



➤ Message from the Associate Administrator for Safety, Cheryl Walker

Protecting the Most Vulnerable



Cheryl Walker
Associate Administrator
for Safety

As roadway safety practitioners, we have a language of our own. Given our focus on engineering infrastructure, it's often technical. But there's one term that stands out to me: "Vulnerable Road User." Unlike most jargon, the use of "vulnerable" conveys the deep concern that my Office—and everyone working in the safety field—has for the people walking, rolling, and biking on our roads.

At some point, each of us falls into this at-risk category. When you're returning to your parked car or heading out to catch the bus, you become a Vulnerable Road User.

From a long-term perspective, we've gotten better at protecting passengers riding inside vehicles. However, fatalities and serious injuries for pedestrians and cyclists have significantly increased.

As we mark Pedestrian Safety Month in October, I'm heartened to see that 43 percent of the groups pledging commitments to the U.S. DOT's National Roadway Safety Strategy have focused on measures that protect Vulnerable Road Users. These Allies in Action come from all sectors of society; please encourage the stakeholders in your network to commit to meaningful actions too.

Good ideas have a way of spreading. You can multiply the impact of your roadway safety projects by submitting them to the U.S. DOT's Allies in Action website, which showcases bold and transformative safety efforts from across the country.

My team is also committed to sharing your successes so they can be adopted by others. In this newsletter you can read about communities at home and abroad—from Colorado to New Zealand—that are thinking systematically about safety. They're building redundancy into transportation networks that safeguard all roadway users, including the most vulnerable.

Wherever you are on your journey to protect people who walk, bike, and roll, the Federal Highway Administration's Office of Safety is here to serve you. Together, we will save lives.



Reduce fatalities and serious injuries to bikers, rollers, and walkers by implementing some of FHWA's Proven Safety Countermeasures.
(Source: FHWA)

Let's all be safe out there,

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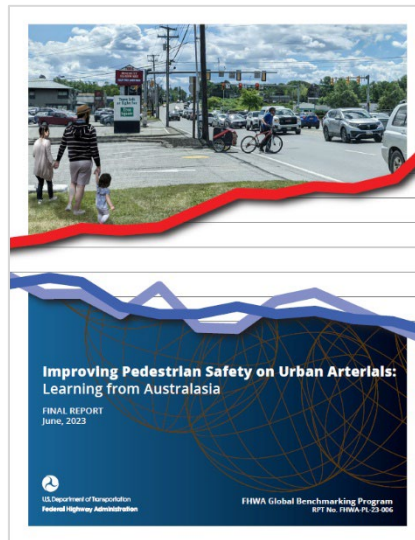
➤ PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLIST SAFETY

FHWA Undertakes Global Benchmarking Study Focused on Improving Pedestrian Safety on Arterials

By: Tamara Redmon, FHWA Office of Safety

Representatives from FHWA, State and local transportation agencies, and a university participated in a study tour under the [FHWA Global Benchmarking Program](#) (GBP). The GBP serves as a tool for accessing, evaluating, and implementing proven international practices to improve highway transportation in the United States.

The purpose of this study was to examine noteworthy approaches and innovations used by other countries to achieve reductions in serious pedestrian injuries and fatalities on arterial roadways. The study team



(Source: FHWA)

researched strategies from 11 peer countries in Europe, South America, and Australasia (Australia, New Zealand, and surrounding islands) that outperform the United States in pedestrian-safety outcomes.

This research included a literature review and interviews with more than 40 subject matter experts to identify the best candidate locations to inform U.S. approaches to improving pedestrian safety on urban signalized arterials. Based on the findings, the study team developed an interim desk review entitled [Global Benchmarking Program: Reducing Pedestrian Fatalities and Serious Injuries on Urban Signalized Arterials](#). FHWA then held a follow-on [webinar](#) to discuss the desk review. The recorded webinar is now available [online](#) (passcode: 6&CJhs=2).

