

Operator: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen, and welcome to the FHWA FRA Joint Webinar Rail State Action Plans. At this time, participants are in a listen-only mode. Following today's presentation, instructions will be given for a question and answer session. If anyone needs assistance at any time during the conference, please press star followed by zero. I would now like to turn the conference over to Kelly Morton. Please go ahead.

Kelly Morton: Hello, good morning and good afternoon, depending on where you're calling in from across the country. We'd like to welcome everyone to today's webinar on rail crossing State Action Plans. My name is Kelly Morton, I'm the program manager for the Federal Highway Administration Section 130 Program. I'd like to thank everybody for joining us today. We're well into our third year for this joint webinar series that both FRA and FHWA host to address a variety of railroad highway crossing safety issues and we've had great response and success to the webinar so far, so we plan to continue them on a quarterly basis for the foreseeable future. I'd also like to thank everybody in advance for their patience today in case we have technological issues as many of us are teleworking more so than normal. We've had an overload of people on using various technology systems so we want to thank everybody in advance for any issues if we do experience them. But, we have a wide variety of support on the phone today for helping us with this webinar, so I'd like to thank Kayce Georgi, who is behind the scenes administering a large part of this webinar, and we also have support from the web conferencing team, the telephone operator, and closed captioning, so fingers crossed and toes crossed that everything runs smoothly.

A quick overview of the agenda for today, we are going to start off; we have three presentations. We're going to start off with FRA; Debra Chappell will be giving an overview from the Office of Safety on State Action Plans and the status of the final rulemaking. We also have Alabama Department of Transportation sharing their experience with developing a State Action Plan. Oretta Clemons, who is the rail program manager with the Traffic and Safety Rail Highway Safety Group with the Alabama Department of Transportation, and we'll follow that up with a presentation from Oregon DOT on their experience developing a State Action Plan and their process involving stakeholder input. We have both Rick Shankle who is with the Crossing Safety Unit with the Oregon Department of Transportation Rail and Public Transit Division, and Rosann O'Laughlin, who's a project manager for the project from the Transportation Development Division, so thank you all for being on the webinar today and sharing your great presentations with us.

Before we get started I have just a few housekeeping items to roll over. While everyone is in a listen-only mode please keep your phone on mute during the webinar. Just in case we have technological issues, this helps cut down on distracting background noise, and if you have to, please don't put us on hold, simply hang up and dial back if you need to step away and take another call. We don't anticipate any issues but just to be on the safe side, that's a good practice. We are also excited to offer two ways that you can ask questions. You can feel free to insert, enter any questions that you may have in the chat box as you go along and we will answer them after each presentation, and there will also be time at the end to ask questions over the phone. At the end of the three presentations, the operator will come back on at the webinar with those instructions, if you'd like to answer, ask your question over the phone. The web links and the file share box to download copies of the presentation for today will also

be put back up at the end of the webinar, so don't worry, you'll have access to those again. In addition, today's webinar is being recorded, so again, barring any technological difficulties, we're hoping that recording will be available in a couple weeks and we'll tell you how you can access that.

So with that, I'm going to turn it straight over to Debra Chappell to kick this off and get us started.

Debra Chappell: Thank You Kelly and thank you all for coming to our webinar this afternoon. A lot of interesting information here so in the interest of time and it's in the interest of interest, we're just going to give a brief overview of the State Action Plan as well as some interesting information on Section 130 and then we're going to move it over to our featured speakers from our States here. So with that in mind here - we just loaded up, it's taking a second here – but passing that information along here, and in full disclosure we also have Kathy Gresham from the FRA Office of Chief Counsel here with us today as well. So moving forward here, Kelly and I are both presenting on some status information. So with our agenda, being slow to load today, I'm having some problems advancing the slides, could somebody advance a slide for me?

Kayce Georgi: I'm trying to but it seems to be frozen on my end as well.

Debra Chappell: I'm sorry?

Kayce Georgi: I'm trying to move it but looks like I am frozen as well.

Kelly Morton: It's on the top slide, go ahead.

Debra Chappell: Okay, I don't see it here so let me move on to the next slide, slide number two. Let me see if I can just go ahead and work with this, but we have a number of things we're going to give an overview of the FAST Act, and also we're going to talk a little bit about the State Action Plan report. We're going to talk about the noteworthy practices and we're going to bring it down like I said before with Section 130.

And we move to the next slide?

Kelly Morton: It may be frozen, Dee. We're working on it, just keep talking.

Debra Chappell: Okay, well I'm going to move forward here, as we move forward on our discussion here with the State Action Plan, I just want to give you some information from our Office of Chief Counsel here because as everybody knows, we are well into working on the State Action Plan. This has not been sitting on somebody's desk here, definitely a lot of information a lot of things moving forward here, and with that in mind we at DOT as a whole, we have - thank you so much - we have limitations on what we can talk about here, so as you can see from this slide here, we're in the process of careful review and considering each comment submitted in response to the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking. The comment period on the State Action Plan is now closed, therefore, FRA and FHWA will consider late-filed comments to the extent practicable, and FRA and FHWA staff cannot discuss any new or existing comments. And just to clarify here, as far as late-filed comments, I shouldn't say just FRA. just got a little head of myself, it should be FRA and FHWA cannot discuss any new or existing comments.

So, just moving forward here, and some of these I'm going to move a little quickly on because, again, we want to be respectful of the time and provide some great information from our States here about an action plan, is that it's a document that talks about steps that will be taken to achieve a specific goal here. We want to make sure the States understand that we want to have a good, solid action plan here. That was the anticipation of Congress when developed into the FAST Act here. So, as you look at these three purposes here, please keep that in mind as you're moving forward on a development of your State Action Plan here.

So, this slide brings in Section 11401, those are the section numbers in there. There should be something uploadable for you at the end of this webinar. If not, feel free to please contact me and I'll get this information on to you.

So, as you know, the Rail Safety Improvement Act of 2008, there were 10 States that were identified to provide a State Action Plan, but within the FAST Act, now all States, and the District of Columbia is defined as a State, will be now required to provide some information to us as far as the State Action Plan. The 10 States will have to provide us an update to their State Action Plan, and the other States and the District of Columbia will have to provide us a brand new State Action Plan similar to what you were provided back in 2008.

So, this is just going into some of the language into the document. We're not going to - I mean language in the law here - I'm not going to go too much into it right now, I'm sure a lot of you have read into this here. Looking at the State Action Plans, that it will be published, it will be published online here, and once those are published, we have, we here at FRA, we have a timeline to apply a report, a report to Congress on the State Action Plan.

So then the documents you will also note that there were some directions to the Secretary regarding State Action Plans and with respect to funding.

So, again, this is one of the questions that popped up a lot here as far as the review process is concerned. We will have a review. A question has popped up: will there be a coordinated effort with other agencies as necessary? We are looking into that as well here. Again, we are very limited as we can talk about what actions we can take. But once the plan is approved, that State Action Plan will be published online. If not, in that first iteration of review not approved, then we will notify the State, we'll give States 50 days per the law, and if they can resubmit the plan. And if no report is received by a State or the report is not considered compliant to the FAST Act we will have to publish that online as well.

