



## SOUTH CENTRAL SAFE COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP TRAFFIC SAFETY SUMMIT 2013

Wednesday, May 15, 2013, 8:00 AM to 2:30 PM

Nicholls State University, Thibodaux, LA

*(Cotillion Ballroom, Plantation Suite and Carnival Room of the NSU Student Union Building)*

### Minutes and Recommendations

**In Attendance:** 109 Safety Partners and 12 high school students  
See attached registration sheets for full list of attendees

#### OPENING PLENARY

**Intro of Moderator and Call to Order** - Rudynah Capone greeted everybody at 8:05 AM and introduced this year's moderator, Captain Darrin Naquin, LSP Troop C Commander and the new Chairman of SCSCP.

#### Prayer, Presentation of Colors, Star-Spangled Banner and Pledge of Allegiance

Capt. Naquin then called the opening session to order, followed by the Opening Prayer by **Troop C Chaplain Bruce Coleman**. The officers from **Thibodaux Police Department and Lafourche Parish Sheriff's Office** (Lt. John Sutton Jr., Corporal Tim Lipscomb, Lt. Michael Beck and Deputy Floyd Jennings) did the Presentation of Colors. **Katy Nicole Rousse**, a 14-year-old talent from St. James Parish, sang the Star-Spangled Banner which impressed everyone in the ballroom. **Captain Ray Traigle** led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Welcome Remarks** - SCPDC CEO Kevin Belanger formally welcomed the attendees and expressed his gratitude to everybody for their participation.

On behalf of LADOTD Secretary Sherri LeBas, **Dan Magri** gave a presentation on "Implementing Safety Infrastructure in a Systemic Way". He shared that with the MAP-21 in place, federal funding for safety projects extends through September 30, 2014. It also increases federal share for critical freight projects. Although funding levels for Louisiana will remain roughly the same, the safety portion for MAP-21 is more than doubled. More infrastructure projects are anticipated to be done. He also shared some of the successes and future plans for LADOTD's safety initiatives that include Destination Zero Deaths (DZD), cable barriers, roundabouts, enhanced mile markers and ITS traffic cameras and signs. He emphasized that DZD brings all partners to work together towards reduction of fatalities by 50% by 2030. There has been 32% reduction in fatal crashes since 2008. Over 80 miles of cable barriers have been installed and over 180 miles planned for I-20 corridor this year as well as along all interstate highways over next 5 years. As for roundabouts, more than \$10 million has been invested to develop them—18 are currently built while 45 are under development. About \$1.4 million has been invested for enhanced mile markers along 900 miles on I-10, I-12, I-20 and I-49. As for ITS, 40 new traffic cameras and 12 dynamic message signs have been implemented, which sums up to 290 cameras and 73 signs across the state.

Mr. Magri also shared an overview about the Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP). The target is to reduce the fatalities from 993 in 2007 to 483 by 2030. DOTD also hopes to establish additional regional coalitions to help implement projects at the local level. Five are currently up and running.

Capt. Naquin reiterated Dan's note on how everybody comes together towards destination zero and then introduced the next presenter, Cory Hutchinson, Associate Director of the Highway Safety Research Group.

**Cory Hutchinson** presented a snapshot on crash data in the South Central Region to help support the data-driven SHSP activities in the region. He did a walk-through around LSU's crash data website and SHSP dashboard to show how agencies can pull out information depending on Parish and specific data they're looking at. He showed the crash data Info-graphics from 2009 to 2012 that his team has recently put together. He started by showing a comparison of statewide and parish-by-parish population of licensed drivers as well as trends of fatalities and serious injuries. He went over each of the emphasis areas in the SHSP (alcohol, seatbelt, young drivers and infrastructure), which are also the same areas outlined in SCSCP's South Central Regional Transportation Safety Plan (SCRTSP). He also included DWI reports from 2008 to 2011 for the whole region and by Parish, as well as pedestrian and bicycle fatalities. In 2012, there were 11 pedestrian and 6 bicycle fatalities in the region, which appeared to have increased from 5 and 2 fatalities, respectively in 2011. The full presentation is viewable on <http://www.scpdc.org/wp-content/uploads/southcentraldata.pdf> *Recommendations: Share the data info-graphics to all partners of the region. Use these data for further action planning & grant application efforts.*

**Don Redman**, AAA's public affairs specialist, gave a talk on teen driver safety agenda. The biggest concern for young drivers is distractions such as usage of cellphones behind the wheel, speeding and inexperience. AAA has been working on a national campaign to ban texting behind the wheel in all 50 states. Less legislation and more parental involvement is what's needed if we want have a significant impact on the lives of the youth drivers. Parents have to supervise their children when they're still learning to drive. Although the state mandates 50 hours, AAA recommends 100 hours of supervised driving. What's happening is that unfortunately, parents are allowing their kids to learn on their own which reflect on the crash numbers.