Based on the results of the interviews and literature review, the study team selected New Zealand and Australia for a week-long study tour to learn more about these countries’ approaches to improving pedestrian safety on their

NEW: Notice of Establishment of the Motorcyclist Advisory Council (MAC)

From the Federal Register: [Notice of establishment of the Motorcyclist Advisory Council \(MAC\) and solicitation for appointment to the MAC \(88 FR 65769\)](#). The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration announced the establishment of the MAC for a 2-year period. The MAC will coordinate with and advise the Secretary of Transportation, the NHTSA Administrator, and the Federal Highway Administration Administrator on transportation issues of concern to motorcyclists, including: motorcycle and motorcyclist safety; barrier and road design, construction, and maintenance practices; and the architecture and implementation of intelligent transportation system technologies. NHTSA is also soliciting nominations for appointment to the MAC. Applications for membership must be received by NHTSA on or before 5 p.m. EST, December 15, 2023. [Read the full Notice here.](#)

transportation networks, particularly on arterial roadways. A full account of the study and findings are documented in a recently completed report entitled [Improving Pedestrian Safety on Urban Arterials: Learning from Australasia](#).

The team developed the following goals for implementing key findings and recommended actions for the FHWA that will be undertaken over the next couple of years:

- Identify, document, and pursue opportunities to integrate the context classification / movement and place framework (i.e., considering the function of each road type within the road network and how it performs to meet the needs of a community) into existing programs and initiatives.
- Coordinate with the FHWA Speed Management Team to recommend updating speed-setting guidelines to facilitate lower speeds.
- Advance the integration of modern, multimodal Road Safety Audit (RSA) processes into new projects.
- Support the resourcing of demonstration projects to

highlight tech transfer possibilities.

- Advance research that integrates study findings, including:
 - Identifying and documenting Federal resources to fund demonstration projects.
 - Supporting State DOTs, planning organizations, and cities in adapting learning from the report to their programs and processes via pilot demonstration projects.
 - Reviewing findings from previous readiness assessments to determine future research.
 - Researching data collection and data management strategies for robust analysis.
 - Identifying research that could be conducted by academia.

A [four-part webinar series](#) will share the results of the study, focusing on: key findings and recommendations (Part 1), the Movement and Place Framework (Part 2), integration of Road Safety Audits (Part 3), network-level approaches for speed management (Part 4). Panelists from FHWA, PBIC, the U.S. DOT Volpe National Transportation Systems

Center, and agency representatives from the United States, New Zealand, and Australia will describe how these approaches in policy, planning, and design may be applied to U.S. arterials roadways.

For more information contact tamara.redmon@dot.gov.

NEW: Final Rule on Public Right-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines for Pedestrian Facilities

Across the Nation, many communities still have sidewalks, crosswalks, and other pedestrian facilities that are inaccessible to pedestrians with disabilities. Because pedestrian travel is the principal means of independent transportation for many people with disabilities, equal access to pedestrian facilities is particularly important.

On August 8, 2023, the U.S. Access Board advanced the effort to address this inequity by publishing the [Final Public Right-of-Way Accessibility Guidelines \(Final PROWAG\)](#) in the Federal Register.

Key pedestrian facilities addressed in the guidelines include:



- Sidewalks, crosswalks, shared use paths, and other pedestrian circulation paths
- Alternate pedestrian access routes where a pedestrian circulation path is temporarily not accessible
- Accessible pedestrian signals
- Transit stops
- On-street parking

In keeping with the process set forth by the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Final PROWAG will become enforceable after the Department of Justice (DOJ) and Department of Transportation (DOT) adopt accessibility standards that are “consistent with” the PROWAG through separate rulemaking.

In the meantime, public entities have some flexibility in complying with the general obligation under Title II of

the ADA to ensure that their facilities are “accessible to and usable by” individuals with disabilities. At present, public entities may turn to different resources for guidance, including the Final PROWAG, [DOJ’s 2010 ADA Standards](#), and other accessibility resources.

Visit the [U.S. Access Board](#) for more information and resources.

➤ MOVING TOWARD ZERO

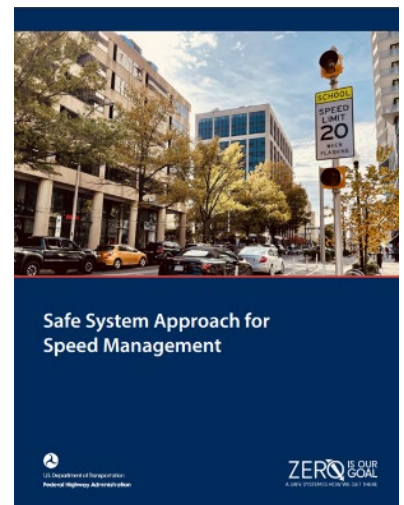
New Products Alert! The Safe System Approach for Speed Management Report and a New NHI Speed Management Training Course

By: Anyesha Mookherjee and Jeff King,
FHWA Office of Safety

In the last edition of the *Safety Compass*, we brought you news on the recently, updated *Speed Safety Camera Program Planning and*

Operations Guide. The FHWA speed management team is happy to be back with two additional resources: the [Safe System Approach for Speed Management](#) report and a new NHI training course, [Designing and Operating Roadways for Safe Speeds](#).

