Effectively Communicating Safety with Elected and Tribal Officials

National Transportation in Indian Country Conference
September 17, 2019
Participants

» Name
» Agency/Organization
» Job Responsibilities
» Training Goal
### Workshop Goal and Purpose

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Goal</strong></th>
<th><strong>Purpose</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ensure road safety practitioners maximize opportunities to communicate technical transportation safety information to a non-technical audience</td>
<td>Provide practitioners practical methods and tips to effectively communicate technical information to their tribal officials and leaders and the public</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
# Workshop Overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part 1</th>
<th>Communication Basics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Part 2</strong></td>
<td>The Importance of Communicating Transportation Safety with Tribal Officials and Others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Part 3</strong></td>
<td>Ways to Discuss Transportation Safety and Effectively Communicate Your Message</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Part 4</strong></td>
<td>Techniques to Engage Local Elected Officials</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Part 1: Communication Basics
What is Communication?
How to be Persuasive

Credibility

Emotion

Logic
Communication Problems

» Barriers
  ▪ Environmental
  ▪ Language
  ▪ Psychological

» Miscommunication
  ▪ Information is incorrectly delivered
  ▪ Information is misinterpreted

» Personal Values & Beliefs
  ▪ Myths and misconceptions about safety
Part 2: The Importance of Communicating Safety with Elected Officials and Tribal Leaders
The Importance of Transportation Safety to Elected Officials and Tribal Leaders

» Knowledge of issues

» Budget and funding

» Responsibility for the quality of life and public health

» Partner access

» Ability to make a difference
Supporting Transportation Safety

» Bring up safety at meetings and other public forums

» Discuss safety issues in newsletters, web sites, blogs and ensure elected officials receive the information

» Request testimony from safety experts when legislating on road improvements

» Assist in the planning process and determining funding

» Know the types, locations, and causes of crashes in their area

» Understand the role of the 4 Es of safety
Challenges in Communicating Safety

» Varying levels of expertise in the subject area

» Limited time available

» Multiple issues and concerns that all need attention

» Limited budgets and resources
# Meeting With Elected Officials

## Tips for a Successful Meeting

- Be flexible with scheduling
- Address the individual formally
- Be a good listener
- Stick to the issue
- Follow up with additional information as appropriate
- Be prepared
Part 3: Ways to Discuss Transportation Safety and Effectively Communicate Your Message
Communicating Safety to a Non-Technical Audience

» Learn the facts

» Keep it simple

» Emphasize results using creative presentations

» Network

» Share successes
Learn the Facts

» Problem locations, crash data, causes, and citizen concerns

» Potential safety strategies and countermeasures to address issues

» State and Federal funding options and relevant safety policies
Relevant Transportation Safety Policies

» Policies

- Policies on setting speed limits
- Cell phones and texting
- Distribution of HSIP and HSP funds
- Last call for alcohol at bars
- Red-light cameras
- Bicycle/pedestrian policies
- Motorcycle helmet use
Sources for Strategies and Proven Countermeasures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Safety Strategy</strong></th>
<th><strong>Proven Countermeasure</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP)</td>
<td>FHWA Proven Countermeasures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)</td>
<td>NCHRP 500 series</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freight Plan</td>
<td>NHTSA Countermeasures that Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bike Plan</td>
<td>Crash Modification Clearinghouse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian Plan</td>
<td>Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) Manual</td>
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<tr>
<td>Local Road Safety Plans</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
FHWA Proven Safety Countermeasures

- Roundabouts
- Corridor Access Management
- Backplates with Retroflective Borders
- Longitudinal Rumble Strips and Stripes on Two-Lane Roads
- Enhanced Delineation and Friction for Horizontal Curves
- Safety Edge<sub>SM</sub>
- Medians and Pedestrian Crossing Islands in Urban and Suburban Areas
- Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon
- Road Diet

https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/provencountermeasures/
Keep it Simple

» Clear and concise language

» Non-technical jargon

» Avoid acronyms

» Make this statement simple
  - *Fred from Ops asked us to send him the SHSP to see whether or not it was coordinated with the HSP, HSIP, the STIP and LRTP. He noted we are having trouble with our data because it is not MMUCC compliant. We’ll also need to get with the HSO to resolve the SHSP EA data and FARS.*
Emphasize Results Using Creative Presentations

» Tell the same story as your data

» Limit the information to your audience’s need

» Be easily understandable and engaging
Sample Visuals

Before Safety Improvement

Proposed Low-Cost Improvement
In 2016, unbelted fatalities accounted for 31.8% of all fatalities.
Network and Enlist Help from Partners

» Law enforcement

» Emergency medical services

» Highway Safety Office staff
Share Successes

» From similar communities
» Effective countermeasures
» “Saved by the Belt”
Make it Personal

» Interests

» Background

» Transportation experience

» Constituent concerns
Potential Opposition

» Know the arguments
  ▪ Anticipate opposing views

» Prepare responses

» Provide visual aids to address them
Case Study Road Diets – Grand Junction, CO

» What are the facts?

» How would you keep it simple?

» What type of a presentation would you do?

» What outreach is needed to other partners?

» What successes would you present?
Common Mistakes for Presenters

» Not knowing key information

» Reading from the slides, not presenting

» Providing too much information

» Poorly designing the presentation

» Including too many slides or too much information on one slide

» Providing too many distractions with animations

» Not checking all the equipment BEFORE the presentation
Part 4: Ways to Engage Local Elected Officials
In Person Meetings

- Town Hall Meetings
- Council Meetings
- One-on-One Meetings
- Road Safety Events
- Open House
Other Means for Engagement

» Phone
» Email
» Social media
» News releases
» Informational handouts
» Public acknowledgement
What to think about before calling, emailing or meeting with an elected official?

Key Message

Strategy

Identify Their Role
Plans for Action

» Future engagement with elected officials/tribal leaders
  ▪ Long and short term

» Determine success
  ▪ Hosting a meeting
  ▪ Request accepted
  ▪ Relationship established
Available Resources

Local/Rural Road Safety

https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/local_rural/

Videos

http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/local_rural/training/

Or contact the National Center for Rural Road Safety Help Desk at:
(844) 330-2200 or info@ruralsafetycenter.org

To learn more about the Safety Center:
Available Resources

» Local/Rural Road Safety
  ▪  https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/local_rural

» Training, tools, guidance, countermeasures, videos
  ▪  https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/local_rural/training/

» Technical Assistance/Noteworthy Practices

» National Center on Rural Road Safety
  ▪  http://ruralsafetycenter.org

» Tribal Technical Assistance Program
  ▪  https://ttap-center.org/
Role Play Exercise

» Two volunteers
  ▪ Tribal leader
  ▪ Tribal planner or engineer

» Safety issue
  ▪ Install rumble strips at a location that has a high number of crashes

» Arguments
  ▪ Number of crashes, deaths, serious injuries along the road segment
  ▪ Benefits of rumble strips
  ▪ Cost
Presenter

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