



**U.S. Department of
Transportation**

Office of the Secretary
of Transportation

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TO: Highway Traffic Safety Partners

FROM: Susan Gorcowski
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REF: Updated Communications Information for Calendar Year 2014

Greetings from Washington, DC! The year is already underway, and as we look back at the year 2012, we know that after several years of improvement, overall fatalities increased by 3.3 percent and injuries rose by 6.5 percent, marking the first such increases since 2005. Fortunately, early estimates for 2013 show an improvement – with fatal crashes falling 4.2 percent from the first six months of 2012.

However, even with the encouraging news from the preliminary report, we know we have a lot of work to do to continue to support the solid programs we have in place. It's a year to push forward – consistently and conscientiously to keep our safety messages in the public eye.

Two areas that will see a sharper focus this year are pedestrian safety, a priority with Secretary Foxx, and distracted driving. This month, we launched the first-ever national distracted driving enforcement and advertising campaign, that included \$8.5 million in advertising to support the thousands of law enforcement personnel nationwide who cracked down on motorists who text and drive. Modeled after our highly successful *Click it or Ticket* high visibility enforcement campaign, we have high expectations that this new campaign will resonate with the public and put motorists on notice that it is not okay to drive distracted, and if “U Drive. U Text. U Pay.” The national campaign builds on the success of two federally funded distracted driving state demonstration programs that took place in California and Delaware, *Phone in One Hand. Ticket in the Other*.

The week after our launch, YouTube tweeted out our ad and the Rhett and Link spot to their 41 million followers. This was non-sponsored and unpaid. Also, Time magazine posted an article and it has already generated 5 million impressions and growing quickly with one share per minute. The take away is that we are learning a lot about engagement from this effort and we are interested in seeing if we can replicate, or try to replicate, this kind of effort for belts and alcohol. It will be harder because they are more established campaigns but this is making us rethink creative strategies and our buys.

In the royal court of our media arsenal, television remains King, but digital media is now Queen, nudging radio for the media of choice for men ages 18 -34, the target of our major campaigns. For example, this year for *Click it or Ticket*, we allotted 28 percent of the media budget to digital, as compared to 22 percent last year. This trend is only beginning as we augment most campaigns with web-based banners and a presence on Facebook and Twitter.

The **2014 National Communications Calendar** remains an essential tool to help in your planning and where you'll find all the 2014 dates for the *Click it or Ticket* mobilization and *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over* enforcement crackdowns as well as those recognized awareness-building holidays that help bridge the gap between mobilizations and crackdowns. The calendar can easily be accessed at:
<http://www.nhtsa.gov/links/NHTSA2014CommCalendar.htm>

NHTSA continues to use **Social Media** communications channels to amplify our safety messaging. The NHTSA Facebook page continues its steady growth, still gaining an average of 500 followers per month. We currently have well over 9000 "Likes" on our page. We continue to manage and maintain the USDOTNHTSA YouTube channel, and continue to populate the SaferCarTV YouTube channel with all of our 5-Star Safety Ratings crash tests and other relevant videos. The @NHTSAgov Twitter account has grown exponentially this year, now boasting more than 19,000 followers and climbing steadily. We host Twitter chats and Tweetups throughout the year. Based on the strength of the NHTSAgov channel, we chose to close the NHTSADriver account and focus all of our efforts on NHTSAgov. For 2014, we will continue to build our base of followers on our existing channels, and explore the possibilities for engagement with other outlets. You will be seeing more suggested tweets and other tools you can use in your social media efforts on the Traffic Safety Marketing website – www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov

The **Traffic Safety Marketing (TSM)** website is continually being enhanced as your one-stop-shop for all your campaign and communications needs. All new campaign and promotional materials are posted well in advance of your local campaign efforts. TSM is a dynamic site and we are regularly reviewing it for improvement. This year, we will continue to enhance the interactive section launched last year for sharing success stories with each other and to have a dialogue about issues you are facing in your states. We encourage you to share your experience, challenges and successes as we continue to learn from each other about overcoming challenges and establishing and sustaining successful campaigns with measureable outcomes. In the meantime, continue to let us know your thoughts and ideas about which assets are useful, and how we can improve the site to better meet your traffic safety campaign needs. Please forward us your thoughts and suggestions at Feedback-TSM@dot.gov. We will continue to alert you to new campaign materials via TSM news alerts to subscribers, where all assets on the campaign can be found. www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov.

Earned Media is Critical to Campaign Success

I can't emphasize enough how earned media is such a critical component to a successful campaign. This key element to campaign success cannot be overlooked, and it does require work. Many worthy issues compete with us for limited time and space. To truly stand out, I encourage you to proactively establish and maintain good, ongoing relationships with key members of the local media – newspapers, local radio and TV stations, who will faithfully respond and report on issues that they routinely cover – whether that's our major campaigns – *Click it or Ticket*, and *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over, You Drive. You Text, You Pay.*, or other highway safety issues that may be of equal or more importance to a particular community. The days of sending a news release to a media outlet in the blind and calling it good is a sure way of not getting an event or release covered. If you've taken the time to develop a relationship with a "beat" reporter in your area, you're far ahead of the competition. To arm you with compelling stories, we are constantly working to keep our data and information fresh, to provide the "news hooks" that the media crave. We consistently mine data for new information to keep the campaigns fresh and newsworthy. As always, you can find fresh approaches and updates at your one-stop-shop - www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov.