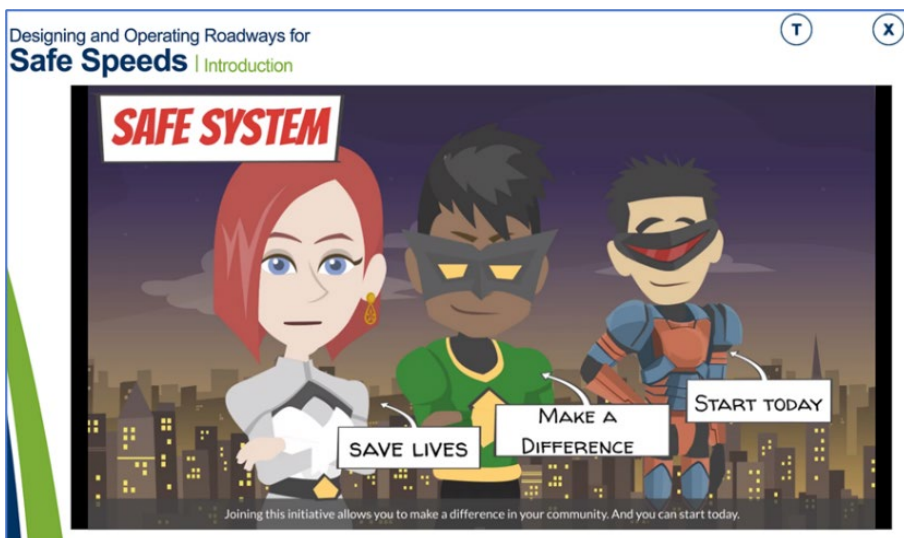
The correlation between speed and injury crashes has been well documented throughout the scientific literature on traffic safety, and achieving lower speeds has been



(Source: FHWA)

proven to save lives and reduce serious injuries. To achieve a truly safe transportation system, road safety practitioners should not only manage speeds, but make achieving safe speeds on all roads a cornerstone of their safety policies.

The *Safe System Approach for Speed Management* report will help practitioners understand the impacts of speed on traffic safety and explore the link between speed management and the Safe System Approach by introducing a five-stage framework. These five stages are establishing a vision and building consensus for

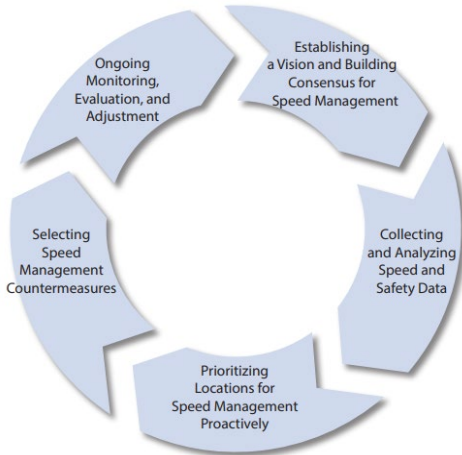


A screen capture from the self-paced *Designing and Operating Roadways for Safe Speeds* course.

(Source: FHWA)



speed management, collecting, and analyzing speed and safety data, prioritizing locations for speed management proactively, selecting speed management countermeasures, and conducting ongoing monitoring, evaluation, and adjustment.



The Safe System Approach for Speed Management Framework.
(Source: FHWA)

The “[Designing and Operating Roadways for Safe Speeds](#)” online course delivers free, self-paced training that provides learners with the knowledge and skills they need to design safe roads effectively, set safe speeds, and select treatments that mitigate crash severity. Participants will learn how incorporating innovative design concepts and new approaches to setting speeds—such as self-enforcing roadways, target speed, and injury minimization—can reduce the likelihood of fatal and serious injury crashes for all roadway users. To register, or to learn more, visit the [National Highway Institute \(course number: FHWA-NHI-380128\)](#).