So again, we have to do a report to Congress and some additional information on that.

So who can help you with the State Action Plan? There's actually the - of course FRA both in headquarters and our regional offices, Federal Highway, headquarters and the division as well, other USDOT offices, and maybe some things within your action plan that may bring in some other agencies. A lot like Federal Transit, Federal Motor Carrier, NHTSA, and the like here. Your stakeholders, railroads, Operation Lifesaver, other stakeholders that are out there that are key folks that help put together a ballot and a very robust State Action Plan here. Other State agencies. Some States have discussions or

some kind of collaboration amongst neighboring States. There may be some good information to share with each other here. You don't have put together your State Action Plan based on you being on an island and that's it here. You may have other plans as well. We've had questions about some information that might have been provided at a State Strategic Highway Safety Plan, or, maybe some incentives, valuable information for a Section 130 Plan to talk about the future. That's some great information to share within your State Action Plan too. And there may be some other things out here that FRA and Federal Highway may or may not be aware of that may be valuable for the State Action Plan.

So, moving on a little bit going into a State Action Plan, this is what the front cover looks like and this can be located both on the FRA and the Federal Highway website. For Federal Railroad Administration, it can be found at www.fra.dot.gov/modelSAP. Again, the FRA website slash modelSAP for State Action Plan.

So, in the document here we're drilling down a little bit here because it's got some key information on the development of a good State Action Plan; a good framework, but not necessarily the only thing that you have to do to develop a good State Action Plan here. So we talked about State Action Plan and we also have a part two of a Noteworthy Practice Guide, and the Appendices. Typically, sometimes people gloss over the appendices, in this case, both FRA and FHWA agree that both of those - I mean all the four parts of the appendices are must read.

So the model plan, again, it is an example. It's not a standard, and you have, again, make sure that your State Action Plan complies to the Final Rule within the State Action Plan.

So you make your State Action Plan, make it SMART. And I'm sure many of you have seen these, this acronym before. Be specific, measurable, agreed-upon, realistic, and time-bound, and recognize your potential challenges, if you know what they are, within your State Action Plan. We've seen in other States' Action Plans, if someone had read some of the "top ten" as we've nicknamed this year, but actually they have some good information to talk about some of the limitations that they would like to do more within their plan but there may be a regulatory issue. It might be a funding issue, might be a number of things, it might be an administrative issue here. So look about that because that helps us and helps me look at the future to see what, if more things can be done to enhance grade crossing safety.

Now as we look at the State Action Plan cogs here, we have informative categories: plan, develop, implement, and evaluate. And, we also would like to see a repeat. This is a State Action Plan that we hope is a living document for our States here to advance crossing safety.

So what else has FRA heard from the States so far? This hasn't been working in a vacuum. There have been many States who have reached out to us and shared information with us, and we appreciate that. We definitely - our listeners - and want to know more about what you're doing and what challenges you've met so far here as far as programmatically putting together your State Action Plan. So we see where you're working in teams, you have some stakeholder engagement, we just talked about both internal and external, that's a great thing, we say yes to both, because there may be another office within your State that might have some good information, good examples. You know, your DMC may have some boards out there far as grade crossing safety, talking about signage such as the

ENS sign, but maybe that needs to be updated a little bit, working for folks like that. Communication with your leadership to make sure everybody understands the content, the scope, and the timeline for complying with the law, and of course data.

So, in the developing of the SAPs, this is what we've heard a little bit more about, metrics to measure progress, data source identification, the thresholds, because we all know, there's not a one size fit all for grade crossing safety from State to State here, and identifying those key elements, where we had those strategies, programs, and timelines as well.

So digging a little bit more into these sections within each part of the Model State Action Plan and the Noteworthy Practices Document, this is a high level overview to show you where we're getting a little bit more into it. And part two, Noteworthy Practices, that's an excellent read, I would really think that States would really be able to embrace a lot of that information and share knowledge back and forth because within these noteworthy practices the State name is identified and you may know that contact person, or you actually might be able to contact through AASHTO if you don't.

So that we can move forward here, so again, I'm just going to quickly go through these.

Again, you get into a little bit more detail here. Can you all hear me? Am I coming through clear? Okay, I'll take that as yes, I'll come off speakerphone maybe that will help here.

Looking at the different chapters here, and I'm going to stop here at Chapter 4, looking at content and recommended outline for a State Action Plan, here. This has been one of the most common questions asked to us, and again, we cannot, here at FRA and Federal Highway, cannot develop your outline, but we're just providing a model that sets a basic framework that you can expand upon as necessary.

So this model outline is located on page 15 of the Noteworthy Practices, and this is the screenshot from what we have in there and as you need, through there, you will see a little bit more discussion on each one of those elements. That will give you kind of an "aha" moment on what's good or what's not so good, or a substitution for good State Action Plan for your State.

So here, in Noteworthy Practices, a good lead as well, some of the highlights here.

And just remembering here with your State Action Plan, you know, we look at process driven information, we also have data driven information, and the State Action Plan, we know it should be a hybrid of both, because we all have to work with administrative, legislative, and funding challenges, as well as opportunities. So let's highlight that and bring it forward here and bring it all together so that you can see the proper planning, development, implementation, and evaluation of your program.

So going into the appendices here, since I brought it up that it's a good idea to read through it, you see where there's some good information here.

We also have an appendix on blocked crossings, which we know with many States that's become a very, very popular discussion here.

And also some costs and benefits discussions here.

So with the timeline gone very rapidly here, these are the basic steps that we're going through and where we are here, the information to the States, we did get that out in 2016, updating the CFR, we're working on that right now, and more to come. We are looking at States, you know many States are well on the way, we thank you so much for moving forward with your State Action Plans here, and of course the report to Congress, we are not sitting by and missing all our laws here, we in fact have already started working on some of the basics of what we need to do for this report to Congress. So with that, I'm going to pass it on over to Kelly to talk a little bit about the Section 130 Program. Kelly?

Kelly Morton: Thanks Debra, that was a great overview, I appreciate it. We do receive several questions commonly, so we thought we'd hit some of them now, and then we will address some additional questions, but it looks like they're coming up in the chat box.

One of the first questions that we often get is “can Section 130 funds be used to develop a State Highway-Rail Grade Crossing Action Plan,” and the answer is yes. This was allowed in the FAST ACT, for Section 130 funds now to be made available and it says, quote, to provide States with funds to develop a State Action Plan or to update a State Action Plan. So when we put the download file share box back up at the end of the webinar today, you can actually download a copy of what the FAST Act says, but the answer to this question is yes.

The next question we also often get is does the two percent limitation for compilation and analysis of data in support of Rail Highway Crossing Programs annual reports apply to the development of State Action Plans? And the answer to this is no, State Action Plan, Section 130 funds used to develop or update a State Action Plan are not restricted to the two percent limitation of funds under Section 130 in Part K for the compilation and analysis of data in support of the annual reports. It is a State's option if they choose to use the two percent limitation for that, but it is not required.

