

Oregon Department of Transportation

Transportation Safety

Program Description

The Transportation Safety Division (TSD) organizes, plans, and conducts a statewide transportation safety program while working with many partners. These partners include other state agencies, governor-appointed advisory committees, local agencies, non-profit groups, and citizens. The division promotes transportation safety through education, enforcement, emergency services, and engineering. TSD's mission is to save lives and reduce costs due to crashes and injuries on Oregon roads.

The programs within TSD are largely funded through federal grants, and the division produces a performance plan to satisfy federal requirements and demonstrate the effectiveness of the broad collaboration taking place in Oregon's highway safety community. The plan also shows the significant impact the funds, time, and programs are having on the safety of the traveling public. The plan serves as a guiding document for the division's programs and was approved by the Governor's Advisory Committees on Driving Under the Influence of Intoxicants, Governor's Advisory Committee on Motorcycle Safety, Oregon Transportation Safety Committee, and the Oregon Transportation Commission.

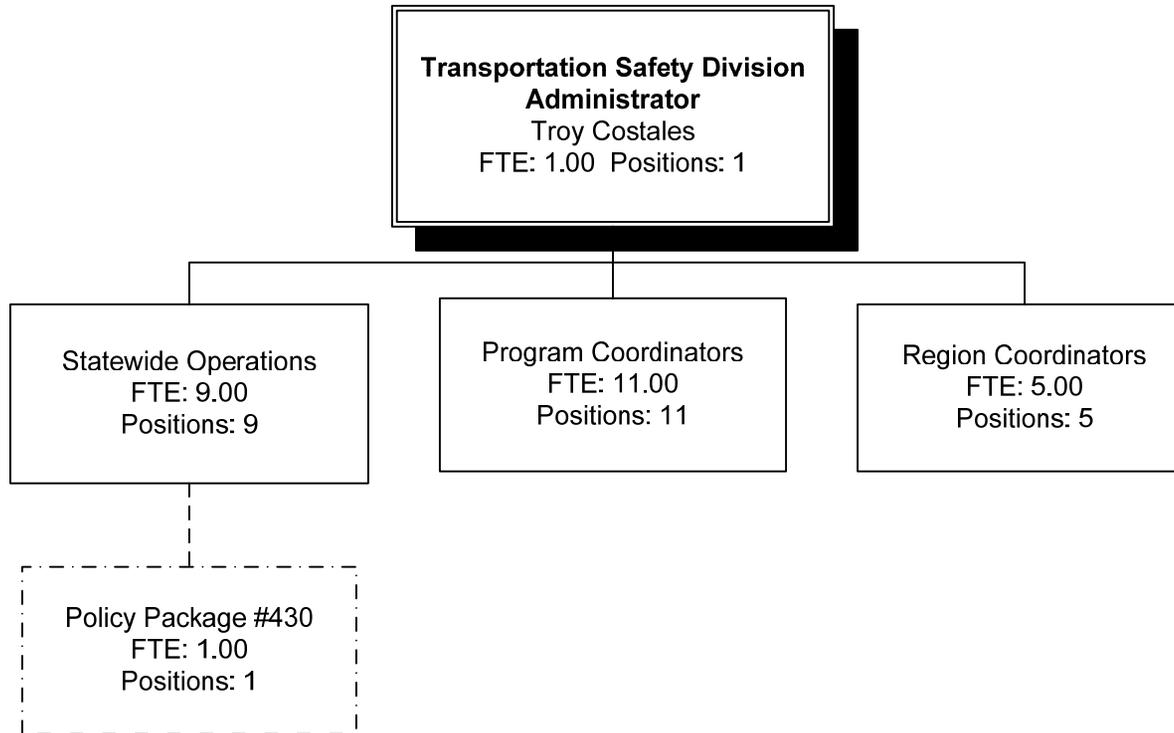
To follow-up on the plan, the division conducts an annual evaluation and reports how funds were spent and how the division's performance measures were met. TSD expects the performance plan will guide its programs to again avoid injuries and dramatically reduce fatalities in 2009.

The Transportation Safety Division has 25 program areas within the division.