The deadliest time for young drivers is between 3:00 and 6:00 PM. Having a parent-teen contract for safety driving would be a good way to start. Another issue is that some parents have failed to set as good examples. The good news is that 80% of the parents realize the inherent of distracted driving, but unfortunately 20% are engaged in various distractions. To sum it up, there's so much legislation that can be done but it really comes to us hammering and working with parents that they have a greater obligation. Parents should dedicate some time for driver education with their children. Experience will make them better drivers. *Recommendation: Heighten involvement from parents, educators and students in implementing teen safety educational activities. Try inviting PTA officers, 4H Group and Student Council reps to the SCSCP meeting.*

**DA Ricky Rabin**, the 23<sup>rd</sup> Judicial District Attorney, spoke about "Processing Impaired Drivers and Overcoming Prosecution Loopholes". The loopholes revolve around the ways that we lose DWI cases, why a judge dismisses a case, and why a jury finds someone not guilty, etc. These loopholes all boil down to three areas: no BAC, the challenge of impairment and the level of offenses.

There are two general reasons why cops stop a vehicle: traffic violation or suspicion of DWI. The more information that is given to prosecutors about the DWI case—from the moment the driver was pulled over to getting them arrested and processed—the better the prosecutor and jury can determine the verdict. It's very critical to know who the operator of the vehicle is; don't assume. Surveillance cameras have aided in determining this. Observations about the vehicle can also result to some loopholes. When the driver is not under the influence, it comes as a loophole. Not having evidence also gives a challenge in prosecution. It's important that witnesses and officers are able to articulate BAC/impairment evidences to the jury and judge. It's also critical that tests are administered appropriately and that results are presented to the jury well.

Remember that any deviation from the test would lose such a test. Another big area of DWI defense is the predicates—how the person gets charged and tried, and what offense he is on, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> offense and so on. It's necessary to refer to the minutes from prior DWI's, if any, to come to a fair decision. Documentation is critical. He expressed his appreciation to all partners who've done a lot of work in addressing the DWI issue. *Recommendation: Plan to conduct a regional meeting among DA's and judges to address some prosecution and conviction issues surround DWI. Check when ARIDE training for law enforcement officers is possible.*

**Breakout Session 1 @ 10:00-10:45 AM: “DUI Apprehension, Investigation and Testifying Techniques”**  
(Plantation Suite) Speaker: Clifford Strider, Gaming Division Director, LA Department of Justice

Cassie Parker introduced the speaker, Clifford Strider III.

Mr. Strider gave a few thoughts on testifying and making the best DUI case in the courtroom. He provided some examples of cases and scenarios. He stressed that there’s going to be a police officer’s testimony in every criminal case. DWI reports are subject for scrutiny by the defense lawyer.

He advised officers to put everything in the report but should be aware that no one will ever know what’s important a 100%. Know your audience before testifying.

Mr. Strider shared more tips: In the courtroom, communicate well and maintain eye contact with the jurors. It’s all about communication and your ability to present what happened, including the conditions of the vehicle when the event happened. Credibility is everything—the jury is going to challenge your honesty every chance they get. Confidence also helps. You want the jury to think you are confident and prepared to testify. If you make a mistake in investigation, it’s okay to own up to it.

He added that when you testify, tell the true story. Always tell the truth when answering questions no matter what. Dress appropriately in court as it establishes professionalism and credibility. Don’t take things personally on the stand. Everything you say is recorded. Make sure you use words that you enunciate, not “uhuh” for instance, but YES or NO. Another important thing is to practice the team concept. Recommendation: Conduct an in-depth workshop on this topic. Bring in some DA participation in SCSCP meetings.