Another common question is can soft match be used to meet the 10 percent match requirement for Section 130 set aside funds? And the answer to that is yes. Soft match can be used for the non-Federal match requirement, with required adequate documentation, and we recommend anyone who has a question on this issue work with their FHWA Division Office, located in each State, to accurately reflect the correct Federal Share of a project.

Another question we get is can HSIP funds or another Federal funding source be used for the ten percent non-Federal match requirement? The answer to this is no, Federal funds, including HSIP funds, cannot be used for a Federal match requirement. It must be a non-Federal match, in short.

You can find these and other question and answers on the Rail Highway Crossing Program FHWA website at this link, and you can also get to this on our main home page, which we'll put that link up at the end of the webinar today.

If you have any additional questions or you'd like more information, please visit the FRA website that you can see here shown on the screen, or the FHWA Rail Crossing Webpage also has links to State Action Plans for the 10 existing States, and we'll have these links again up at the end of the webinar.

Last but not least, we want to thank everybody for their patience and understanding during this process. FRA's done a lot of work developing the Noteworthy and Model State Action Plans, and we thank you for that.

With that, I think we will go into answering some questions on the chat box if that's okay. Dee, did you have anything you wanted to add real quick before we start answering some questions in the chat box?

Debra Chappell: No, I'm fine, thank you so much. I just apologize for the audio issue here.

Kelly Morton: No worries, I think technology is going to be a challenge for a lot of folks, but so far everything's running smoothly. The first question we have could be either for Debra or Kathy Gresham, both from FRA. Debra, you mentioned that FRA cannot comment on the new or existing NPRM comments, how can an interested party follow FRA's process of deliberation? Will FRA announce when they plan to discuss the comments, and whether FRA is or has considered the comment?

Debra Chappell: Well, I could answer that question, but I think it would be more appropriate if I yield that question off to Kathy Gresham from the Office of Chief Counsel. Kathy, are you there? Okay, I don't hear her, but as far as the steps are concerned, once we have completed everything, because we know that rulemaking is a process here, where it has to go through many steps, not just through Federal Highway, Federal Railroad, it has to go through Office of the Secretary and the like here. Once everything is complete and everything has been approved, it will be placed in, the final rule will be placed in the Federal Register, and that is a public document, and of course Federal Railroad, and we'll work together with Federal Highway to make sure that announcement gets out to everybody. But right now, it's an internal ongoing process here. So as far as the intermediate steps, that's not typically published to my knowledge, here.

Kelly Morton: And Debra, can you mention which NPRM? Is there a title to the NPRM that you talked about in your presentation?

Debra Chappell: There is. What I'll do is, let me look it up real quick, I will put it in the chat box, the Federal Register number and give as much information as I can on that.

Kathy Gresham: Hello, can you all hear me?

Kelly Morton: Hi Kathy, go ahead.

Kathy Gresham: Hi, I apologize, I think I called the incorrect number, so I apologize that I wasn't able to jump in earlier. I can provide the Federal Register citation for the notice of proposed rulemaking for the State Action Plan regulation. We published the notice of proposed rulemaking on November 7th of 2019, and they published it in Volume 84 of the Federal Register, and the page number is 60032.

Kelly Morton: Thank you both very much. The next question is from Jessica Rich in Tennessee, if Section 130 funds are used the funding split is still 90/10, correct? And the answer is yes, that is correct, the Federal Share is required to be 90 percent Federal funds and 10 percent non-Federal match.

Another question we received, will this allow State DOTs to be bold and innovative in implementing safety features at grade crossings? Debra, can you take that one?

Debra Chappell: I'm sorry, say that again? I didn't hear you.

Kelly Morton: Will this allow State DOTs to be bold and innovative in implementing safety features at grade crossings?

Debra Chappell: Well, that's our expectation here, that we're looking at tomorrow, as we have talked about last year and our grade crossing symposium in Washington, DC. We're looking at States to investigate and implement next generation technology to enhance safety at grade crossings here, and we're hoping that, to see if there are any States who are doing so right now, so please highlight that in your State Action Plan, or if there is an interest in doing that in the future, to program that into your Grade Crossing Safety Program, whether it's Section 130, whether it's your State program, whether it's another Federal program, there are, a grant program that may be out there, you know, there have been a number of CRISI Grants that have been announced and we will have more CRISI Grants, but I'm getting out of my lane a little bit more that way, but we will want States to please provide that information.

Kelly Morton: Okay, great. Another great question for you Debra, this is from Operation Lifesaver, welcome Rachel to the call, her question is when we get to the stakeholder item, Operation Lifesaver and State coordinators are looking forward to engaging in their State Action Plans. How can we help facilitate this?

Debra Chappell: Thanks, and hi Rachel, how are you doing? Yeah, Operation Lifesaver should have a relationship with the State Rail Division or Grade Crossing Program and their own little protocol within their individual State. We're hoping that States will reach out because typically, if I remember correctly, with some of the State programs, like the Strategic Highway Safety Program, I believe Operation Lifesaver is listed as one of the partners, so there should be some communication anyway. So we're hoping that both the States will reach out to Operation Lifesaver, or Operation Lifesaver, during its regular interaction with the State, reach out to them and said hey, you know, you're working on your State Action Plan, as one of your partners here we stand ready to provide support or information as needed.

Kelly Morton: Great, and one last really quick question, Wisconsin Department of Transportation asks when are the State Action Plans due?

Debra Chappell: That's the popular question here and I'm going to let Kathy answer that question.

Kathy Gresham: So although we would like to provide a specific time frame, we are still working on finalizing the final rule that will set forth the details associated with all of the requirements that will

need to be met. So I'm afraid at this point we don't have a specific date or month in time as for when the State Action Plans will be due. I'm sorry.

Kelly Morton: Okay, thank you. With that, those were excellent questions, please keep them coming, we're going to move into our first State DOT presentation from Alabama, who has so graciously agreed to join us on a webinar today to share their experience with the Rail State Action Plan and their program reevaluation. So with that I'm going to turn it over to Oretta. Go ahead.

Oretta Clemons: Thanks, Kelly. I'll just give a brief overview and locate some highlights from our State Action Plan, and some things we did to reevaluate our program.

Here come the topics that I'll discuss: an objective, program funding, Project Advisory Committee, the risk analysis strategies, and actions.

Overall program objective was to focus on the four E's: engineering, education, enforcement, and evaluation. Our goal was to include effectiveness of the program success, incorporate use of innovation and other low-cost engineering improvements, as well as increase the involvement of our local agencies, local governments, and other stakeholders to identify different locations and proper funding for crossing improvements.

So our previous State Action Plan, it was implemented because Alabama was in the top 10 States with most collisions at grade crossings. It was completed in 2011 internally by our ALDOT Rail Personnel. The objective was to identify specific solutions to mitigate collisions.

Some of the pros and cons from our previous action plan, it did give foundation to the program's outlook, and it met the minimum Federal requirements. Some of the cons, the plan itself didn't clearly define or identify next steps for future progression. It also wasn't widely known and used by the department, one of the questions we asked which I'll get into in our Project Advisory Committee, has anyone seen the previous action plan, and everybody said no. The plan also clearly didn't define roles or involvement of stakeholders, which all three of those cons we found potential in the development of our current State Action Plan.

