

State of North Carolina 2015 SCOHTS Safety Report

I. ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) is committed to measuring and improving performance. The department’s [Organizational Performance Dashboard](#) serves as an indicator of how well we are meeting our mission and goals. One of our performance measures for making our transportation network safer is the real-time updating of our state’s fatality rate. The fatality rate is defined as the total number of statewide fatalities on N.C. roads per 100 million vehicle miles traveled for the calendar year to date. The table below shows the actual numbers from calendar year 2000 through February 29, 2016.

Year	Crashes	Fatalities	Injuries	VMT (100MVM) ¹	Crash Rate	Fatality Rate	Injury Rate
2000	231124	1560	141159	892.46	258.97	1.75	150.67
2001	225320	1533	134115	915.71	246.06	1.67	146.46
2002	234234	1579	133360	936.86	250.02	1.69	142.35
2003	248021	1562	134709	937.63	264.52	1.67	143.67
2004	248510	1579	133153	956.27	259.87	1.65	139.24
2005	233980	1552	124135	1008.61	231.98	1.54	123.08
2006	235976	1560	120410	1016.48	232.15	1.53	118.46
2007	241968	1704	120123	1035.98	233.56	1.64	115.95
2008	235422	1466	112614	1014.63	232.03	1.44	110.99
2009	231177	1346	109908	1025.9	225.34	1.31	107.13
2010	237565	1329	109463	1023.85	232.03	1.3	106.91
2011	233197	1225	107126	1037.38	224.79	1.18	103.27
2012	238705	1275	110416	1044.65	228.5	1.22	105.7
2013	247157	1283	108876	1051.44	235.07	1.22	103.55
2014	252435	1283	110621	1080.4	233.65	1.19	102.39
2015	280155	1376	123564	1119.8	250.18	1.23	110.35
2016	46983	173	18671	160.52	292.69	1.08	116.32

¹ VMT=Vehicle Miles Traveled, MVM=Million Vehicle Miles. * Total Year to Date

In 2003, the [North Carolina Executive Committee for Highway Safety \(ECHS\)](#) was formed as a mechanism for highway safety leaders to collectively identify and address highway safety issues. The initiatives of the ECHS have helped to move the statewide fatality rate in the desired directional trend, but there is still work to do.

II. SAFETY INITIATIVES

2014 NORTH CAROLINA STRATEGIC HIGHWAY SAFETY PLAN (SHSP)

North Carolina is a Vision Zero State – even one fatality is too many on our roadways. Our completed SHSP articulates the way forward to achieve Vision Zero. The Plan’s vision, mission and goals guide the development and implementation of strategies and actions to achieve Vision Zero. The Plan’s [website](#) provides public access to information about the 2014 North Carolina SHSP, as well as a way to quickly view progress toward the goals stated within the plan.

HIGHWAY SAFETY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (HSIP)

The purpose of the [North Carolina Highway Safety Improvement Program \(HSIP\)](#) is to provide a continuous and systematic procedure that identifies and reviews specific traffic safety concerns throughout the state. The 2015 HSIP identified the following totals of potentially hazardous locations:

- 1,819 potentially hazardous intersection locations were identified.
- 491 potentially hazardous section locations were identified.
- 127 potentially hazardous bicycle/pedestrian intersection locations were identified.

After reviewing the potentially hazardous locations found through the HSIP all safety projects are submitted to North Carolina's Safety Oversight Committee, which was established to help select projects to receive Spot Safety Program funding. For calendar year 2015, 87 spot safety projects were completed at an estimated cost of \$9.6 million.

ROADWAY DEPARTURE SYSTEMIC SAFETY PLAN

North Carolina's Roadway Departure Systemic Safety Plan currently includes three primary treatments and efforts: 1) Implementation of Safety Edge, 2) a large pilot project to determine the benefits on wide pavement markings on 2-lane rural roadways, and 3) enhanced signing for curves. Safety Edge has been implemented and is now a standard in North Carolina. The pilot project for the wider pavement marking is in the implementation stage and the enhanced signing for curves is currently being reviewed for potential countermeasures with implementation to be determined at a future date.