The [FHWA Resource Center](#) is also pleased to announce the availability

of a one-day, instructor-led training course that builds on the web-based training. The instructor-led training includes engaging exercises and focuses on the process for setting speeds based on target speed and injury minimization objectives to serve all roadway users.

For more information on these new resources, please contact [Anyesha Mookherjee](#) or [Jeff King](#).

New Resources Educate, Aid Practitioners in Applying the Safe System Approach

By Chimai Ngo, FHWA Office of Safety

The Office of Safety is busy developing new products and resources for practitioners that highlight current challenges and illustrate how applying the Safe System Approach (SSA) can help overcome them and improve safety for all road users across the Nation. We encourage you to share these with your networks by including them in your organization’s e-newsletters, websites, intranets, and social channels.

New Safe System Video Now Available

A new, 5-minute [Safe System video](#) gives a complete overview of the philosophy behind the Safe System Approach. This video uses a



FHWA’s new Safe System video.
(Source: FHWA)

scenario that illustrates an opportunity to save lives when SSA is implemented. The goal of the video is to educate and encourage practitioners to spread the word about the Safe System Approach and incorporate the concepts into their own communities.

Vision Zero Case Studies Highlight Communication, Partnership, and Safe System Principles

The Office of Safety has issued a series of case studies showcasing how State and local agencies are working together, and with communities and stakeholders, to advance Safe System principles and implement Vision Zero policies to improve safety for all users. We hope they inspire and connect practitioners around innovative ways to apply the Safe System Approach to achieve both safety and mobility goals.

- [Promoting Vision Zero: A Case Study from Richmond, VA](#). Communication, outreach, and partnerships are deployed to promote Vision Zero and grow a safety culture in organizations throughout the City of Richmond, VA.
- [Rapid Response Program in Denver, CO](#). A Vision Zero program brings together different city departments to investigate fatal crashes and determine appropriate treatments—engineering, education, enforcement, or a combination of the three—at crash locations and sites with similar characteristics.





Following quarterly compliance studies, SGF Yields added signs to treated intersections or mid-block crossings to publicly display the rate at which drivers had yielded to pedestrians. (Source: SGF Yields)

- [Highway 316 Redesign in Hasting, MI](#). Presented in the ArcGIS Storymap format, this story explains how a State DOT worked with a city to engage the community to improve a road segment, leveraging Safe System principles to bring safety to all road users.
- [SGF Yields – A Pedestrian Safety Program in Springfield, MO](#). Also in the ArcGIS Storymap format, this story depicts how a city leveraged Safe System principles in implementing a citywide program that ensures drivers yield to pedestrians.

To learn more about the Safe System Approach, please contact [Chimai Ngo](#), or visit the [Zero Deaths and Safe System](#) landing page.

Tony Ciko: Cable Barriers “Likely Saved My Life”

By Chimai Ngo, FHWA Office of Safety

Every time Tony Ciko drives near the Williamsburg exit on Interstate-70 East in Missouri, he recalls the day when, in a matter of seconds, everything could have changed but for cable barriers—the traffic safety measure he believes saved his life in the summer of 2007.

Ciko was driving to Jefferson City, MO, when a driver in the opposing lane lost control of their vehicle.

“I was driving in the left lane and suddenly I saw a passenger car coming toward me that was weaving left to right,” Ciko recalled. “It then completely lost control and drove into the median. It looked like it was coming right at me. But then the vehicle quickly turned parallel to the road in the middle of the median.”

The vehicle had careened into a median cable barrier. Cable barriers are made of three or four steel cables mounted on weak steel posts. When a vehicle hits it, the flexible barrier absorbs much energy of the impact, capturing or redirecting the vehicle to prevent it from crossing the median.

Interstate 70, one of the country’s oldest interstates, was built with 40-foot medians instead of the 60-foot medians that are standard today. After Missouri installed nearly 180 miles of median cable barriers on I-70, cross-median fatalities decreased by 92 percent, according to AASHTO.

Those life-saving benefits were likely realized by Ciko and other road

users that day when the runaway vehicle finally came to a complete stop. At that point, Ciko parked his car and checked on the passengers.

“It was a car with four young people,” he said. “The driver said they leaned forward to adjust the radio and that distracted them. It apparently caused them to lose control.”

Luckily, no one was injured.

“Although I can’t be a hundred percent sure they would have hit me, I was a hundred percent sure they were completely out of control, coming across the median in the wrong direction on the interstate,” Ciko said. “It is very likely the cable barriers saved *their* lives as well.”