So prior to 2017, the program the primary focused on locations with crossbucks that to upgrade them to active warning devices. Section 130 funds, if they had been spent on the location in the past, it wasn't likely that the funds would be spent at that location for alternative improvements. The ranking of projects to taken literal without proper understanding or evaluation of accidents. Not too many questions were being asked for the how, the who, the when, or why an accident had occurred at a crossing. The input from stakeholders is minimum, and the systematic updates of our inventory hadn't been performed since 2011.

Currently, within our program, we receive 4.7 million dollars annually for Section 130 projects. Before the 100 percent changing, 100 percent funding that's changed where we could get a lot more projects out, but because of the change we aren't able to get as many projects out because cities and counties are not willing to pay the 10 percent on the match. Railroads, however, have been willing to share that

funding match, if there's a closure or corridor project involved. Currently, Alabama does not have State legislation to automatically allocate additional funds to rail improvement.

So our current State Action Plan, we initiated it in 2017, December, and completed it in 2019. We reached out to a consultant and it was performed by Cambridge Systematics and our core engineers. The mission was to identify and provide a strategic approach to ALDOT and partners to reduce crossing fatalities and incidents, and overall goal was to reduce fatalities and incidents by three percent on an annual basis over five years and averages. As of right now, we have not measured whether we have the successful net three percent or not, but it is ongoing and part of our process.

In the State Action Plan we did focus a lot on methods and means, the actual meat of how we get things done, and how we will go about getting things done. We reevaluated the formula we were using, as well as reached out to other States, their programs, to update our programs and to see what's going on currently in the industry. We conducted a Project Advisory Committee, which I'll give a little bit more detail on that as well, which is extremely helpful, as well as receiving feedback and having involvement of stakeholders. We implemented, more into our action plan, low-cost improvements that we can focus on, as well as incorporating inventory updates, which we are currently working on now to update our database and push those updates to FRA so that the data that we have in-house and the data that FRA has is more consistent, and where there are discrepancies we intend to get those updated as quickly as we can.

The goal objectives for the plan itself were to incorporate more warning signage, passive device improvement that was on the low cost side, as well as using warning lights, active gates, activate gates for train approaching, such as, sometimes we have gate warning signs that has LED lights that we plan to implement in our upcoming fiscal year with some railroad crossings for passive device upgrades, as well as using motion detective sensors that can be placed that will fit the train approaching and activate equipment a lot quickly, such as those locations where sight distance isn't as clear as we would like for it to be. We did see emphases in the plan to help reduce pedestrian bicyclist incidents as well as trespassers. The trespassing incidents and fatalities, it's something that's very difficult for us to focus, we don't have any rail owned by the State, so trying to prevent people from getting on the railroads, right of way, is difficult when you can primarily focus on just the highway itself in the crossing.

So a little more detail on our Project Advisory Committee, we had three body committees meeting, we incorporated different levels of ALDOT personnel from our safety planning, to our regional representative district offices, our leader relation that deals a lot with legislation, our design bureau, admin, transportation operations, other State agencies, such as the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs, law enforcement, our public health section, our Federal partners at FHWA and FRA, local partners, Operation Lifesaver, county engineer's, MPOs, RPOs, as well as our many railroads that operate in the State. Each of their inputs was very useful and helpful in the development of the action plan to bring our action plan up to more internal industry as well as incorporate those new ideas, fresh ideas.

Within those project advising committee meetings were three different levels, we established goals and objectives, plan scope for the action plan, we reviewed what was done in the past, future issues, as well as brainstorming strategies. Those strategies that we brainstormed, we actually developed ways to actually get those strategies implemented, we had a schedule for those actions as well as data metrics to make sure that we have something to measure the things that we were able to do. There's a lot of things that we did with the project reevaluation that we actually started using during the process, such as developing a parallel program to get more stakeholders involved within client locations and identifying those problematic areas as well as updating our formula that we used, so it was extremely helpful.

This is a little highlight of what we have operating in the State, we operate five Class 1 Norfolk Southern, CSX, Canadian National, Tennessee Southern, and Burlington Northern all operate. We have a number of shortlines, and Class 1 railroads. We have at least, over, 2,700 at grade crossings, 50 percent of those are signalized, and of that 50 percent, seven percent belong to State route, 13 on county Road, and rest on city route.

Some of the areas that were highlighted in our action plan is forwarded from our problem fatality and serious injuries. As you can see from the data, fatalities in fatal injuries were split closely between rural and urban, however on the serious injury side, there were more serious injuries in our urban areas, and our top five counties are shown: Jefferson, Mobile, Shelby, Lee County, and Talladega.

So, identifying those locations we reevaluated the formula used previously. We had only had, we were wrongly using the accident prediction formula, which is a more reactive measure, and we wanted to incorporate something that was more reactive and predictive, as well and include the form that the other States were using, so we decided to go with the provided for to add in crash severity. The New Hampshire has an index, as well as the form developed by the University of Alabama, and the Alabama Grade Crossing Safety Performance Measures.

And with the change in our formula, we were able to, in our priority ranking list that we're running now, and to give back to those locations that continually are issues, where people are going around gates, people are ignoring event warning signs, and a really excellent question, what can we do more to help. And now we're working on trying to do a pilot program, critical cases of people going around gates, and use more low cost measures such as median barriers. And the action plan helps us get to those low cost measures to figure out what more can we do with it on the education side or engineering or enforcement side.

And this is the framework in which we look at those locations, whether it be a Federal project or a corridor, whether it be, look at the operation or the education side, and we follow this to see exactly how we need to go about making improvements at the crossing.

So as far as an evaluation phase, we outlined, we identified the risk, how much it cost, and the implementation or complexity of the project, will there be a lot of political politics behind it, if we can get it implemented or not, if we have funding issues, the dynamics of the actual location itself. So we considered the closure/consolidation along with everything we identified within the framework.

One in particular project that came up due to action plan as a sample location was due to geometric improvements, and this corridor project, initially we did not move forward with it because I had no ADT minor incident history, and there were no other factors at the time during the Project Advisor Committee identified. However after that, Norfolk Southern approached the department of possible corridor partnership due to them build a siding that would impact the town, and causing a possible blocked crossings. The locations were College Street which was - locations in Leighton, Alabama and Colbert County - College Street proposal to close and Main Street and Sadie Roberson both proposed to upgrade.

And the reason for it was, again, and we identified in the action plan to be proactive, there's a car manufacturing plant and associated suppliers being built in North Alabama so the impact on rail traffic, the train increase was expected to be from 8 trains per day to about 20 or so, trains speed was anywhere from 40 to 55, relatively low ADT field but it was one of those situations where if we do nothing now there will be a problem so why not address it now to prevent any fatalities or accidents, and when we did it diagnostically sitting out there on the side of the road as those trains were coming through, I did not want to get hit by anything that came through on that line, so it was necessary for us to be proactive to actually make that collection. With this partnership, Norfolk Southern agreed to 20 percent on cost, total project cost on proposal, and our Section 130 will cover 80 percent of the project cost, and the cost itself was about 915 thousand dollars to implement.