For hands-on help to support your public relations efforts, this year we have teamed with the Transportation Safety Institute (TSI) to offer communications training suited to your individual needs. Whether you're looking for regional, state or simply local outreach ideas and tactics, TSI can assist you with a strategic plan and tactics that will ensure you get the best media product out on time, to the right audience, with the necessary follow-up. Our periodic webinars with the Governors Highway Safety Association are also a valuable tool to help you maximize great coverage for your key highway safety messages.

The Year Ahead

As we look forward to the remaining months of 2014, for the most part, we're staying the course in all our campaigns - impaired driving, belts, and heatstroke, a campaign that we initiated in 2012. With the addition of the new national distracted driving enforcement campaign, we're also in the planning stages for a new PSA campaign for child passenger safety, as well as new campaigns directed at tweens in the areas of impaired driving and belt use.

May

Our national *Click It or Ticket (CIOT)* high visibility law enforcement campaign continues to be one of our collective greatest successes. This year, back by popular demand, is "Friendly Cop," the ad that garnered much media support when it was first released a few years ago. Since talent rights expired, the spot has been re-shot to be used for your local and state media buys. The target audience for the new CIOT rural spot remains white males, 18-34 years of age, who continue to be the largest demographic that

does not wear seat belts. Of those who drive pickup trucks, seat belt use continues to be lower than for drivers of other vehicle types.

Motorcycle rider fatalities increased for the third consecutive year in 2012, up 7 percent over 2011 fatalities. I encourage you to take full advantage of campaign materials posted on TSM in recognition of May as **Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month**, to remind drivers of all vehicles to safely “share the road” with motorcyclists, and to be extra alert to keep motorcyclists safe.

Summer

This year will mark our third summer sponsoring a **Heatstroke Campaign**. *Where's Baby? Look Before you Lock*, will include a national buy on radio and internet. Our materials will be refreshed and we are working to engage new partners so the message is heard in many different places from many different sources. We will again be pursuing earned media opportunities for Acting Administrator Friedman and our partner, Safe Kids Worldwide.

Pedestrians: Fatalities among pedestrians increased for the third consecutive year, a 6.4 percent increase over 2011. The data showed the large majority of pedestrian deaths occurred in urban areas, at non-intersections, at night and many involved alcohol. Last August, Secretary Foxx announced a new set of tools to help communities combat the rising number of pedestrian deaths at a news conference in Washington, DC. As part of the new campaign, NHTSA is making \$2 million in pedestrian grants available to cities with the highest rate of pedestrian deaths, and along with the Federal Highway Administration, launched a one-stop-shop website www.nhtsadot.gov/everyoneisapedestrian.gov with safety tips and resources for local leaders, city planners, parents and others involved in improving pedestrian safety. We continue to work with the Office of the Secretary to build on this campaign and will post news on campaign plans, new assets, and local outreach resources on TSM as we get closer to the summer.

Impaired driving and impaired motorcycle riding remain two of our most serious and intractable problems. Deaths in crashes involving drunk driver's increased 4.6 percent in 2012, taking 10,322 lives compared to 9,865 in 2011. The majority of those crashes involved drivers with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .15 or higher – nearly double the legal limit.

The Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over. paid advertising and enforcement crackdown to support the August and December crackdowns will continue at the same funding levels, \$14M for the Labor Day crackdown and \$7M for the December push. We will be working more aggressively with gaming sites that our target audience frequent, in addition to the traditional advertising you have come to expect. Support from us will also include updated and enhanced law enforcement and consumer materials, including enforcement earned media materials, new creative posters, electronic banner ads, flash drives containing the Products for Enforcement Action Kit (PEAK), a microsite, and

sample social media Facebook and Twitter posts for both *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over* and *Buzzed Driving is Drunk Driving*.

The financial consequences of “buzzed driving” have proven a motivating social norming message, and this year we will continue to augment the campaign with an enhanced social media presence on Facebook and Twitter

Child Passenger Safety (CPS): Exciting news! Working with the Ad Council and the Weinstein Group, we are creating a new full suite of PSAs using footage from the upcoming Paddington film for the CPS campaign. Following in the footsteps of Cinderella, Chuggington and the CARS gang, Paddington Bear cares very much about safety in general. The film targets kids 5-12 and their families which is precisely our CPS target and a great tie-in for the campaign. The PSAs will be developed using our same strategic message of “the right seat” so the work will integrate into our larger communications. We plan to launch the campaign in late August, ahead of Child Passenger Safety Week, September 14-20.