**Breakout Session 2@ 10:00-10:45 AM: Refresher Guide and New Techniques for Child Passenger Safety Technicians (Carnival Room)** Speaker: Bridget Gardner, RN, Program Director, LA Passenger Safety Task Force

Rudynah Capone introduced the speaker, Bridget Gardner.

Ms. Gardner provided updates on what’s new in CPS. She showed some latest car seat types that go on different vehicles. Multiple children will now fit properly side by side. It’s important to have the product that accommodates the child. The recommendations from NHTSA are different from what the law suggests. Obviously, the law needs an upgrade if we want to meet the safety standards.

The LATCH Manual 2013 is also now released. She went over the different LATCH requirements for various vehicles as well as variations in how LATCH is accessible and visible. She showed sample photos. Law enforcement officers and technicians should have the ability to educate people and have them make the right decision.

As of February 2012, NHTSA ruling requires that labels on child restraints to state an upper weight limit for use of the lower attachment system by 2014. Another way to limit head excursion is to use the seatbelt from the row behind to attach the tether, if allowed by manufacturer. Only 12 manufacturers do; 13 do not.

Ms. Gardner also stated that if the car seat and vehicle weight limits are different, then follow the one that is lower. She showed the child-weight limit cheat sheet that would serve as a guide to technicians and caregivers alike. She noted that securing the child restraint by LATCH doesn’t apply to booster seats because it’s not going to secure the child well to the vehicle. Recommendations: Continue expanding CPS efforts in the region. Plan to conduct a booster seat event. Conduct a forum among CPS techs sometime this year.

### **Breakout Session 3 @ 11:00-11:45 AM: On Seatbelt Use: How Can Enhanced Seatbelt Enforcement and Education Programs Take us from 79 to 89 Percent Use? (Plantation Suite)**

Speaker: Dortha Cummins, Occupant Protection Program Coordinator, LHSC

Cassie Parker introduced the speaker, Dortha Cummins.

Ms. Cummins showed some data on seatbelt use percentage: LA is at 79.3% as compared to 86% nationwide. LA has a primary seatbelt law, which means we can get pulled over for not wearing a seatbelt. Other primary enforcement states are around 90%, so what's up with LA not reaching it? She reasoned out that our fine is very low at \$25. For Houma region, we're at 84% seatbelt use. There's a lot of nighttime enforcement in this area which is key. Data tell us that people aren't wearing belts at night. Pickup truck drivers—primarily males—are the lowest users of seatbelt for every region. LHSC recently conducted a nighttime observational survey which revealed that usage is 11% lower than 86%. Unrestrained fatalities are decreasing. There were only 244 fatalities and 1,388 serious injuries in 2012, which is actually below our SHSP benchmarks.

Ms. Cummins shared some Occupant Protection (OP) strategies that can help us increase seatbelt use rate: (1) Funding year-long contracts to law enforcement agencies to support the Click it or Ticket (CIOT) mobilization. (2) Work with regional coalitions and provide them with data that direct their efforts; (3) Encourage nighttime enforcement (Troop C is very instrumental in doing this); and (4) Continue supporting Child passenger safety efforts across the state through the LA Passenger Safety Task Force. The statewide Occupant Protection team is also looking at back seat laws, Employer Safety Program (like Wal-Mart's Committed to Safety) and health sector involvement. Recommendation: Continue daytime and nighttime enforcement. Increase nighttime checks. Continue participating in the CIOT campaign. Increase awareness efforts targeting the young drivers. Bring more health & medical partners to the table. Contact hospitals and fire departments and invite to the next meeting.

### **Breakout Session 4 @ 11:00-11:45 AM: Innovations in Road Safety and Their Effectiveness—J-Turns, Roundabouts, Safety Edges, etc. (Carnival Room)** Speaker: April Renard, Safety Engineer, LADOTD

Joshua Manning introduced the speaker, April Renard.

Ms. Renard gave an overview of the SHSP and announced that they're looking at adding incident management and bicycle-pedestrian components into the Infrastructure & Operations Plan. She mentioned the four strategies in the infrastructure plan as: systemic countermeasure deployment, high-crash location improvements, road safety assessments, and conducting 4E approach. Systemic approach would help identify the risk factors for crashes instead of using crash data to identify where to put your safety improvements. She then elaborated the benefits of implementing J-turns, roundabouts and safety edges by showing sample photos and scenarios.

