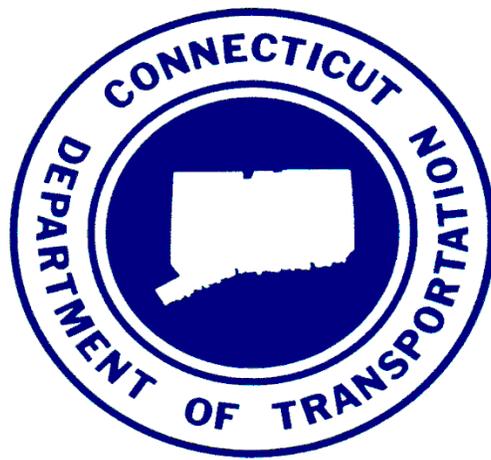


**STATE OF CONNECTICUT HIGHWAY SAFETY OFFICE
REPORT FOR
AASHTO STANDING COMMITTEE ON HIGHWAY
TRAFFIC SAFETY
MEETING**



APRIL 2016

CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION RECENT INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS

NHTSA Bi-Regional Seatbelt Summit

In March 2016, the State of Connecticut Highway Safety Office hosted a mega Seat Belt Summit in Windsor, Connecticut. The Summit was attended by over 120 individuals from nine States and two Territories. The activities were conducted over a three-day period and included traffic safety practitioners and advocates from the host state as well as the states of Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island and Vermont, as well as contingents from Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. In addition, representatives from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) also attended. The American Automobile Association (AAA), Northeast assisted Connecticut as a supporting sponsor.

There is a history of a close working relationship on joint conferences between NHTSA Regions 1 & 2 so it was suggested that a similar undertaking occur for the development of a seat belt summit. Two committees were formed, one for Logistics Planning and the second for Agenda Development. The agenda committee was comprised of representatives from states in the two regions, Regional staff and personnel from NHTSA Headquarters.

As the agenda was developed presenters, moderators and facilitators were identified. The summit's format was a mixed blend of panels, power points and facilitated group discussions. In the weeks prior to the summit, the States and Territories were provided with a six page "Seat Belt Profile" form. This form asked each jurisdiction to provide their own pertinent local data, information and observations describing their existing seat belt programs. Next, the States and Territories were provided with a Seat Belt Work Plan form and asked to develop a plan based on their local data, problem identification and other related information. The work plan format was similar to the Data Driven Approaches to Crime and Traffic Safety (DDACTS) Implementation Plan and included most of the DDACTS guiding principles.

What made this Summit unique was that it was a single focused topic gathering eleven separate jurisdictions into one location, networking and exchanging ideas, and insuring that each attendee would leave with tangible take-aways. During the last morning, States and Territories moved into separate breakout rooms and fine-tuned their jurisdiction's Work Plan. Each entity was then asked to conduct a structured report out. During these brief reporting sessions, each State and Territory detailed what they had learned and how they would implement these ideas upon returning home.

Connecticut Highway Safety Office Three-Wheeled Training Initiative

The Department of Transportation's (DOT) Connecticut Rider Education Program and the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) have partnered to address a growing segment of the population who choose to ride three-wheeled motorcycles.

Officials at DOT and DMV recognized the need for additional training services as new types of vehicles gained popularity and gaps existed in programs meant to train prospective riders. The agencies worked to develop language and policy to create a special endorsement on a driver's license to indicate the eligibility to operate a three-wheeled motorcycle only. Specifically, this cooperation resulted in the drafting and passage of Public Act 15-46 that created this new special license classification. This Public Act was signed by the governor on June 5, 2015.

Legislation passed in January of 2011 mandated that a state approved motorcycle-training course be successfully completed prior to the issuance of a motorcycle endorsement on a driver's license. Until recently, administrative and fiscal limitations on the training program made it only possible to obtain this endorsement while training on a two-wheeled motorcycle. The ability to operate a traditional two-wheeled motorcycle is one that only those who are physically able can accomplish. This leaves out a large segment of the population who can't operate a two-wheeled motorcycle due to physical limitation.

The cooperative effort between agencies resulted in updates to state policy that will allow for a participant to take the Connecticut Rider Education Program course on a three-wheeled motorcycle and receive an endorsement for three-wheeled motorcycles only. Participants who take the course on two-wheeled motorcycles will continue to receive the traditional motorcycle endorsement; allowing them to operate either a two- or a three-wheeled motorcycle. Training courses will be provided at Gateway Community College in North Haven and are taught by highly qualified instructors. Students will participate in classes using the Evergreen Safety Council's three-wheeled training curriculum. This training program is the only curriculum of its kind and incorporates sidecars, trikes and spiders into basic rider education. Participants will be encouraged to use their own vehicles as long as they are registered and insured, though training vehicles will be provided to students who do not have a vehicle.

This program requirement does not apply to the class of motorcycles known as "autocycles" that was also created through Public Act 15-46. Autocycles have three wheels, but unlike trikes, they have steering wheels and foot pedals and are fully or partially enclosed. An autocycle rider is not required to have an endorsement on his or her license.

RUFF RUFFMAN Distracted Driving Program

This initiative was a multimedia project and so the majority of the time and effort has been spent on researching, devising and producing a robust array of materials. Each has been iterated with feedback from our funders and advisers in the Connecticut Highway Safety Department of Transportation and with PBS, through whose platforms much of this material will be distributed.

Work was done with formative research conducted by students in the Masters program at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. They helped steer us towards an approach that we have embraced, one in which the child can be something of a co-pilot who helps remove distractions from the driver such as handling the phone.

Scripts were created, edited and then recorded at studios in New York with Jim Conroy as voice talent for Ruff Ruffman (and his relatives). These recordings were directed from Boston and then edited as preparation for our animators Flaming Medusa in Cincinnati. Once animated, post production fixes, music and closed captions were created in Boston. We created the main 3-minute animation, an original song, and eight PSAs (four at 30 seconds, four at 45 seconds).

A key approach in developing a digital game was to offer the player a chance to keep the driver's thoughts clear and focused, leaving the passenger to address any distractions. Using the visual texting language of emojis, game pieces are created where the player must assign to either the driver's thoughts or the passenger's. The player has to keep the driver focused on traffic, pedestrians, weather etc. and so must assign these icons to Ruff's thought bubbles and assign the rest (food, inconsequential events, media use etc.) to Ruff's nephew Glen, who is represents the child/player.

The game introduces feedback to explain why a driver might need, for example, to be aware of a ball or dog in the road, or why the driver should not be wearing headphones. The game also has typical gaming features such as a timer, rounds of increasing difficulty, fun feedback, sound effects, and an overall goal (of completing a family photo album.)

We also chose to make this our first ever responsively designed game, one in which the game's separate components flow and conform to the size and shape of a desktop or mobile browser. This creates as seamless an experience for a player on a tablet, phone or laptop as possible. The game responds to both mouse input and touchscreen. Sound effects include an arcade---game style version of the distracted driving song we created. The website includes not only the videos but a rich set of complementary material for children and adults. These include:

- A quiz where Ruff asks questions about driving and offers appropriate feedback
- A pledge for families to print and sign
- Real letters from kids about their own distracted driving experiences
- A guide for parents explaining what's in the video
- Background information for parents about the hazards of distracted driving