Who of American Women," received the national Award for Public Service from the U.S. Department of Transportation, and is a two-time recipient of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) President's Modal Award for highway safety.

A Phi Beta Kappa graduate with Highest Honors in English from the University of Iowa, she holds a master's degree in communications from the University of Iowa and a master's degree in business administration from the University of Texas at Austin.

## **JENNIFER HUEBNER DAVIDSON**

[jennifer@thegillengroup.com](mailto:jennifer@thegillengroup.com)

Jennifer Davidson is a recognized traffic safety expert with more than 17 years of experience in program, campaign, and curriculum development driving successful national initiatives from conceptualization through local delivery.

As the former Manager of Traffic Safety Advocacy for AAA, Jennifer oversaw strategy development, curriculum development, marketing initiatives, training, programmatic efforts, and cultivated successful partnerships reaching more than 55 million viewers for several national safety initiatives. Her background is in public health education and marketing with areas of focus including child passenger safety, occupant protection, pet passenger safety, school safety programs, School Safety Patrol, bike safety, pedestrian safety, sharing the road with motorists, crash prevention and avoidance, impaired driving, driver training and education, senior driver safety, and Halloween safety.

Jennifer has authored educational materials including curriculum, national campaigns and has published contributions in several textbooks and the “The Expert’s Guide to the Baby Years”. She has been featured on national radio tours, the Today Show, in Parents Magazine, USA Today, Parade Magazine, Reader’s Digest, and various media outlets over the years educating motorists on the importance of safely securing their child passengers, sharing the road, and driving safely when school is back in session. In addition to media outreach, Jennifer also served as spokesperson at highway safety conferences, represented AAA on two national boards and managed/supported social media outreach. She is a certified child passenger safety lead instructor and mentor, served as Chair of the Curriculum Committee for the National Child Passenger Safety Board, and is a CarFit technician.

Prior to the start of her career with AAA, Jennifer managed Child Passenger Safety and NETS grants for Florida Department of Transportation. With more than 17 years of experience in highway safety, Jennifer brings a passion for traffic safety issues and a desire to see public education programs bring about behavioral change in individuals.

## **ROBERT TICER**

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Robert Ticer is a 27-year veteran law enforcement officer and is currently the Chief of Police in Avon, CO. Prior to his appointment as Chief, he completed 20 years of service with the Arizona Department of Public Safety (DPS), where he retired at the rank of Commander (Major). Chief Ticer completed assignments in the Highway Patrol Division, Media Relations Office, Director's Office, and Criminal Investigations Division. In 2003, Robert completed a one-year assignment at the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) in Washington, D.C. where he researched Law Enforcement Older Driver Programs and provided valuable expertise in the areas of Standardized Field Sobriety Testing, Drug Recognition, and Law Enforcement Phlebotomy.

Chief Ticer has published traffic safety research in *The Police Chief*, *National Sheriff's Association Sheriff Magazine*, and the *American Bar Association Senior Lawyers Division Publication*.

Robert holds a Bachelor of Science Degree and a Master's of Education Degree from Northern Arizona University, and is a past Adjunct Faculty Member at South Mountain Community College and the University of Phoenix. Robert is a graduate of the Northwestern University School of Police Staff and Command, and the FBI National Academy. Chief Ticer chairs the Colorado Task Force on Drunk and Impaired Driving and is a member of the International Association of Chiefs of Police Highway Safety Committee where he chairs the Technical Advisory Panel to the Drug Evaluation and Classification Program. Robert is the Past President of the Colorado Association of Chiefs of Police. Chief Ticer is committed to reducing traffic fatalities in the United States and has provided his expertise to NHTSA and multiple states as an assessor in Occupant Protection Programs.

## **KATIE WOMACK**

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Katie Womack is a Senior Research Scientist at the Texas A&M Transportation Institute and manager of the Behavioral Research Program at the Institute's Center for Transportation Safety. Ms. Womack has been a member of the Institute's full-time staff for 38 years. Her educational background includes a Master's degree in Sociology from Texas A&M University, and B.A. degrees in Sociology and Psychology from Texas A&M University--Commerce.

Ms. Womack's primary areas of interest are in survey research and traffic safety research. She has been the principal investigator or co-principal investigator on numerous research studies; including over 60 Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) funded projects, in addition to several National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) funded projects. Occupant restraint surveys and studies have been a focal point of Ms. Womack's work for more than 30 years. Ms. Womack is currently responsible for observational surveys to assess the safety belt and child restraint use rates for the state of Texas. She has previously served as the Data and Evaluation panel member for six NHTSA Occupant Protection Assessment teams.