With J-turns, if people want to go left from the main street, they'd have to go through the intersection and make a U-turn. J-turns eliminate the direct left turns of the main intersections and decrease conflict points (from the usual 32 to 16) as well as reduce congestion. Roundabouts are not neighborhood circles, a rotary or a traffic circle. A roundabout is a compact, circular intersection in which the traffic flows counterclockwise. It is designed to slow down the speed of vehicles and yield. Maximum speed is 20mph. She mentioned that landscaping in roundabouts should be done subtly, not too dramatically as it could become a distraction. Roundabouts are traffic calmers; they reduce congestion and complement active transportation. Ms. Renard showed some crash modification factors and said that roundabouts reduce crashes by 60%. Conflict points are reduced from 32 to only 8. In Louisiana, there's one roundabout on LA 36@LA59, near Abita Brewery, which was converted from a triangular crazy intersection. Implementing safety edges is part of the pavement preservation program. Instability of a roadway edge tends to result to rollovers as well as head-on and side-swipe collisions because tend to over-correct when they run off the road or perhaps avoiding a roadside object/utility pole. Putting a sloped edge (called safety edge) on a roadway would make it safer. Safety edges were proven in Indiana, Georgia and New York to have reduced overall crashes by 6%. When making a safety edge, they put on a little shoe device that shapes up the asphalted edge. Short discussion ensued after the presentation. Recommendations: Consider these countermeasures when planning for engineering safety improvements at a highly congested or high-crash location. Take note of putting safety edges when investigating roadway departure or run-off-the-road crashes.

## **LUNCH & LEARN @ 11:45 to 12:45 AM - South Central Regional Transportation Safety Plan Progress Reports**

Nicole Waldheim from Cambridge Systematics gave a quick background on SHSP and how our coalition came up with the South Central Regional Transportation Safety Plan, which is a mini-SHSP. Houma is the only region to have a regional safety plan. The formula to reaching Destination Zero Deaths is SHSP + Regional Safety Action Plan = 50% crash reduction by 2030. Our SCRTSP's goal is reduce 75 fatalities in 2011 to 38 in 2030. She showed a quick video of Rhode Island's vision Toward Zero Deaths. She commended all the partners for having worked hard in developing the safety plan (SCRTSP) and working towards zero. She noted that the plan was adopted in October 2011 and now is the first year of reviewing our progress.

### ***Alcohol-related Impaired Driving Action Plan Updates***

Trooper Harrell reported the progress we're making in our alcohol-related driving programs. No Refusal Weekends are currently underway. He commended Lafourche SO for doing this all year-round. The Sudden Impact Program is being re-started. Negotiations are pending with Terrebonne General and hopefully, they can kick off with Vandebilt High School in early 2014. Troop C's 10-year-old Zero for December campaign has been pretty successful and will continue to be conducted alongside MADD's Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony. A big hit among young drivers are the fatal goggle vision demonstrations (being presented to students at various high schools) as well as Nicholls State University's Think Before You Drink Program. ADAC's Get in the Zone program has succeeded again this year, and communities have reached out to ADAC to duplicate this program in their area. Trooper Harrell also mentioned about the Impaired Driving Workshop held last October 2012 which was designed for law enforcement officers and prosecutors. The DWI Van effort is still in progress. This vehicle is designed to be shared by police agencies in the region when conducting DWI checkpoints and saturation details. A grant application has been submitted and subject for review by the SHSP Implementation Team. The Drug Evaluation and Classification (DEC) Program will start up again by end of 2013. Drug Recognition Expert (DRE) is an officer who's been specially trained to conduct an examination to determine whether a person is impaired.

### ***Occupant Protection (OP) Action Plan Updates***

OP Team Leader Captain Jamey Fontenot (Thibodaux PD) reported that the coalition regular hosts child restraint events which is very important because parents lack the education of how to properly install car seats. The "Buckle Up, America!" and "Click it or Ticket" (CIOT) seatbelt messages are being spread continuously in various activities in the local communities. On May 20, the CIOT mobilization will kick off and officers will start cracking down on the unbelted. Nighttime seatbelt checkpoints are a big component in our regional efforts. Statistics reveals that most males in pickup trucks are not buckling at night or most likely getting killed on the roadways. He said the coalition's prioritized educational activities include: increasing and encouraging police officers to wear their seatbelt and make it mandatory among law enforcement agencies; reaching out to employers to encourage their employees to buckle up as well; and developing a pilot test program to actively involve members of public health and medical communities.

