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Register Now for the 2005 Traffic Records Forum

July 31 - August 4, 2005 - Buffalo, New York

<http://www.atsip.org>



Over the past 30 years the **International Forum on Traffic Records and Highway Information Systems** (Traffic Records Forum, for short) has become internationally known as the annual meeting of traffic safety data professionals from all over the world. The annual attendance of over 500 safety professionals has drawn from federal, state, and local government agencies as well as the private sector. This five day conference is typically composed of over forty technical sessions and seven to fifteen training sessions where attendees are briefed on the latest developments and technologies to support transportation safety data systems. Attendees and presenters represent all aspects of the safety data environment, from data collection,

data systems management, data integration and linkage, and safety data analysis. The professions represented at the Forum include IT professionals, enforcement, engineering, injury control, and research. The 2005 Traffic Records Forum will build upon the successes of past years and expand upon the range and depth of traffic safety data issues to provide attendees with the most comprehensive range of training and networking possible.

If you are involved in planning, operation, or use of traffic crash, roadway, emergency medical systems, GIS, traffic enforcement, citation adjudication, driver license, vehicle registration, operations, other traffic safety data systems, we assure you that you will find ample content at the 2005 Forum. We welcome newcomers and hope that you will plan to attend!

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Association of Transportation Safety Information Professionals (ATSIP) Professional Certification

Larry Holstine, ATSIP Certification Committee
Jack Zogby, President - Transportation Safety Management Systems

Certification as a Transportation Safety Information Professional is a powerful demonstration of requisite knowledge, skill and ability in this specialized application of traffic safety. This certification process builds on and supports the practice we [ATSIP] have been involved in these past 30 years.

Certification is a voluntary process through which individuals are recognized for specialized knowledge and skill in a specified field of endeavor. The purpose of voluntary certification is to enhance public safety and welfare by providing assurance that the certification holder possesses the knowledge, skills and abilities required to provide services to the public at a professional level with a competence which will, in our case, safeguard life, health and property and protect the general public welfare.

This process is intended to provide the public with an important assurance that the holder of that certification has demonstrated acceptable knowledge and skill in basic traffic records areas. These include systems design and implementation, safety data classification and standards, safety analysis, the management of safety information systems, etc. Certification is designed to protect and promote the public safety and welfare; however, it must and does offer value to the certificate holder because obtaining certification may take time, hard work, and out-of-pocket costs. Keeping the certification valid requires the holder to pay attention to regularly upgrading knowledge and skills through continuing education.

What are the requirements for certification as a Transportation Safety Information Professional?

The primary requirement is that the applicant has been engaged in the practice of traffic record systems development, implementation, management and use at a significant level of responsibility. The applicant must pass an examination that attests to the skill level of the specialty field requested. The applicant must also have at least four years of professional practice in traffic records systems operations (advanced education may be substituted for some of this experience).

Who is a Transportation Safety Information Professional?

A Transportation Safety Information Professional is a person who applies a comprehensive knowledge of technology and scientific principles acquired through study and experience to the supervision of day-to-day operation of traffic record systems. Responsibilities often include the management of those operations, detection and analysis of problems and deficiencies, setting of priorities, assignment of resources and development of improvements in operations through systems design, systems re-engineering, standards development, database management, crash analysis, crash investigation, etc. The Transportation Safety Information Professional may carry out some, but not all, of the above duties or serve as a consultant to individuals with the above responsibilities.

How can I get started?

ATSIP Certification Committee members have been working on core questions for the exam for over a year and are now requesting question submissions from the ATSIP membership to accelerate the development of the exam. Each question will be validated through resource material by the ATSIP Certification Committee.

The functions being tested are as follows:

- Management
- System Design
- Standards
- Data Collection
- Data Management, Analysis, Interpretation/Use

For more information on becoming a member of ATSIP or to submit questions to the Certification Committee, please visit <http://www.atsip.org>. Please find additional information on NHTSA's Web Based Traffic Records System Training session at the 2005 Traffic Records Forum on the last page of this newsletter.

Determine the Incidence of Alcohol and Other Drugs in Fatally Injured Drivers and Pedestrians in Texas

Becky T. Davies, Research Scientist
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 Project Currently Funded by the Texas Department of Transportation:

More than 3,700 persons (including more than 2,200 drivers and approximately 400 pedestrians) are killed in traffic crashes each year in Texas. Based on officer-reported drinking as a factor in the crash, the Texas Department of Public Safety estimated that alcohol was involved in 1,047 (28%) of all traffic fatalities in 2000.¹ In contrast, the Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) estimated that 1,898 (50%) of the traffic fatalities in Texas in 2000 were alcohol-related. Yet, only 33% of fatally injured drivers and 21% of fatally injured pedestrians in Texas had a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) reported that year.