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2009–2011 Organization Chart

FTE: 26.00 (27.00 with Package) Positions: 26 (27 with Package)



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Internal Measures and Division Performance

- Reduce the traffic fatality rate to 0.85 fatalities per hundred million vehicle miles traveled, or 333 fatalities, by 2015
- Participate in the Speed Task Force to create effective countermeasures to addressing the complex speeding issues on Oregon roadways
- Identify worst 10 historical speed-related problem locations from crash reconstruction reports, focus enforcement, engineering and educational efforts in order to make the biggest impact possible using limited funding and resources
- Continue the reduction of traffic fatalities that are alcohol-related from 179, the 2007 level, to 158 by December 31, 2010
- Increase the use of child booster seats from 57 percent to 67 percent by December 31, 2010
- Reduce work zone fatalities from the 2005-2007 average of 12, down to 10 by December 31, 2015
- Increase the number of students completing the ODOT approved driver education course to 9,259 by December 31, 2010
- Reduce the number of crash-related injuries to children ages 0-14 from the 2003-2007 average of 2,146, down to 1,631 by December 31, 2015
- Maintain the reductions in teen driver fatal and injury, a 46 percent reduction since 1998, through December 31, 2010
- Reduce the number of fatal crashes involving motorcyclists from 51 in 2007 to 42 by December 31, 2010
- Reduce the number of pedestrian fatalities from the 2007 level of 50 to 47 by December 31, 2010
- Reduce the number of bicyclists, all ages, injured in crashes with motor vehicles from the 2003-2007 average of 697 to 655 by December 31, 2011

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2009-11 Essential Budget Level (EBL) and the Governor's Recommended Budget (GRB)

Traffic safety is a major issue of national, state, and local concern. Drugged and drunk driving, safety belt use, speeding, motorcycle and bicycle helmets, vehicle standards, driver education, and traffic enforcement all have become social issues. Traffic crashes boost insurance, medical, court, corrections, welfare, and business costs. Everyone pays the price of traffic crashes – as individuals and as a society.

Traffic safety will continue to be important to citizens, corporations, and government agencies into the future. Speeding, drugs and alcohol will continue to play a large role in traffic crashes, deaths, and injuries.

Oregon is one of a handful of states that qualified for multiple federal highway safety incentive programs available through USDOT. It is unclear how many incentive programs will continue in the next federal authorization.

Work is coordinated with partner agencies, three governor-appointed safety committees, 50 local traffic safety committees, and various volunteer/community organizations. Services, grants and contracts are delivered directly to the public and other governmental units. The availability of services through public agencies is not always available for the purpose or at the time necessary for public safety. With a heavy reliance of citizen involvement for the Oregon highway safety program, steady staff or volunteer turnover can cause delays in long-term projects or initiatives.

MAJOR BUDGET DRIVERS, ISSUES AND ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

Impaired Driving

Impaired driving (drugged and drunk driving) continues to be a leading cause of driving-related deaths nationwide. Data from the Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS), based on police, medical, and other information, shows that in Oregon in 2007, 39.3 percent of all traffic fatalities were alcohol-related. Since 1991, Oregon's alcohol related fatalities have been reduced from more than 47 percent. Alcohol continues to be an overwhelming factor in impaired driving, fatal and injury crashes. Although great strides have been made to reduce the number of alcohol-related fatalities, Oregon has set a goal to further reduce those fatalities to just 38 percent by 2015. Impaired drivers don't just hurt themselves in these crashes; between 2003 and 2007, 18 children—ages 14 and younger—were killed in alcohol-involved crashes.

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Transportation Safety Division, in cooperation with the Governor's Advisory Committee on Driving Under the Influence of Intoxicants (DUI), deploys safety information and education programs to reduce accidents caused by driver behavior. The division also supports enforcement efforts to keep unsafe drivers and vehicles off of the system to improve safety and feelings of safety among Oregon system users. To accomplish this, the division:

- Supports comprehensive community DUI prevention projects that employ collaborative efforts in the development and execution of strategic information and education campaigns targeting youth and adults, and focusing specific attention to those who engage in high-risk behaviors;
- Provides financial support for Drug Recognition Evaluation training for enforcement officers, prosecutors, and judges to facilitate in the arrest, prosecution, and adjudication of alcohol and/or drug impaired drivers; and
- Develops public information and education campaigns targeting specific law changes that will occur during the 2009 Legislative Session.