### ***Young Drivers (YD) Action Plan Updates***

YD Team Leader Lt. Bobbie O'Bryan (Houma PD) reported that it's been a challenge how to reach out to the teen drivers through the school systems. The approach done was to offer the safety section as part of their academic curriculum. Houma PD has so far spearheaded in teaching driver's education classes highlighting teen driver safety. The students were tested on the materials given to them. The Teen LA Highway Endangerment Awareness Training (HEAT) has also been implemented. In Lafourche and Terrebonne Parish, schools were asked to do drama plays that portray a safety message. It has taken off successfully in Thibodaux High and planned to be duplicated in more schools. A safety photo contest and an incentive program are two strategies that still haven't started. R. Capone told that a grant application has been submitted to State Farm to hopefully make these happen. Also to be pursued is the Sudden Impact Program which was mentioned earlier. A summer program, the Teen CERT (Certified Emergency Response Team) will be conducted on June 24-28 in Bunkie targeting to bring in 150 students. Highlights include Teens' Got Talent segment, highway safety mock crashes and drama acts. "If we can teach the teens to become safety advocates and teachers, then they can become educators themselves and help spread the safety word." Other programs underway are fatal vision demos and safety lectures at various high schools, as well as NSU's "I Refuse" program which focuses on texting and driving.

*Next Steps: Continue implementing the strategies in the plan and tracking progress of ongoing efforts. Update the Action Plans and encourage other partners from medical field and fire departments to get involved. Attend the SHSP EA Meetings to ensure that our regional goals align with statewide goals.*

### ***Child Passenger Safety Updates***

Regional CPS coordinator Michael Toups (Houma PD) expressed how the team lacked organization and leadership in CPS events prior to his appointment as Regional CPS Coordinator of SCSCP. Every event, only 2 techs would show up. Less than 10 techs are active. In 2012, there were 154 child seats that were checked in 11 CPS events, which is 154 lives potentially saved. From January to April 2013, there were 8 events where a total of 117 seats were checked. Only 4 of which were properly installed while 57 were replaced. Right now, the SCSCP has 65 CPS techs wherein 75% of them are active; 10+ show up at events. A lot of techs have expired certification; they have to work on getting recertified. He announced that there are 3 upcoming events scheduled so far and more will be planned by the team. The goal is to triple the number of seats checked last year.

Capt. Naquin thanked all the Team Leaders for their extra efforts in organizing the safety activities and then announced that more breakout sessions were scheduled for 12:45 to 1:45 PM as well as outdoor demos such as seatbelt rollover simulator, Wal-Mart's "Committed to Safety" truck display, NSU PD's fatal vision goggle demo, Lafourche SO's bike and motorcycle display, CPS seat check, and Jefferson SO's BAT Mobile unit.

*Recommendation: Continue expanding CPS. Techs should work on their recertification.*

### **Young Drivers Breakout Session 5 @ 12:45-1:45 PM (Carnival Room)**

**Awakening the Youth to Drive Safely: Prevention is Key - Speaker: Craig Jaccuzzo, NSU Police Chief**

**AAA's Keys2Drive Program - Speaker: Don Redman, Public Affairs Specialist, AAA**

Chief Jaccuzzo motivated the students to be responsible and safe drivers. He informed them about a fatal vision program that the NSU has wherein students are put to the closest reality of driving impaired by having them wear a fatal vision goggle while riding the golf cart. The program teaches them the different levels of impairment or texting when behind the wheel. He interacted with the participants by asking them questions. He also mentioned that energy drinks like Red Bull could be impairing the judgment of a driver when mixed with a dietary pill. He told them of a story about a predominant, productive and successful individual got caught up with impairment and not able to finish her career because of bad choices. He read some statistics—that revealed 21 to 24 year olds are the highest age percentage in fatalities in 2010 and 2011, with 226 deaths in 2010 alone. He then mentioned about how they instill disciplinary actions and leadership in their "Think Before You Drink" Program. They counsel the offenders and do interventions. NSU PD is providing services to the leaders of today and future leaders of tomorrow. He reminded that making the right decisions and driving responsibly will bring them to the right path.