SAFETY EDGE

In an effort to reduce the number of lane departure crashes throughout our state, the Safety Edge pilot project was initiated in 2008. In North Carolina, Safety Edge was initially implemented on 79 sections (160 miles) throughout the state. The pilot projects allowed us to prove the constructability and establish an implementation methodology. In the March 2013 letting, NCDOT implemented the use of the Shoulder Wedge (i.e. Safety Edge) on all Division and Central let resurfacing projects. The Shoulder Wedge can contribute to the reduction of lane departure crashes. Currently, crash data is being examined by FHWA on Shoulder Wedge sites from a National perspective. This analysis will include all sites from North Carolina. The NCDOT Traffic Safety Unit has reviewed the preliminary data for all NC sites with the Shoulder Wedge installed and the data shows a general downward trend in lane departure crashes in subsequent years after installation.

WIDE PAVEMENT MARKINGS

The NCDOT Traffic Safety Unit is initiating a pilot project to study and evaluate the effect of wider pavement markings on 2-lane rural roadways in North Carolina. This effort will apply new 4 inch and 6 inch center and edge markings, with and without Highly Reflective Elements, on roughly 400 miles of 2-lane rural roadways across the state. The purpose of the project is to determine if significant reductions in single vehicle lane departure crashes can be realized. If successful, this low cost application could be used systemically across the state. We are currently in the implementation phase with the majority of the markings to be installed between the summer of 2014-fall of 2016.

III. BEHAVIORAL EFFORTS

In North Carolina, the Governor's Highway Safety Program (GHSP) takes the lead on programs and projects seeking to change behavior. Examples of programs and initiatives implemented by the GHSP include:

CLICK IT OR TICKET

In North Carolina and across America, millions of deaths and injuries occur because people don't use safety belts and child passenger safety seats. Research shows that appeals to "do the right thing" don't work for people who don't use safety belts. What gets them to buckle up is high visibility enforcement. That means checkpoints and traffic tickets for drivers not using seat belts.

North Carolina's ["Click It or Ticket"](#) program began in 1993 to increase seat belt and child safety use rates through stepped-up enforcement of the state's seat belt law. Nearly every law enforcement agency in the state participates in "Click It or Ticket," one of the most intensive law enforcement efforts of its kind. Due to its success, North Carolina's "Click It or Ticket" program now serves as a national model for an enforcement and education campaign of the same name operated by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

BOOZE IT & LOSE IT

The ["Booze It & Lose It"](#) campaign zeros in on drunken drivers with innovative education and extensive enforcement of DWI laws. Sobriety checkpoints are continually set up in all North Carolina counties as part of the state's highly effective anti-drunk driving campaign.

Law officers use six mobile breath-alcohol testing units, better known as BATMobiles, to increase the efficiency of on-site DWI processing. Each BATMobile is equipped with workstations for Intoxilyzer 5000 breath test instruments, cellphones, computers, officer workstations, a magistrate's work area, a lavatory, DWI checkpoint signs, traffic cones, traffic vests, search batons, screening tests devices and all other necessary equipment and supplies for processing DWI suspects.

OBEY THE SIGN OR PAY THE FINE

Studies continue to show that speed is a major cause of injury and fatality on North Carolina roadways. In 2015 alone, there were 322 speed-related fatalities and 10,658 speed-related injuries. Speeding was a contributing factor in 23 percent of all fatal crashes in North Carolina.

Many Americans believe they won't be ticketed if they drive within a "buffer zone" above the posted speed limit. But now, law enforcement will be targeting and ticketing speeding drivers. When it comes to speeding: Obey the Sign or Pay the Fine – the posted speed limit IS THE LAW.

WATCH FOR ME NC

[Watch For Me NC](#) is a comprehensive statewide safety and awareness campaign geared toward bicycle and pedestrian safety, education and enforcement. Combining multimedia with public engagement, Watch For Me NC promotes safety messages at local events, followed by targeted enforcement in areas with heightened risk of crashes involving bicyclists and pedestrians. A key component of the program includes the training of law enforcement officers on existing laws and how to enforce them.

BIKESAFE NORTH CAROLINA

[BikeSafe North Carolina](#) is a partnership with the Governor's Highway Safety Program and the N.C. State Highway Patrol. The program invites motorcyclists to participate in Rider Skills Days that offer assessment on present skills and advice to help make their riding in North Carolina safer and more enjoyable. In addition to professional riding techniques, topics include the system of motorcycle control, collision causation factors and security. The Rider Skills Days are conducted during the week and at weekends by highly qualified police. Trainings are at the Highway Patrol driving facility in Raleigh and other local law enforcement agencies across the state. The pre-booked days include both classroom based advice and on-road ride-outs.