NHTSA’s Safercar mobile app is now available for both Apple and Android devices, and provides up-to-date information on child seat installation locations. Users can quickly get driving directions to the nearest child seat inspection station and get assistance to properly install car seats. I encourage you to take advantage of promoting the app in your child passenger safety campaigns with the public and the media.

October-December

Last year, for **National Teen Driver Safety Week**, we launched a new parent education campaign, “*5 to Drive*”, that encourages parents to talk to their high school teens (14-18 year olds) about car safety and driving responsibly. The 5 topics are alcohol, seat belts, distraction, speeding, and driving with extra passengers. We continue to support this campaign through social media and our safety partners, and I encourage you to do the same to reach this very important time in a child’s life before bad driving behaviors develop into habits.

For Halloween, check www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov for new creative resources to promote *Buzzed Driving is Drunk Driving*, as well as new creative materials encouraging seat belt use during the busy Thanksgiving holiday travel period.

December is Drunk Driving Prevention Month and we are fortunate to own air-time the last two weeks of December to promote our enforcement message with a \$7M media buy reminding the public to *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over*, and capping the year with our annual TVB roadblock that engages local affiliations throughout the nation to air our Ad Council buzzed driving TV and radio spots. This is an excellent time of year to augment our efforts with drunk driving prevention messages. Project Roadblock is the largest annual station-supported initiative in support of a single PSA issue: drunk driving. This multiplatform, anti-drunk-driving campaign runs during one of the deadliest auto-

fatality weeks of the year, the holiday week of Dec. 26th, and culminates with a concentrated roadblock of on-air spots, texts and tweets on New Year's Eve. Project Roadblock continues to demonstrate the power of local broadcast television to influence, persuade and affect social behavior, and TV broadcasters' commitment to the safety of their communities. In 2012 alone, 864 stations (plus 517 digital sub channels), aired the *Buzzed Driving is Drunk Driving* campaign during this critical week, totaling over \$4 million in donated on-air time.

What Else is New?

Seat belt use among children ages 8-14 will be the focus of a new **Tween Belt Campaign** we expect to launch in January 2015. Exploratory research with parents of children has already been completed, and we are currently testing creative concepts. Our campaign objective is to elevate the importance of consistently good seatbelt behavior. Parents and caregivers will be encouraged to ensure their children are properly wearing their seatbelts at all times. We will keep you apprised of new developments on the campaign via TSM alerts.

In an effort to reach the underage audience, we conducted exploratory market research in August 2013 with young adults and their parents, to develop a campaign strategy and message for a new **Underage Drinking and Driving** campaign that we are working with the Ad Council to develop. We have more research to do before prime time to ensure the campaign message is clearly communicated and motivating, but we're targeting a launch in February 2015.

Spanish language materials are being developed for all our campaigns that resonate with the Spanish speaking community, not simply a direct translation from the English materials. When we are shooting new ads, we are "shadow" shooting the same English spot, with a storyboard and script that is specifically tailored to the Hispanic audience. We will keep you apprised of our new Spanish language assets on TSM.

There are a few developments on the vehicle side that will also heighten our communications this year. In February, we announced that all manufacturers must use a distinctive label on required mailings to vehicle owners that will allow consumers to quickly recognize and act upon recall notices mailed to their homes. We also expanded our suite of tools for recalls and complaints, including the addition of a mobile app for Android devices, which along with the app for iPhone users, allows consumer to search the agency's 5 Star Safety Ratings for vehicles by make and model, and subscribe to automatic notices about vehicle recalls. A new VIN lookup feature on safercar.gov is coming in August.

We are continuing to expand on last year's initiative of posting crash tests videos on YouTube in the SaferCarTV channel (<http://www.youtube.com/safercartv>) so prospective car buyers have the opportunity to see how the cars perform firsthand. Not only is this a great resource for consumers, but also for the online automotive community, who now

routinely embed these videos in feature online articles when crafting stories about a particular make/model vehicle.

Last April, we launched our new publication called *Safety in Numbers* that provides enriching information on a variety of highway safety topics, including older drivers, drunk pedestrians, school bus transportation, EMS, motorcyclists, bicyclists, and speeding, among others. A new edition is released monthly and takes a fresh perspective on existing data, while explaining why the topic is a problem, who is at risk, and what can be done about it. *Safety in Numbers* is distributed to the media via press release and promoted on social media. Downloadable copies are available on the www.nhtsa.dot.gov as well.

In summary, our communications goal is simple. Stay the course, keep on message, use every opportunity to advance our life-saving messages, visit www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov on a regular basis, and stay abreast of technology that will increasingly impact how we communicate with our target audiences.

Thank you again for all your hard work to make our highways safer for all drivers and passengers. We're in this together. And together, we can do great things to advance our important safety messages to the motoring public, and ultimately – save lives.



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UPDATED CAMPAIGN MANAGERS

Please do not hesitate to call or email any of our campaign managers whenever you have successful ideas you would like to share.

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SaferCar.gov

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