The author would like to thank Tony Ciko, who contributed his story. At the time of the incident, he was a consultant for the Missouri DOT. He is currently retired.

Using Innovative Contracting Approaches to Get Safety Projects Done Faster, at Lower Cost

by Rick Drumm, P.E., Office of Safety

The Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) at FHWA regularly produces “Noteworthy Practices” focused on streamlining safety project delivery. Recently, the program highlighted innovative contracting methods that various States are using, in cooperation with FHWA Division Offices, to implement Safety projects faster and at a lower cost. Each practice is described in a two-page fact sheet. An explanation of the approach along with two State experiences are discussed for each HSIP Noteworthy Practice:



- **Design-Build Contracting.** Florida and Missouri have bundled several low-cost safety projects under single contract vehicles to address multiple smaller scale safety projects quickly and efficiently.
- **Force Accounts.** Alabama and Mississippi are using public maintenance workforces to implement needed, low-cost safety improvements at high-risk locations to improve safety now.
- **Indefinite Delivery/Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ).** In Montana, job order contracting provides a way for the State DOT to deliver common, low-cost safety projects at HSIP project sites, while Delaware uses a combination of open-ended contracts with no treatment locations specified as well as contracts that list only some treatment sites, leaving others to be determined.

- **Materials Procurement.** Maine is using HSIP funds to buy materials for localities to install on local roads, while the Ohio LTAP invites the counties with the most challenging crash problems to apply for a Township Sign Grant to fund the purchase of signs for installation on local roadways.

The States highlighted in these Noteworthy Practices demonstrate that effective alternatives to traditional contracting paths exist. While the use of innovative methods is not limited to the featured States, these States provide notable examples of how contracting techniques can be applied effectively to increase safety, including on local and rural roadways. By using these approaches, States have shown that safety projects can be installed faster and at lower cost, which results in more lives saved, more serious injuries reduced, and more



(Source: FHWA)

resources available for other safety projects.

If your State is interested in pursuing one of these innovative project delivery methods for your safety projects, please contact your FHWA Division Office.

For more information on the HSIP Noteworthy Practices, please contact Rick Drumm, rick.drumm@dot.gov.

➤ ASSESSMENT AND ANALYSIS

Safety Performance Target Setting: Understanding the State of the Practice

By: Danielle Betkey, FHWA Office of Safety; Charles Meyer, FHWA Office of Safety; Catherine Chestnutt, VHB; Jeff Gooch, VHB; Frank Gross, VHB; Mikayla Brooks, VHB

Performance management is the process of establishing and assessing safety performance measures and targets related to the lives lost and serious injuries incurred on the Nation’s roadways. States use safety performance measures to assess progress toward safety goals, which can lead to

better accountability and program agility.

States are required to establish targets annually for each safety performance measure (23 CFR 490.209(a)) and report those safety performance targets in the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) annual report (23 CFR 490.213(a)).

States must develop five safety performance targets: number of fatalities, rate of fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles traveled (VMT), number of serious injuries, rate of serious injuries per 100 million VMT,



(Source: FHWA)

and number of non-motorized fatalities and serious injuries.

In an effort to learn more about how States set targets, how targets influence project planning and programming decisions, and how others can learn from States' successes and challenges, the FHWA conducted a scan that resulted in the new [Safety Performance Target Setting: State of the Practice Report](#). The report details the methodology for how State agencies set and apply safety performance targets; shares States' future plans for target-setting practices; presents how target setting informs investment decisions; and identifies example State practices.

Safety Performance Target Setting State of the Practice

The *Safety Performance Target Setting: State of the Practice Report*



uses anonymous survey data from all 50 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico and follow-up interviews with 15 States to better understand safety performance target-setting practices and how these targets inform project planning and programming decisions.

States reported using a variety of methodologies for setting safety performance targets, from selecting goal-driven targets to align with the aspirational goals established in the Strategic Highway Safety Plan

(SHSP), to using sophisticated data models to forecast future safety performance targets.

States shared several thoughts on the safety performance target-setting process. The States noted increased communication and interest among stakeholders. They also pointed out that the safety performance target-setting process was effective in helping to communicate the need to include safety in all projects (not just those funded through the HSIP) and during early development of programming and scoping phases. Moreover, the States pointed out the performance management process reinforces the need for a systemic approach to safety, which lowers risk across multiple sites rather than individual, larger scale, site-specific projects. The States also commented on other issues such as how and whether the performance management target-setting process impacts project selection and the availability of recent data.