This is the event at Sadie Roberson, we're correcting the profile more than 90 degrees, adding bell gates and lights, and other passive devices. Normally, we would not look at Sadie Roberson, but this is one of those political issues where the mayor would not agree to the closures unless we addressed safety improvements at Sadie Roberson. The main concerns was having an alternate for school buses and EMS if the other crossing is blocked, which is understandable and something we definitely evaluated and decided to add to the project.

Main Street, of course, is the main thoroughfare through the town, it's the main line for trucks and farm equipment. There have been be known close calls, vehicles being stuck on the track due to the profile of the roadway. Prior incident histories at both locations, just not high enough as to reach on our traditional priority list before the revaluation. So with the closure of College Street and improvements on Main Street, we were able to, the projects are ongoing now but we were to possibly prevent anything from happening in the future.

What we learned from the whole process, we were able to get a more defined definition of what we considered a corridor project, which we did include in our action plan. Policy plays a significant impact whether a project makes it or breaks, and the railroads, such as Norfolk Southern, are willing to work with things to find and share when there's a closure, most of the locations succeeded. And I can't emphasize enough the importance of a State Action Plan, the Project Advisory Committee, and the input of all those involved, where we were able to get outside of the box and go beyond our traditional process to accomplish safety policy.

Lastly, some of these things that we identified in the action plan are more strategies and actions. Strategies and actions: evaluation strategy, education strategies. I only highlighted a few here, we identified the strategies, it has a timeframe that we can implement it, or take a year to two years, or however long to get the strategy accomplished, who the lead agency is, and the opportunities for action, what we can do to accomplish that strategy. Here, this one is making corrections or updating our priority ranking process.

Another strategy was increasing the involvement of local agencies.

And lastly, one of the strategies, engineers that were closing consolidations. Alabama has State law for closures, however, no director has implemented this, enforced that State law without the buy-in from all parties. So this is something we at ALDOT are going to move forward, to initiate that conversation rather just rely on the railroads to initiate that conversation, because it is a State policy, if we can be a part of their practice to eliminate redundant policy there may be a way that we want to do that.

In addition to these strategies, one of the things that came about is our Hazard Elimination Application. This is a parallel program that I mentioned before that we're implementing, that will allow us to have program documents to implement the use of 50 percent of our funds for hazards, such as humped crosses or blocked crosses, but actually have a program document that we can be consistent and fair in any distribution. It also allows stakeholders to buy-in to the process, to tell us where the issues are versus relying solely on our priority project list.

Our project process is our greatest challenge. Location selection, diagnostic review, turnaround times of projects, and agreement execution and project authorization, stakeholder involvement, and the funding. If you don't have the funds, we can't implement what we need. 4.7 million dollars can really only go so far. But we do the best we can for what we have, and we try to go from there.

So my takeaways from the Alabama Action Plan is, ultimately our goal is always reduce fatalities at the crosses. Funding is limited, so we can only do so much. The involvement of our State and local agencies, local government agencies, and channeling our railroad partners, other stakeholders, industry with a business to utilize their policies. It is our intention, and if not for the involvement stakeholders being proactive, we will continue to be in the top 10, so we strive to get off the list by implementing ideas and tactics within the action plan that you see. If you have any questions for me, please let me know. Thank you.

Kelly Morton: Thanks, Oretta, great job we really appreciate you sharing your experience here in Alabama. Wonderful, wonderful presentation. There was a question in the chat box for you: what was the total cost of the State Action Plan contract?

Oretta Clemons: The total cost - I don't have the exact numbers off the top of my head, but it did range in the 400,000 dollar range. Excuse me, I'm sorry. 200,000 or so thousand dollar range, not 400. 200,000 and some.

Kelly Morton: 200,000 dollars, got you, okay, thank you. And there's some other questions in the chat box regarding funding, Ken from the California FHWA Division office asked how many States have submitted concerns about the 90/10 Federal split? Meaning the Federal share and he's experienced that locals can't commit to the 10 percent match and it shrinks the extent of where and what projects can be proposed. Alabama mentioned that in their presentation, and Ken yes, we've heard from several States regarding that issue and their experience coordinating with local agencies, and how it may impact their programs. As Shayne Gill mentioned, this is a legislative requirement, so it will require a change from Congress to change the Federal share requirement for the Section 130 program. And thank you to Florida and Arkansas for jumping in and mentioning that you also have similar experiences. Minnesota as well, thank you, and Shayne for sharing your email address.

Another question from Patrick Allen: how many States leverage other Federal funding sources, such as HSIP or TAP to supplement the Section 130 program? And specific to State Action Plans we highly recommend any State coordinate with their FHWA Division Office on opportunities for Federal funding other than the Section 130 program for State Action Plans, in addition to implementing other rail highway crossing safety improvement projects. We strongly recommend you coordinate with the FHWA Division Office on opportunities that might be available in your State, and it's a great question and a great topic, possibly for a future webinar, so if that's something of interest please let us know and we can maybe address that in greater detail when we have more time.

Oretta Clemons: Kelly, I'd like to add to that a little bit one of the things that we're doing is looking more at corridor projects for railroads and having to buy in or participate with just one location, so it kind of helps when we do corridor projects for cities and counties where they won't have to pay that 10 percent for funding when we could still move forward with a location project, just adding more to it.

Kelly Morton: And Oretta, can you touch on based on a project scope, how do you tackle surface improvement issues, in terms of funding?

Oretta Clemons: Surface improvements, if there's a project that has other improvements, then we include the surface improvements. Just because there's a rough crossing, we don't automatically use Section 130 for that. There has to be other underlying issues for the benefit of that crossing in order for us to address surface issues. And we only go so far out, say within, you know, 60 to 80 feet where correcting the profile or dealing with the hump crossing. We're not researching all the sections of the roadway or anything like that, just at the crossing itself. And that there aren't any other line issues or safety concerns, we tend not to address it.

Kelly Morton: Okay. When presenting corridor improvements do your railroads also require crossing closures?

Oretta Clemons: Some of them do. If we can get across the closure, yes, but if there are multiple crossings within a section, even if we can't give it a closure but if there's a benefit to the railroad or they can, you know, justify their participation. Sometimes the quality's not always there, they will light the closure, and we're asked to participate in areas, but if there isn't, it won't necessarily kill the project.

Kelly Morton: Excellent, we appreciate your insight, thank you very much Oretta. We are going to move on into the next presentation from the Oregon Department of Transportation. Thank you very much to Rick and Roseann for sharing your experience and I'll turn it over to you now.

Rick Shankle: Okay, good morning happy to be here. Roseann and I are pleased to be providing a joint presentation of the Oregon Highway and Railroad Crossing Safety Action Plan. This was a joint effort between rail and planning, as rail does not have its own planning personnel. We feel this has been a great collaboration. I will begin the presentation and then then hand the talk to Roseann.

We will be discussing why we developed the plan, what it means for Oregon, explaining how we completed the process, including some lessons learned, then describe some of our implementation efforts.