Driver and pedestrian BACs provide the only objective evidence of alcohol impairment at the time of the crash. The FARS database contains, among other things, the BAC and drug test results that are reported for drivers and pedestrians killed in each state and in the United States (USA) as a whole. Comparisons of Texas data with the USA and California reveal that a substantially larger proportion of the BAC and other drug test results from Texas were unavailable in 2000 (see below).

FARS (2000) FATALLY INJURED DRIVER BAC TEST RESULTS	USA	TEXAS	CALIFORNIA
BAC = 0.00	9,308 (36.5%)	282 (12.7%)	1,171 (59.8%)
BAC > 0.01	6,722 (26.4%)	445 (20.0%)	609 (31.0%)
Not Tested	5,121 (20.1%)	970 (43.6%)	164 (8.4%)
Unknown if Tested/Results Unknown	4,341 (17.0%)	528 (23.7%)	15 (0.8%)
Fatally Injured Drivers (2000)	25,492	2,225	1,959

FARS (2000) FATALLY INJURED PEDESTRIAN BAC TEST RESULTS	USA	TEXAS	CALIFORNIA
BAC = 0.00	1,532 (32.3%)	32 (7.8%)	341 (50.9%)
BAC > 0.01	1,185 (25.0%)	53 (12.9%)	210 (31.3%)
Not Tested	1,282 (27.1%)	241 (58.5%)	114 (17.0%)
Unknown if Tested/Results Unknown	740 (15.6%)	86 (20.8%)	5 (0.8%)
Fatally Injured Pedestrians (2000)	4,739	412	670

FARS (2000) FATALLY INJURED DRIVER DRUG RESULTS	USA	TEXAS	CALIFORNIA
No Drugs Reported	7,029 (27.6%)	33 (1.5%)	1,299 (66.3%)
Drugs Found (itemized list)	2,083 (8.2%)	50 (2.2%)	296 (15.1%)
Not Tested	9,549 (37.5%)	988 (44.4%)	343 (17.5%)
Unknown if Tested/Results Unknown	6,831 (26.7%)	1,154 (51.9%)	21 (1.1%)
Fatally Injured Drivers (2000)	25,492	2,225	1,959

¹ At the time of this writing, data for 2000 were the most current data available from the Texas Accident Database.

FARS (2000) FATALLY INJURED PEDESTRIAN DRUG RESULTS	USA	TEXAS	CALIFORNIA
No Drugs Reported	1,372 (29.0%)	3 (0.7%)	386 (57.6%)
Drugs Found (itemized list)	422 (8.9%)	9 (2.2%)	107 (16.0%)
Not Tested	1,754 (37.0%)	242 (58.7%)	173 (25.8%)
Unknown if Tested/Results Unknown	1,191 (25.1%)	158 (38.4)	4 (0.6%)
Fatally Injured Pedestrians (2000)	4,739	412	670

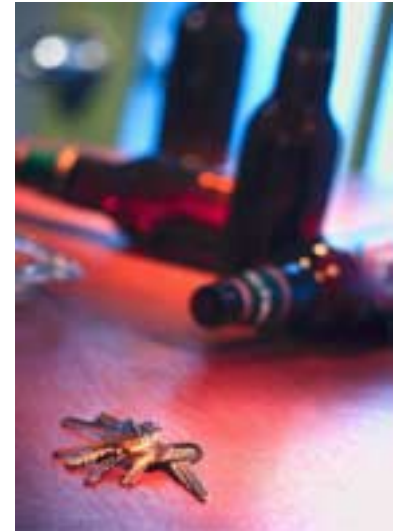
In the past 10 years, Texas has enacted several important laws (e.g., Zero Tolerance, 0.08 BAC) and provided training for hundreds of law enforcement officers as Drug Recognition Experts. Texas has also trained hundreds of officers in Standardized Field Sobriety Testing (SFSTs). However, the effectiveness of these measures in reducing the toll from driving under the influence of alcohol or other drugs cannot be reliably determined because so much of the alcohol and other drug information is not reported.

Without toxicological test results demonstrating that a driver or pedestrian had no alcohol (BAC=0.00); some alcohol (BAC=0.01-0.07); or an illegal amount of alcohol (BAC≥0.08) and/or other drugs in his system at the time of the crash, it is not possible to determine the effectiveness of legislation, enforcement efforts, and countermeasures implemented to combat impaired driving. Nor is it possible to identify high-risk groups or locations to target for future legislative, intervention and enforcement efforts. Analyses of more comprehensive, reliable data on the level of alcohol in fatally injured drivers and pedestrians across time are needed to determine trends in alcohol-related crashes and fatalities in Texas.