*Recommendation: See the possibility of holding the fatal vision goggle demos in schools other than NSU. Encourage other high schools to participate in our efforts.*

Mr. Redman started by telling the students about the 100 deadliest times of the year based on crash statistics. The top 5 are Fourth of July, June 10<sup>th</sup>, August 14<sup>th</sup>, August 8<sup>th</sup> (back to school) and July 9<sup>th</sup>. He provided some significant statistics: Nearly 6,700 teens ages between 13 and 19 died in traffic between Memorial Day and Labor Day during a five-year period. On average, 399 died in traffic crashes from May to August. He gave emphasis on how teen drivers are mostly distracted by texting while driving. He told that if you're night a driver, be a responsible passenger—buckle up and don't crank the music up! When you are the driver, you have to have an expectation of your passengers to keep the cool. He provided scenarios of getting distracted, and told that studies showed that those getting distracted are equated to having five beer bottles. Distractions may be visual, cognitive or manual. Hands-free phone usage is just as bad as handheld.

Mr. Redman shared his best advice to teens: Put the phone off and just leave a voice message saying that you can't take the call momentarily. He encouraged that parents should supervise kids during their learning stage of driving; 100 hours is recommended. He also suggested that a parent-teen contract be signed stipulating that you won't drink and drive, and that you would buckle up, etc. He also showed the webpage of AAA's Keys2Drive Program <http://teendriving.aaa.com/LA/> which is an interactive and educational site for parents and teens. This program guides those who are just getting their learner's permit and new licenses. This highlights driving with supervision, the licensing process, parent-teen agreement, etc. He then quizzed the students of how much they knew about safety driving. He wrapped up the session by reminding the students to drive with great responsibility, watch the passenger capacity they have, and get as much driving experience as you can. *Recommendation: Form a youth subgroup in the SCSCP. Encourage participation from other high schools and colleges.*

Before ending the Young Drivers breakout session, Capt. Ray Traigle of APSO shared a few words. He told them of stories how he has seen many situations where families are affected by vehicular crash fatalities. He reminded them that they're the future professionals and that they're the current leaders of their classes being in AHS Student Council—so be that! They can motivate others to do the right thing and make good choices on the roadways.

### **Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Breakout Session @ 12:45-1:45 PM (Plantation Suite)**

#### ***Understanding and Implementing Complete Streets Policy to Create Livable Communities***

Speaker 1: Jason Tudor, Associate Director of Outreach, AARP Louisiana

Joshua Manning introduced the first speaker of this session, Jason Tudor of AARP Louisiana.

**Jason Tudor** started by asking questions and then provided the session objectives like learning why AARP cares about Complete Streets Policy. He said that Louisiana is facing a challenge of implementing this program. The state is now working on starting a community foundation that can provide micro-grant programs benefiting the 50+ age group. About 89% of AARP members want to age in the home where they currently live. The Complete Streets Policy is beneficial to older adults. He showed a picture of a street that would need certain safety infrastructures that would accommodate the needs of pedestrians such as raised medians, crosswalk markings or pedestrian islands, for instance. He gave an overview on how they formed the Livable Communities Council to get the Complete Streets Policy started. It supports communities for all ages and recommends that they consider this resource. They also worked with Bike Easy, a local bicycle advocacy group. National partners such as National Complete Streets Coalition also support their programs.

Mr. Tudor also talked about the Sidewalks and Streets Survey which is downloadable via [www.createthegood.org](http://www.createthegood.org) and help people to understand Complete Streets. Their volunteers and bicycle advocates help them do the survey. He also made mention of how most pedestrian fatalities occurred near hospitals. When it comes to implementation of Complete Streets, it's quite a challenge. Decatur Street in New Orleans is a good example of the Complete Streets project. He announced that they're holding a grant writing workshop for a good sidewalk/recreational trails project on June 13-14 in Alexandria. He offered AARP's willingness to host a sidewalk and street survey if we hope to hold one in our area. Interaction ensued; questions were raised and addressed. *Recommendations: Promote Complete Streets Policy and see if partners would want to conduct Sidewalks and Streets Survey. Integrate this strategy into the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.*

#### ***What Makes a Competitive Safe Routes to School Project***

Speaker 2: Scott Gros, Engineer, LADOTD

J. Manning then introduced the second speaker, Scott Gros of LADOTD.

**Scott Gros** gave an overview of the Safe Routes to School Program. Although the program's overall focus is fighting childhood obesity, it aims to provide safe, fun and convenient way for children to walk and bike to school on a daily basis. He explained that SRTS is competitive because LA itself has 1,472 public schools and 525 private ones, and about 90% are eligible for funding. Some cities, parishes and school boards have grant writers trained in applying for these types of programs while others don't have enough staff/resources. He showed a graph showing the reasons why children don't walk to school with safety being the top reason.