But first, let's just get a few things out of the way. As you may know, Oregon being the Wild, Wild West, as it is, does a few things differently than other parts of the country.

For example, our standard traffic signal preemption standards include a pedestrian clear-out interval at the beginning of advance preemption. When this cycle is done, it transfers over to the vehicle clear-out interval. Most other States do not use or truncate the pedestrian clear-out in favor of increasing vehicle clear-out. Oregon's standard was established to serve the pedestrians first.

Oregon has also elected to have a predominance of stop signs at passive railroad crossings instead of the standard yield sign, except, based off of a recent law passed by the legislature that changed the meaning of stop signs for one transportation mode.

Bicyclists are no longer required to stop at stop signs; they treat them as a yield sign. These are in situations where they come up to the intersection and feel that it's safe to go. Oregon borrow this from our neighbors to the east, Idaho. This law does not apply to unicycles though.

And one final note, Sasquatch is real, you can see them all over the State.

Now, why do we plan, why did we develop a plan before the rule was completed?

Oregon is growing and has been for some time now. Oregon's population growth is expected to continue. We recently hit the 4 million mark. We are anticipating 1.4 million new residents by 2050, and 33 percent increase. For reference, Oregon had approximately 2 million residents in 1970, 2.6 million in 1980, and 4 million in 2015.

Meanwhile, our rail volumes are increasing as well. While you're not increasing the number of crossings by much, we are seeing an increase of exposure or even two at the crossings. Oregon and Washington have two Class 1 railroads, which carries a significant training volume but, we have a significant number of Class 3 railroads. In fact, ODOT works with 35 separate railroads on crossing safety efforts.

Here's a closer look at the railroad system in Oregon. You can see that the majority of lines follow the Willamette Valley, which is along the west side of the State. These areas are also the highest population centers.

On this rail system, Oregon has 1,865 public at-grade crossings, and this number is not really expected to rise. We also have 49 at-grade pedestrian only crossings, 23 of which are a multiuse path. Because we have a modest system spread out in a large State area, we've combat complacency both from travelers and other agencies. We are experiencing more exposure at these existing crossings, and this shows in our trends.

And as you can see here, the result has been a recent increase in crossing incidents after decades of decline within the State.

Here's a closer look at the incidents in the last 10 years by mode and severity. We have the bike, the pedestrian vehicle, and then the fatalities and injuries. You notice that the purple lines draw your attention to the vehicles and pedestrians, which have experienced a noticeable increase in incidents.

In addition to increased exposure, we are seeing a rise in risky behavior. This is an actual photo taken in the Portland area, where a man is pushing the stroller across the crossing where the gates are down.

The action plan unites our synched Rail Plan and our Transportation Safety Action Plan. I'm going to hand it off now to Roseann.

Roseann O'Laughlin: Thanks, Rick. As Rick mentioned, I served as project manager for the plan, and I'm actually a principal planner at the Department of Transportation, so I brought in some planning experience to this. And I'm going to provide an overview of how we developed the action plan.

So first you start by taking a look at the requirements that were provided by the FRA, and we've heard about those today. So we got a good sense of what our requirements were going to be, and this also involved the FRA-issued State Action Plan guidance, so that outlines the need for providing specific solutions, of course. We need to assess multiple-incident locations and we needed to cover a five-year period. So while Oregon intends to meet its Federal obligations, and certainly any changes we see in the upcoming rule, we will modify accordingly, it was also important in the beginning for ODOT to develop a plan that suited Oregon's needs as well as our own transportation safety vision. We also reviewed the model action plans, those of course means Texas, Illinois, Louisiana, Georgia, and so on, and we have also looked at the Model Action Plan.

So here's a look at the steps in our plan development process. So if we started with our data collection and analysis, and then we actually went on and took a good look at some research. We reviewed for relevant trends in these and certainly those that were most relevant for Oregon. We put a stakeholder input throughout our process, which I will talk about shortly, and we completed interviews with other State DOTs, and finally we synthesized everything into a series of strategies and actions.

Once our data analysis serves as the foundation of the action plan, I'm just going to do a closer look at what our analysis and findings showed us.

So we re-review data for the years 2008 to 2017, this actually went beyond the five year data requirement, to give us a better sense of the issues and contributing factors to our crossing incidents. We removed confirmed suicides and we removed the Portland area TriMet Max Crossings, which are transit crossings, as those cannot be funded with Section 130 dollars. And so after removing those, we expect 120 incidents in this time period. We analyzed who was involved in the crashes, where the incidents occurred, when in terms of time of day, time of year. We assessed why, we looked at various factors, contributing factors, and reviewed behaviors at the time of the incident. And we took a look closely at crossing characteristics, such as angle, profile, the number of lanes, the number of tracks, and the speed, just to name a few. The data analysis also included a subset of another - one or more factors in instances that I'm going to give you a little highlight for.

So we found that the majority of incidents involved male travelers, and at this is probably not terribly surprising as it falls right in line with the national average. We actually assess for age, and we found that adult travelers between the age of 25 and 45, you have the largest percentage of our travelers involved in incidents. We did find that we actually had very few teen travelers during this period, but a good number, around 15 percent, were actually seniors or those over the age of 60.

When we took a look at traveler mode, we found that vehicles made up the most number of incidents, but bicycles and pedestrians, as Rick alluded to, were involved in a significant number of incidents. Also notable are CDL or commercial driver license vehicles were involved in 15 percent of our incidents.

So of our 120 incidents they occurred at 100 different crossings, so 19 of those are repeat or multiple incident locations, and that leaves us 81 crossing locations with just one incident. Now if you recall, Rick said that we had 1,865. So this whole test focused in on those areas where we're seeing the biggest problems.

So we found that most of our incidents occurred in north Willamette Valley, which as Rick pointed out was the northwest part of the State there, or the left side, which is also where the majority of our population is located. But we also find a significant cluster in rural northeastern Oregon, indicating to us that rural as well as urban policies are actually problematic.

So we also took a look at the incident rates of crossing per county, because we want a different perspective of our – well, you can guess what that looks like. Marion County, which was, I'll go back here, just north of Eugene there, that is actually our capital area, the Salem area is there, and that was a notable outlier for us.

So we look in terms of time of day, as I mentioned, and we found that the lunch hour through that time spot that you see on the left, 10 a.m. to about 2:00 p.m. on weekdays, was one of our primary peak times for incidents. Also notable, the p.m. travel peak time on weekdays saw the most number of incidents following that. So again these occurred mostly on weekdays, specifically on Friday. And our summer and winter months were our peak times for incidents.