Speed

In Oregon, speeding is the number one contributor to death and injury in traffic crashes. In 2007, 48 percent of all traffic fatalities in Oregon involved speeding (216 of 455 traffic deaths). The Oregon State Police do not have the staffing levels needed to appropriately address and make significant death and injury reductions given current and known future staffing levels through 2009. Police agencies, large and small, do not have adequate funding to allow for the purchase of needed enforcement equipment such as radar, laser, and radar trailers or reader boards to assist them with traffic enforcement duties. The Transportation Safety Division supports law enforcement efforts and facilitates multi-agency partnerships to address the problem.

To accomplish this, the division:

- Provides public information and education on the issues of speed through a media contractor, ODOT public information officers, and other media outlets;
- Monitors the Speed Task Force, established for the 2009 calendar year, to ensure it maintains focus on its goals and develops effective countermeasures using a variety of stakeholders to address speeding issues in Oregon; and
- Ensures that speed enforcement overtime dollars are targeted to roadways with the largest percentages of crashes resulting in death and injuries. The priority order is: Rural State Highways, County Roads, City Streets, and lastly, the Interstate System.

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Occupant Protection

During 2007, Oregon crash reports indicate 48 percent of motor vehicle occupants in fatal crashes were unrestrained – safety belts do save lives. Although Oregon has consistently been among the top five states with a high percentage of safety belt use – achieving a 97% use rate in 2007 – the Transportation Safety Division strives to achieve 100% use by 2015 by promoting the use of safety belts, child safety seats and other occupant restraint devices. The division's efforts are focused on educating the public about the use of restraints, proper use of safety belts, proper use of child restraint systems, and the affordability of child restraint systems. To accomplish this, the division:

- Educates the public about Oregon laws, and proper and consistent use of safety belts and child restraint systems;
- Provides funding for law enforcement agencies to conduct overtime enforcement of safety belt/child restraint laws and to heighten enforcement visibility through news media contacts, safety belt/child seat inspections, and other promotional activities; and
- Maintains a statewide pool of Certified Child Passenger Safety Technicians (CPSTs) who can routinely provide child safety seat check-ups to meet demand within their local communities, and subsidizes the purchase of child safety seats for no or low-income families.

Driver Education

As one component of the Teen Graduated Driver Licensing program, Transportation Safety Division's driver education program has helped reduce fatal and serious injury crashes for teen drivers. From 1998 through 2007, the number of teens involved in fatal and injury crashes has declined 48% for 16-year-olds and 36% for 17-year-olds. This has resulted in 537 fewer fatal and injury crashes with 17-year-olds behind the wheel and 575 fewer fatal and injury crashes with 16-year-olds behind the wheel for the same period. Improving the quality of the driver education program and creating a delivery system to increase the number of teens completing an approved driver education course is critical to reduce teen crashes and injuries.

Today, just one-third of Oregon's teen drivers are receiving driver education training. To encourage teens to participate in driver education programs, TSD reimburses public driver education providers whose curriculum has been approved by TSD. TSD is requesting a law change to allow reimbursement of private driver education providers whose curriculum has been approved by TSD. Private providers are not required to teach from a specific curriculum – today, almost half of private providers offer TSD approved driver education programs.

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TSD strives to educate more first-time drivers and to eliminate inconsistencies by implementing a statewide model for driver education. To accomplish this, the division:

- Continues to implement statewide curriculum standards and instructor training as a part of the new administrative rules adopted April 1, 2007;
- Promote best practices through quality professional development for instructors; and
- Reimburses public driver education providers up to \$210 per student. (SB 125 would allow ODOT to reimburse all TSD-approved providers, including private driver education.)