Mr. Gros provided info on how the grant application cycle works—It opens in January 1<sup>st</sup> and typically submission of applications is due on March 1<sup>st</sup>. They do the review, scoring and approval between March and May. Site visits of approved applications are slated in June and July, followed with trainings and assistance with prospective applicants for next cycle. With MAP-21 in place, there will be new trainings set this fall to learn of any changes in the SRTS program. He did a walk-through of how to go about the project application, including what's entailed in the paperwork preparation such as data, demographics, project cost estimates, support letters from local agencies, etc.

It was emphasized that the 5E's—education, encouragement, enforcement, evaluation and engineering—are vital in rating the Safer Routes to School grant application. The project need and how you convey it is the most important part of the application. We should consider factors like every place having sidewalks needs repairs and that every school that doesn't have sidewalks will need then to encourage walking and biking to school. He said the easiest project needs to demonstrate are in areas where kids are already walking and lack adequate facilities. If the lack of infrastructure is only an obstacle to walking, then adding infrastructure alone may not solve the issue. He shared the characteristics of competitive projects as: having a team put together the app; the app should address all questions and demonstrate the needs; local community support must be established; and project should pass the infrastructure review. Some project applications are found to have problems when they're incomplete, when project need is overstated, when the community has limited buy-in, when project is not cost-effective, and project is not sustainable. He showed photos of problem projects wherein they're not cost-effective, lack the infrastructure and not sustainable at all. He offered his assistance to local agencies interested in pursuing a SRTS project. *Recommendations: Schedule for site visits/meetings for next year's SRTS.*

## CLOSING PLENARY

Captain Darrin Naquin introduced the first presenter of the Closing Plenary, Ms. Betsey Tramonte, who is Safety Programs Coordinator of FHWA.

**Betsey Tramonte** talked about usage of effective communication strategies in advocating safety and delivering the right message. It's important to have the 3 W's and 1 H in communication—What, Who, Why and How. The two global strategies that are used to change the driving behavior are: (1) the promotion of new ideas; and (2) the integration of national campaigns such as Click It or Ticket and Drive Sober with other local activities. She stressed that communicating something is better than community nothing. The key is to have a communications plan that establishes goals and objectives and defines the target audience & strategies to reach them. The plan should also include year-round tactics, partners involved, evaluation plan, timeline and budget.

Capt. Naquin introduced the last presenter of the day, Trooper Evan Harrell.

**Trooper Harrell** talked about how citizens can ensure driving home safely, with emphasis on vehicle preparedness and planning ahead before driving to one's destination. He shared safety tips to ensure the vehicle is in good condition and the things to check such as tires, brakes engine compartment, windshield and lights. It's also important to be on track of validity of inspection stickers and license plate. He added that it would help to print out a map and review the route if unsure of where you're headed. Driving safely entails a lot of things such as not speeding, scanning ahead with eyes on the road, not following too close to the vehicle in front of you, avoiding distractions, passing with care if needed, moving over to the shoulder of a car on emergency approaches, always driving on right lane and being on the lookout for work zones. If and when driving in bad weather, it's advisable to slow down for better car control and use lights for better visibility. He emphasized that all occupants, both driver and passengers should buckle up all the time. It's the law. Another tip of driving safety is to never get behind the wheel if you've been drinking, or if feeling sleepy, grab a coffee. Driving defensively means not only taking responsibility for yourself and actions but also keeping an eye on others.

**Closing Remarks** - Capt. Ray Traigle delivered the Closing Remarks. He thanked everyone's support and cooperation in everything that they do to save lives. The summit adjourned at 2:30 PM.

*These minutes were approved at the Quarterly Partnership Meeting on August 15, 2013.*