So why the incidents occurred was something we took a look at, and we found that nearly every incident occurred involved traveler judgment error. This is a very important assessment factor, this travel

behavior, so we actually took a deep dive and found that we were able to track 160 of the incidents that had occurred; occurred because the traveler either went around activated gates, stopped and proceeded, or got stuck on the tracks, indicating to us that the traveler judgment is a major contributing factor to our incidents. And while just less than 50 percent of Oregon's system is actually equipped with active crossings, 55 percent of our incidents occurred at an active crossing, and the equipment did not malfunction. Again, underscoring the significance of travel judgment at the time of the incident. We also took a look at the other 19 of those crossing characteristics, and we found that angle, we found a minor correlation with the angle of the intersection, and we really only found that correlation with the extreme angle crossing. In terms of approach or profile, we didn't see any correlation, but we did see a correlation with train speed, it just wasn't true as we had expected. The most number of our incidents occurred when the train was at a medium speed, or approximately 30 miles an hour, again, indicating that travelers are unable to judge the rate of speed at approaching trains. And when we took a look at the number of lanes on the roadway, we found that there was a connection with our smaller roads our one- or two-lane roads.

So as I mentioned earlier on, stakeholder input occurred throughout our plan development, so we incorporated stakeholder input in three ways.

So given the importance of stakeholder input, it was important for us to establish a standalone committee of crossing safety experts for this planned process. The group, which was comprised of railroads, local agencies, ODOT, Federal level, and Operation Lifesavers representatives, which convened for two intense work sessions. Additionally, we presented our plan and sought input from our standing Statewide Rail Advisory Committee, and we also reached out to numerous ODOT divisions and units for more information and input. We worked closely with our transportation safety division, our DMV, our motor vehicle – basically, our driver training vehicles, our active transportation group, which is our bicycle and pedestrian folks, our research division and our highway division of engineers, just to name some examples. We found that our plan actually resonated across these units throughout the agency and made a good number of connections.

During our stakeholder committee work sessions, as I mentioned there with two, we reviewed incident data, reviewed and debated contributing factors to incidents, we developed plan objectives, reviewed strategies and actions, and we discussed funding prioritization. So here are some highlights of what we heard from our stakeholders. First and foremost, multimodal crossings or those pedestrian and bicycle crossings, our glowing concern for them. Those folks were unsure of what information was best, where to get the information, and they really had an interest in how to best and safely incorporate the modes, and weren't certain how to do so. They also expressed concern over railroad response times.

Additionally, there was a lack of good, easily accessible, and comprehensive information on railroad crossings. And this is simply with regards to project development, the standards, and even the few who don't. So the next thing, we also heard the need for stronger partnerships. Railroad crossing projects involve a minimum of three partners: the railroads, the local road authority, and ODOT. And there was definitely concern for strengthening the road coordination relationships there. And finally, there was a clear desire to go beyond engineering for the maximum impact.

So in terms of our stakeholder objectives we worked with our stakeholders closely to develop our objectives, there are eight of them there.

I circled the three that really add robustness as a development with our stakeholders. So first, of course, collaborate and coordinate, and then you see number six there, balance safety and quality of life. There was definitely a debate about getting the needs, the railroad crossing needs, but still allowing accessible friendly areas as well, not to over engineer everything. And then finally leverage the opportunities best as possible.

So synthesizing all this information and translating it into strategies proved challenging, so we had many avenues of focus and many related actions, so we navigated this process through a series of steps. So first we selected our information, as I mentioned we did a robust data analysis, and we also checked into our research and relevant trends. Next, we assessed the key factors and trends that would specifically be impactful for Oregon, things like aging population, attraction, complacency, and reduced funding were major trends we noted. We also identified key areas of concerns but also gaps, areas we knew we had gaps in. From there, we started to put everything into our focus areas and then naturally, we've had to assess the feasibility and do a reality check. And then finally developed our plan strategies and these related actions.

So to synthesize all of this data analysis, the trends, the research, and the stakeholder input together, we developed 31 strategies and 85 actions would be an action plan in all to achieve those eight objectives that we mentioned. So they form the framework as a plan, and it's all fairly naturally the two categories: on the left you see modifying traveler behavior, meaning improving our traveler judgment and reducing risky behavior at crossings, and then on the right hand side, we see improving our ODOT processes for coordination collaboration. So with ODOT at the center of this effort been recognizing that you have to collaborate with all of our partners.

So on the left there you see some of the focus areas that fall into the modifying traveler behavior, and on the right you see the focus areas that fall under ODOT coordination and collaboration. These focus areas collectively form the Strategy Framework of the plan, and while each focus area is distinguished by unique contributions, they are all connected to improve crossing safety Oregon.

So we developed an action term table that take the 85 strategies and actions and puts them into short, mid, and long term categories. So our short term actions are those already in motion or to be completed within about a year. Our midterm actions take a bit more effort or resources, and plan to be completed by approximately 2021, and then naturally the longer term actions target more about five years.

I'm going to keep this brief and give you some highlights, this information should be available after this webinar and the document is available online, but here's just some high level looks at some of the actions that fall into each of these categories. I'm just going to draw your attention to a multimodal question, just for example. First and foremost for us, short term, we need to engage better with our pedestrian and bicycle engineers and planners, and get a sense of what these, not only the important needs are for them but how to best engage with their stakeholders. And I'm going to show you the other side of the coin here, and that is the coordination and collaboration section, which helps us really get to

what we're going to do with our data and our funding, and even how to coordinate our training and outreach. And at the far bottom-right of training and outreach, you see partner with our Operation Lifesaver partners. This has really been instrumental for us and all who we're working with.

So finally, in terms of plan schedule, we began this process in January 2018 and by May 2019 we were able to complete a plan draft and give that to our stakeholders for their review. We gave them about a month turn around, and we were able to complete the draft in July of 2019, so it was about 18 months total.

So now I'm going to hand it back to Rick to get some last words about lessons learned and what's happening.

Rick Shankle: So one of the major lessons learned, if you have planners, use them. We elected to not use a consultant and found definite advantages to be doing this in-house. Keep an open mind; we found that many groups have a lot of good ideas, incorporate stakeholder input, and don't underestimate the importance of coordination and collaboration.

Now that we've completed the plan I want to share some highlights of what we've discovered.

With the education, we've worked with our DMV to improve the manual, we're working with the CDL to improve that manual, we've got partners with our safety division helping with other training aids and developing and distributing a safety video which you can find on the link for our action plan.

With the coordination, this is the other side, we've been more engaged within our transportation project funding process, we're working with disadvantaged communities, and we've also improved our cooperation coordination with Operation Lifesaver.

We did promotional items such as umbrellas, bike bells, first-aid kits, flash drives, and multiuse chargers.

The next item is training and outreach. We've begun to work on a training curriculum for our local partners to include what they should know, how to contact about the plan, how to work with the railroads, and what not to do. This will be complemented with the development of a communications plan where we cite who our audience is, what the key messages should be, and how to get them out there.

We've also worked with our local social media, and this is a local newspaper that came out in August where they talked about our crossing safety within the State, but it must have been a slow news day because they also talked about a rabid bat biting a tourist.

Rail crossing safety - and one final area, for example, is our funding. We've been working on developing project needs, we're starting with grade separation needs. We've also worked with our partners with the purse strings, our legislature, to better convey the importance of funding. Current State funding is about 300,000 dollars, and that number has not changed since 1973.

For us, the key takeaway is think of rail crossing safety as holistically. We found that engineering alone is not enough. I know that needs to elevate the other areas, which are education, enforcement, and outreach, to improve safety of crossings.