Example State Practices

Nearly half of States (45 percent) found the target-setting process to be an effective mechanism for supporting informed decisions on safety investments.

States noted that performance target setting had an array of positive impacts, ranging from greater stakeholder interest in safety trends and promoting safety culture to incorporating local agencies in the safety performance target-setting process and helping them analyze

their data, provide feedback on the safety performance targets, and apply for HSIP funds.

One State sets safety performance targets based on planned improvements and policy changes. Highlighting political actions such as policy changes shows how a strong safety culture can influence safety performance target setting.

States also mentioned support from representatives from the 4Es (engineering, enforcement, education, and emergency medical services), which included educating leadership about a multi-disciplinary approach. This approach helps agencies to address safety issues from multiple angles as some State leaders focused more on infrastructure-related strategies than non-infrastructure and behavior-related strategies.

Several States also noted a strong connection between safety performance target setting, the HSIP, and the SHSP processes. The collaborative nature of many States' safety performance target-setting approach is similar to the planning process that informs the SHSP.

State DOTs, State Highway Safety Offices, MPOs, and other local agencies can use the information highlighted throughout the report to enhance inter-agency communication, support short-term actions and progress toward zero fatalities and serious injuries, and use HSIP Implementation Plans to better understand their HSIP



program, projects, and where investments can be made to make the greatest impact.

To learn more, read the [Safety Performance Target Setting: State of the Practice Report](#).

For more information, contact [Danielle Betkey](#).

► ANNOUNCEMENTS

State Safety Performance Target Assessment Results Now Available for CY 2021

By Danielle Betkey, FHWA Office of Safety

The results of the calendar year [2021 State Safety Performance Target Assessments](#) are now available on the [TPM State Performance Dashboard and Reports](#) website. Ten States (19 percent) met or made significant progress and 42 States (81 percent) did not. In an effort to elevate the safety performance target results, FHWA has also included a link on the FHWA safety performance targets and target assessment summary for each State that enables users to download a file of all the State data for CY 2021.

For more information, please contact Danielle Betkey at Danielle.Betkey@dot.gov.

Upcoming Conferences and Events

[38th Annual North Central Regional Local Roads Conference](#). **Sioux**

Falls, SD. October 23-25, 2023.

Sponsored by the South Dakota Local Transportation Assistance Program (SDLTAP), this conference provides an opportunity to learn and share ideas about building and maintaining safe, local roadways. The target audience is highway superintendents/county engineers, municipal street managers, equipment operators, consulting engineers, and elected officials.

[Safe Routes to School Virtual Summit 2023](#). **October 24–26, 2023.**

Sponsored by the Safe Routes Partnership, this three-day summit will be filled with presentations and networking opportunities for Safe Routes practitioners, partners, and champions.

[AASHTO Annual Meeting & Expo](#). **Indianapolis, IN.**

November 13–16, 2023. This annual meeting brings together experts from the public and private sector to share the latest in industry policy and innovation. Attendees will have the opportunity to network with fellow transportation professionals and contribute to discussions on a

wide range of issues facing the industry today and tomorrow.

[Crash Responder Safety Week](#).

November 13-17, 2023. This Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) sponsored initiative communicates the simple steps everyone can take in keeping our roadway responders and the public safe around traffic incidents. CRSW is an opportunity to promote road user awareness and adherence to Move Over laws and Traffic Incident Management (TIM) training for all traffic incident responders.

[103rd Transportation Research Board \(TRB\) Annual Meeting](#).

Washington, DC. January 7–11, 2024. TRB's Annual Meeting attracts thousands of transportation professionals from around the world. The program covers all transportation modes, with sessions and workshops addressing topics of interest to policy makers, practitioners, researchers, and representatives from government, industry, and academic institutions.



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The Safety Compass Newsletter is available online at the FHWA Office of Safety website at:
<http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/newsletter/safetycompass/>.

We welcome your comments and highway safety-related articles. The purpose of this newsletter is to increase highway safety awareness and information and to provide resources to help save lives.

We encourage readers to submit highway safety articles that might be of value to the highway safety community. Send your comments, questions, and articles for review electronically to Tina Tennessen at: christina.tennessen@dot.gov.

