Consistency and Uniformity of Crash Data Across the U.S.

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January 24, 2012 • TRB Session 547
International Benchmarking on Road Safety
Overview

• Overall U.S. Motor Vehicle Crash Statistics

• Consistency and Uniformity of Crash Data

• Distraction-Affected Crashes – An Example
Safety on America’s Roads

• 32,885 fatalities in 2010
  – Decline of 998 fatalities from 2009
  – Lowest number of fatalities since 1949

• 2.24 million people were injured in 2010
  – Increase of ~ 26,000 injured people from 2009
  – First increase since 1999
Crashes by Crash Severity, 2010

- 30,196 Fatal Crashes
- 1,546,000 Injury Crashes
- 3,843,000 Property-Damage-Only Crashes
- 5,419,000 Police-Reported Crashes
- ~16,400,000 Total Crashes

32,885 Fatalities

$230 Billion Societal Costs
Fatalities and Fatality Rates, 1949-2010

[Graph showing the number of fatalities and fatality rates per 100M VMT from 1949 to 2010.]
Injured People and Injury Rates, 1988-2010

- **Persons Injured**
- **Injury Rate per 100M VMT**
Collaborative Effort Towards Uniformity

Current Means
- Harmonization of National Databases
- Guidelines & Grants for States
- National Standards
- State Assessments
- Training

Future Means
- Electronic data collection
- Linkage
- Consolidated files
• Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS)
  – All fatal motor vehicle traffic crashes
  – Recoding of State police accident reports, death certificates and more

• General Estimates System (GES)
  – Nationally representative sample of all severity of crashes (about 55,000 per year)
  – Recoding from State police accident reports

• FARS/GES Harmonization underway
Guidelines and Grants to States

• Model Minimum Uniform Crash Criteria (MMUCC)
  – Recommendations on what data to collect
  – Collaborative effort of law enforcement, health, traffic, automobile industries and government (State & Federal)

• States earn grant funding from Federal Gov’t
  – By showing they are compliant with MMUCC
  – To support traffic safety programs in the States
Other Avenues To Uniformity

• Training for State data coders
• American National Standard Institute (ANSI) D.16
  – Definitions of motor vehicle traffic crash language
• Traffic Records Assessment Program
  – Peer review of State Traffic Records Systems
Traffic Records Systems

- CRASH
- DRIVER
- VEHICLE
- ROADWAY
- CITATION/ADJUDICATION
- EMS/INJURY
Outlook for Uniform Data

• Electronic data collection
  – Faster, more accurate data transfer
• Linkage
  – Increased user accessibility to multiple systems
• Consolidated data files
  – Increase efficiency in data analysis

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Continual and Inter-related Process to Develop Uniformity

- Meet all users’ needs
- Promote uniformity at the State level
- Unify data at the national level (to account for inconsistency between States)
- Incorporate emerging issues and technologies
Distracted Driving – A Relevant Example

• Issue on NHTSA radar screen for years
• Secretary LaHood’s focus of highway safety
• NHTSA tasked to review data and develop national picture of problem
  – Use existing data and data structure for reporting of distracted driving data
Distracted Driving – Initial Assessment

• Data collected differently on State’s police accident reports
  – Extraneous categories (reckless driving, fatigue)
  – No collection of distraction at all

• Data coded differently in FARS and GES
  – Need to create uniformity at national level
Distracted Driving – Promoting Uniformity

- Team discussion on definition, collection, analysis
- MMUCC changes
- FARS/GES harmonization
- Clarify distraction as a distinct activity
- Communication to States about importance of data collection
Thank You!

For further information or questions, please contact terry.shelton@dot.gov

Or visit www.nhtsa.gov