Thank you very much for letting us provide you with the information. Time for questions.

Kelly Morton: Rick and Roseann, I want to thank you so much for your wonderful presentation, it was really great and we appreciate you taking the time to share it with us today. Real quick, there are several great questions in the chat box I'll throw your way.

One of them is regarding what you're doing with the funding aspect, and I know you just mentioned that in one of your just last slides, is there anything you wanted to add about funding?

Rick Shankle: We are currently working with our, like the slides said, or like I said in the slide, that we are currently working with our legislature to try and develop additional funding for grade separated projects and also increasing the amount of funding we receive from the State and, it's, a little bit of a long road to get a little bit more money out of our legislature.

Kelly Morton: Right, okay, thank you. There's another question: what are the number of crossing improvements that fall into the short through the long term plan?

Rick Shankle: Through the short and the long, we don't have a specific number of crossings that are falling in that. As we went through the analysis, we are able, with the funding that we receive, to do about four crossings a year. And part of our focus, that's the engineering side, that part of our focus is also to do the outreach education, social media has been a new aspect that we've started using to send out messages.

Kelly Morton: Okay, how do you address quiet zones in your plan?

Rick Shankle: Just to work collaborative with the Federal Railroad Administration. Quiet zones are regulated by the FRA, so it is my understanding that we are not allowed to use, I know we can't use State funds, that we're not also, we're also not allowed to use the Section 130 funds to establish quiet zones.

Kelly Morton: Okay, another question: are incidents due to blocked and occupied crossings that impact emergency vehicles considered part of your plan, and if so, how is the risk identified and quantified?

Rick Shankle: At this point, they will be, as part of the plan, they're, additional data. We are also looking at hazmat routes and several other aspects that we are developing a new risk model assessment that will incorporate those. That has not been completed yet.

Kelly Morton: Great! We might have to have you back to share that with us when done. At this time I'd like to ask Kelly Anne to give the operator instructions for anyone who wants to ask a question over the phone.

Operator: Certainly! On the phone, if you have a question that will be star one a voice indicate that your line has been open to ask your question. And again, star one.

Kelly Morton: Okay, while we're waiting to see if anyone calls in with a question over the phone, there was an additional question in the chat box regarding if anyone knows of a State public utility company that has completed a State Action Plan, and thank you to Steve who shared that the Illinois Commerce Commission prepared the plan for Illinois, we appreciate that, and he provided his email address if anyone has any further questions about Illinois' plan, plus the plans for the original 10 State Action Plans are available on the FHWA Rail Crossing Program Website, and that email – sorry - web site address was added to the chat box. Were there any questions over the phone?

Debra Chappell: If I can also add, there are other States out there that had public utility commissions as well. On the FHWA website, by the State Action Plans, you'll see it there.

Kelly Morton: Great, thank you Debra. Are there any questions over the phone?

Operator: Again, that is star one for questions.

Kelly Morton: While we're waiting to see if there are any questions over the phone, we've added the file share box and the web links box back up on the web room, so you can download copies of today's presentation and get web link addresses to many of the websites that we talked about today.

Okay, I see a couple more people typing, so we'll see if there's any additional questions that come in over the chat box.

Okay, while those questions are coming in on the chat box, a few reminders, an announcement. Many of you have probably heard by now, but we've recently published a new update to the Rail Highway Crossing Handbook, it's now called a Highway Rail Crossing Handbook, Third Edition, and you can download a copy for free from both FHWA and FRA's websites, plus there's a link to it in the web links box, so thank you to everybody interested in viewing the latest and greatest for the handbook.

We are working on some new noteworthy practices, sharing peer experiences from other States with you all. We have four that are getting ready to be published at any moment, we were hoping they'd be publishable by today, but we're still waiting on the final approval from our public affairs office, but, great news, they are coming soon. They will be covering issues such as pedestrian gate skirts, education efforts, partnering efforts in different States, and some State funding programs that might be good examples. So when those are available we will make sure to include an announcement and they will have links available on our website.

This is the link to the website, FHWA Rail Highway Crossing Program Page. Many of the resources that we talk about in these webinars are available here. You can always go here as your landing page to get more information.

With that, if you're talking about the State Action Plans with your stakeholders and they have questions about the Section 130 program, this is a great Federal-Aid Essentials Video that covers an overview of

the Section 130 program that you might be interested in sharing with your stakeholders who might be interested in getting more information about the 130 program. It is about five and a half minutes, and you can find a link at that website.

A couple other reminders about some upcoming events, while some of the recent conferences that were scheduled for the spring has been postponed, FRA is planning a few roadshows in Texas, Florida, Illinois, and California, and as a side note there was a question earlier about leveraging additional funding sources, that will be a topic at the roadshows, if it's possible for you to get to one of those. Debra, did you want to add anything about the upcoming FRA roadshows?

Debra Chappell: Kelly, you know, at this point we are rescheduling for a later time and more information will follow. Thank you.

Kelly Morton: Thank you. Okay, and there's a few questions in the chat box, we'll try and get to them, we do have a hard stop at the bottom of the hour. There's one from Montana: under the proposed rule, States are to have their final rule completed in 426 days. Why 426 days? Sorry, that's the action plan completed. If anybody want to answer that?

Debra Chappell: I'm not so involved in the rulemaking effort. Kathy, are you still there?

Kathy Gresham: I am, I am indeed. You know, we are getting a little close to the line, but I think just as far as explaining where the 426 days came from, a year is 365 days, and an additional two months, when it's gotten up to about 426 days. Generally speaking, when final rules are issued, they generally take effect two month later, so that's where the 60 days comes from.

Kelly Morton: And Kathy, where will the new rule, when it's finished, be published, so that folks can get a list?

Kathy Gresham: Oh, so it will be published in the Federal Register, just like this proposed rule is published in the Federal Register.

Kelly Morton: Great, thank you. And I saw there was another question that Oregon already answered, thank you for that, for how long it took to complete the plan. Operator, were there any questions over the phone?

Operator: No questions, however again, that is star one, though.

Kelly Morton: Thank you very much. While we're waiting to see if there's any last questions I wanted to thank everybody for their patience today during some of the technological difficulties. Overall, everything went smoothly. Special thank you to the speakers for joining us today and sharing their great presentations, and once again a huge thank you to the behind-the-scenes staff that helps us with the webinars, from web conferencing team, the operator, and also Kayce Georgi who is doing a large part of the behind-the-scenes work for this.

There are some final poll questions up in the web room. We'd like you to take a moment to let us know what you would like to see for our next webinar topic and how you would rate today's webinar.

Thank you all for attending today, keep an eye out for the next webinar announcement and an announcement about the webinar recording when it's done in the next one to two weeks, it will be both put up on the FHWA rail crossing webpage, and I also appreciate everyone sharing their experiences in the chat box, this is a great forum for peer States to share what each other are doing, and there was a great conversation going on in the chat box, so thank you for that.

And last but not least, don't forget to slow down, buckle up, and always drive safe near trains. And when you see tracks, think trains. Have a great rest of your week! Thank you.

Operator: And ladies and gentlemen, that concludes today's conference. Thank you for joining us.