The Current Project:

Previous investigations by Texas Transportation Institute researchers have found that, even in those cases listed in the FARS and Texas Accident databases as “Not Tested” and “Unknown if Tested,” more than 95% of the drivers and pedestrians killed each year in Texas who were taken to a Medical Examiner (M.E.) Office were tested for alcohol and/or other drugs. A large percentage of these results are available from files at M.E. Offices since information on fatalities is not subject to privacy issues. The proposed study will use this information to accomplish the goals listed below.

1. The information contained in FARS for 2002 and 2003 (driver/pedestrian age, gender, county, date of crash) will be matched with the BAC and drug information in M.E. files.
2. A database of driver and pedestrian BACs and other drug results from 2002 and 2003 will be constructed. The driver and pedestrian BACs will be compared with data collected in previous projects (1997 and 1998) to determine the trend in alcohol-related crashes and fatalities in Texas.
3. The current project will provide for a continuation of efforts to improve the flow of data from M.E. offices to the Texas Accident Database. The principal investigator will work with officials in charge of the Crash Records Information System (CRIS) to ensure that M.E. offices report BAC and drug information for inclusion in CRIS when it becomes available.
4. The study will provide baseline information about drugs found in fatally injured drivers and pedestrians that can be used by the Drug Demand Reduction Advisory Committee to support its statewide strategy to reduce drug demand by 25% in the next 10 years.
5. A comprehensive report of the results will be available to state agencies and other institutions to assist in determining the need for additional legislation, enforcement efforts, and countermeasures to reduce the incidence of impaired driving in Texas.



When you're at the Forum.....

Visit us!

The NHTSA traffic records staff invites you to visit us in Booths 10 and 11 at the Traffic Records Forum. In Booth 11 we will have the NHTSA Traffic Records web site online and hope that you visit us to see what's new and soon to be released at the site. You will be able to check what NHTSA has on file about you as a traffic safety information professional and update your professional profile. In addition, the TSIS Newsletter and Traffic Records web staff will be on hand to demonstrate the various web resources that are available at the NHTSA TSIS web site, as well as several new applications that will be released about the time of the Traffic Records Forum. Stop by and check out the Traffic Safety Data Improvement Project Clearinghouse, the new Traffic Crash Content database, and take a preview look at several 'work-in-progress' products that are likely to become available in the second half of 2005.

Plan to attend these important sessions!

Federal Agency Update and US DOT TRCC

Tuesday Afternoon

Representatives from the U. S. Department of Transportation will present their current and future agency initiatives as it pertains to transportation safety. Also included in this session will be the introduction of the United States Department of Transportation's, Traffic Records Coordinating Committee (US DOT TRCC). This will be interactive discussion open for questions and answers.

Federal Funding for Traffic Records Data Collection and Analysis

Thursday morning

Representatives from the U.S. Department of Transportation and other Federal Agencies (TBA) will present a range of funding sources available to finance traffic safety data improvements. Such funding activities will not be limited to programs specifically designated as "data" or as "safety" funding. The panel will present funding that will be available for data improvements found in core programs and other established programs not normally thought of as "safety programs".

Native American Sessions

Tuesday and Wednesday

The purpose of the Native American Sessions is to look at the Data Improvement Initiatives within Tribal Traffic Records and discuss future initiatives. The Sessions will also address the impact of re-authorization on Tribal Traffic Records.

Web Based Traffic Records System Training

Monday

NHTSA has contracted with Data Nexus, Inc. to develop web-based training for the full range of traffic records systems. This training addresses traffic records in general and each of the major components and processes making up a comprehensive system. In addition to providing an opportunity to improve individual knowledge of traffic records systems, this training will be available to support ATSIP certification. NHTSA is hosting an interactive training session for the citation and adjudication, driver, and crash courses at the Traffic Records Forum. Training session participants will be solicited for feedback and expressions of interest to pilot test future courses.

NHTSA Web Resources

Wednesday

Over the past year NHTSA has begun a major expansion of its on-line resources for the traffic safety data community. This session will provide the attendees an update on the new content and discuss the need for greater input from States and the traffic safety data community.

Specific components to be discussed will include:

- The Traffic Safety Information System Newsletter, the subscription process, and article submission – in particular best practices activities
- State Traffic Records Systems Inventory and how this will be used to benchmark the status of state data systems and state data systems needs, how to verify and update information for your system(s)
- Crash / Citation / EMS Forms Catalogues, goals of the sites, and how to help us get current information
- State Crash Forms & Database Content Analysis, how to find out what we (TSASS) saw in your state, how to give us updates & corrections, and potential use of this analysis for crash system benchmarking
- State Safety Data Improvement Project Clearinghouse, how this may be used to support Section 412 activity, and how to search the clearinghouse
- Other web resources – current and planned.