Children (20 years and younger)

The highest cause of death and injury to children ages 14 and younger is motor vehicle crashes. In 2007, drivers age 20 and under were involved in fatal and injury crashes at over twice the rate of the population as a whole. TSD has implemented programs to reduce the death and serious injury to children in motor vehicle crashes. The division:

- Collaborates with the Oregon Medical Association, Oregon Health Division, and local physician offices and partners with school districts and “Safe Routes to School” organizations to educate families about youth (14 and younger) in traffic safety; and
- Emphasizes the graduated driver licensing law for teens in all driver education and traffic safety programs, while generating discussion about secondary restrictions vs. primary restrictions and the enforcement of the graduated driver licensing restrictions in general.

Motorcycle Riders

Across the nation, motorcycle crashes involving injuries and fatalities are rising. Oregon is no exception. Motorcycle crashes in Oregon have almost doubled from 2002 to 2006. Fatal motorcycle crashes represented 11.7 percent of the fatal crashes in 2007, while motorcycles represent only 2.8 percent of the total vehicles registered in 2007. Oregon motorcycle fatalities increasingly involve riders who were not properly licensed (no motorcycle endorsement). Non-endorsed motorcyclists were involved in 35.4 percent of motorcycle fatalities in 2007. These unlicensed riders are not only a risk to themselves, but to other drivers as well. The Governor’s Advisory Committee on Motorcycle Safety has put forward a legislative concept this session to request a statutory increase in the penalty for riding without a motorcycle endorsement.

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The Transportation Safety Division has set a goal to reduce fatal traffic crashes involving motorcycles from 51 in 2007 to 42 by 2015. To reduce serious injury and fatal traffic crashes involving motorcycles, the division:

- Continues to offer TEAM OREGON Motorcycle Safety Program beginning, intermediate and rider skills practice training courses at 20 different locations throughout the state;
- Promotes motorcycle campaigns in the Transportation Safety Division's Public Information and Education program, focusing on separating drinking and riding, correct licensing, proper protective riding gear, speed, and rider training for all riders, including riders over the age of 40 that are over-represented in fatal and injury crashes; and
- Encourages all motorcycle riders to get TEAM OREGON training and be properly endorsed by disseminating information using public information and education campaigns and public outreach by the Governor's Advisory Committee on Motorcycle Safety.

Driver and Behavior-Distracted Driving

In 2007, 455 people were killed and 27,850 were injured in traffic crashes in Oregon while vehicle miles traveled decreased approximately 2.1 percent compared to 2006. In an effort to further reduce fatal and serious injury crashes, Transportation Safety Division educates the public about driving behaviors that contribute to crashes and public concerns around driving behaviors.

To accomplish this, the division:

- Produces a comprehensive traffic safety public information and education program that is designed to impact a change in the public's behavior concerning the issues of safe driving, DUII, safety belts, child safety seats, speed, motorcycle safety, bicycle safety, equipment standards, driver education and traffic laws;
- Publicizes and trains law enforcement, judicial branch, legislators and prosecutors on 2007 law changes; and
- Continues the development of a revised Transportation Safety Action Plan, the long-range planning document for addressing the "4-E"'s in transportation safety issues in Oregon.

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Process and Program Changes

Work is coordinated with partner agencies, three governor-appointed safety committees, 50 local traffic safety committees, and various volunteer/community organizations. Services, grants and contracts are delivered directly to the public and other governmental units. The availability of services through public agencies is not always available for the purpose or at the time necessary for public safety. With a heavy reliance of citizen involvement for the Oregon highway safety program, the level of staff or volunteer turnover can cause delays in long-term projects or initiatives.

Grant agreements have been established with the Oregon Association Chiefs of Police, the Oregon State Sheriff's Association and ACTS Oregon. These statewide non-profit organizations oversee the mini-grants offered throughout the state for their members. This allows the division to only manage one large contract versus the hundreds of smaller mini-grants. Field positions are located in the five ODOT Region offices, allowing for local contacts, oversight and program support. Staff meetings are conducted by teleconference, reducing the reliance on in-state travel. National training sessions have been conducted through a webinar format, reducing the requests for regional out-of-state travel.

One part-time position has been held vacant and work covering walk-up visitors, calls for information, workshop and training event packets and general office duties have been shared by other operations support staff.

Recent Success

The Oregon Legislature has expressed an interest in and demonstrated its leadership in highway safety, resulting in the success of the following:

- Teen graduated driver license implementation
- Safety Corridors -- permanent program status
- Speed limits and their impacts
- Motorcycle helmets retained
- Safety belt law loopholes closed
- Re-building of the Patrol Division of OSP

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- Booster seats for young children
- Photo radar in work zones as a pilot project

Policy Packages

#430	Safe Routes to School Coordinator	\$150,322	1 Positions	1.00 FTE
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During the 2005 legislative session, the responsibility for the Safe Routes to School program was legislated to the Transportation Safety Division. The federal legislation for the program requires a full-time coordinator be fully dedicated to the Safe Routes to School program. Duties of existing FTE were reassigned for the short-term while the impact of the new program was assessed. After two years, it is clear that the Safe Routes to School position is a full-time job and continues to expand. SB 242 (ORS 332.176) requires the evaluation of safety improvements to create safer routes to school as part of any school construction bonding. In addition the congressional sponsor of this program is now the chairman of the congressional committee that will create the next transportation authorization bill and he has committed to continuing the program. This request is for the FTE and related services and supplies for the Safe routes to School program.

Summary of Proposed Legislation

SB 125—Driver Education Funding

Purpose: Requires the Department of Transportation to reimburse commercial driver training schools for course in traffic safety education that is certified by the department

Policy: Approved providers in public schools, community colleges, educational service districts and commercial driver training schools will be eligible to receive reimbursement up to \$210 per eligible student. As a result, teen drivers will have better access to complete a driver education course. Teens will receive education to become better and safer drivers, reducing fatal and serious injury crashes.

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Budget Detail

Program	2005–2007 Expenditures	2007–2009 Approved Budget	2009–2011 Governor’s Recommended w/o JTA	2009–2011 JTA	2009–2011 Governor’s Recommended
<u>Transportation Safety</u>	\$23,654,591	\$27,857,473	\$29,076,885	\$0	\$29,076,885
Total Safety	\$23,654,591	\$27,857,473	\$29,076,885	\$0	\$29,076,885
Expenditures by Revenue Source					
Federal (FF and FF as OF)	\$15,805,460	\$18,106,961	\$18,766,984	\$0	\$18,766,984
State (Other)	7,849,131	9,750,512	\$10,309,901	0	10,309,901
Revenue Bonds					
State (General)					
Total	\$23,654,591	\$27,857,473	\$29,076,885	\$0	\$29,076,885
Positions	24	26	27	0	27
Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)	24.00	26.00	27.00	0.00	27.00
Personal Services	\$3,304,069	\$3,875,007	\$4,429,436	\$0	\$4,429,436
Services & Supplies	3,642,478	3,708,844	3,805,165	0	3,805,165
Capital Outlay	32,523	160,275	165,763	0	165,763
Special Payments	16,675,521	20,113,347	20,676,521	0	20,676,521
Debt Service	0	0	0	0	0
Total	\$23,654,591	\$27,857,473	\$29,076,885	\$0	\$29,076,885

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Essential Packages

	Package Amount	Pos / FTE
Non PICS Increases	\$ (18,405)	
General Inflation	676,806	
PERS Pension Bond Increase	14,083	
State Government Service Charge Increase	(27,823)	
Total	\$ 644,661	

Summary

Despite record-breaking storms at year's end, Oregon's highways claimed fewer lives in 2008 than in the previous nine years. Yet we know that one death is one too many, but making strides in safety is noteworthy. As of today, there were 418 fatalities in 2008. This represents the lowest loss of lives since 1999 and 1955.

The Transportation Safety Division compares fatalities to vehicle miles traveled to assess safety. Oregon's rate is projected to be 1.25, based on miles driven in the state in 2008 (1.25 lives lost per 100 million miles traveled). This is the second lowest rate in Oregon motor vehicle history—in 1999, the rate was 1.19. By 2015, the goal is to reduce fatalities to 0.85 per million miles driven.

Oregon will be well below the national average for the tenth straight year after being at or worse than the national average for 50 straight years. We will continue our efforts in education, enforcement, engineering and emergency response, and we hope Oregonians continue to listen and make the safest choice.