



U.S. Department
of Transportation

**National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration**



DOT HS 813 537

March 2024

Nighttime Seat Belt Enforcement: A How-To Guide and Case Study Summary

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Suggested APA Format Citation:

Miller, R. J., Miller, S., Redden, C., Retting, R., & Sprattler, K. (2024, March). *Nighttime seat belt enforcement: A how-to guide and case study summary* (Report No. DOT HS 813 537). National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

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Technical Report Documentation Page

1. Report No. DOT HS 813 537	2. Government Accession No.	3. Recipient's Catalog No.	
4. Title and Subtitle Nighttime Seat Belt Enforcement: A How-To Guide and Case Study Summary		5. Report Date March 2024	
		6. Performing Organization Code	
7. Authors Richard J. Miller (Senior Traffic Safety Consultant, M. Davis and Company, Inc.); Sheryl Miller (Toxcel); Carrie Redden (Toxcel); Richard Retting (Sam Schwartz: A TYLin Company); and Karen Sprattler (Sprattler Group)		8. Performing Organization Report No. DOT-VNTSC-NHTSA-xx- xx	
9. Performing Organization Name and Address Toxcel 7140 Heritage Village Plaza Gainesville, VA 20155		10. Work Unit No. (TRAIS)	
		11. Contract or Grant No. Contract DTNH2216D00018 /Task Order 693JJ919F000195	
12. Sponsoring Agency Name and Address National Highway Traffic Safety Administration 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE Washington, DC 20590		13. Type of Report and Period Covered 2018 – 2020	
		14. Sponsoring Agency Code	
15. Supplementary Notes Janice Hartwill-Miller served as the NHTSA COR.			
16. Abstract This how-to guide gives an overview of best practices to conduct nighttime seat belt enforcement. It contains practical checklists for law enforcement agencies to consider when planning and implementing nighttime seat belt enforcement operations. In addition, this report describes nighttime seat belt enforcement practices of case study States.			
17. Key Words nighttime, seat belt, law enforcement, occupant protection, high-visibility enforcement, primary law, secondary law, enforcement tactics, traffic safety		18. Distribution Statement This document is available to the public from the DOT, BTS, National Transportation Library, Repository & Open Science Access Portal, https://rosap.ntl.bts.gov .	
19. Security Classif. (of this report) Unclassified	20. Security Classif. (of this page) Unclassified	21. No. of Pages 78	22. Price

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Acknowledgements

This guide is the result of collaboration among traffic safety experts, law enforcement agencies (LEAs), and State Highway Safety Offices (SHSOs). The authors are grateful for the time and contributions provided in developing this document. In particular, the efforts of the following organizations and people are greatly appreciated.

- Georgia Governor's Office of Highway Safety
- Maryland Office of Highway Safety
- Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, Division of Highway Safety & Traffic Operations
- Washington Traffic Safety Commission
- Highway Safety Network
- Montgomery County Police Department, Maryland
- Prince George's County Police Department, Maryland
- National Highway Traffic Safety Administration Regional Offices
- Chief Raul Almeida (Retired), Almeida's Consulting & Training, LLC
- Glenn Cramer, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Region 10, Law Enforcement Liaison

Executive Summary

This is a *how-to guide* for law enforcement agencies and their partners in traffic safety, criminal justice, and the community to understand the process of planning and implementing nighttime seat belt enforcement (NTSBE) operations. The guide addresses many of the challenges faced when operationalizing NTSBE including troubleshooting poor visibility, safeguarding officer safety, balancing resource needs for other safety and criminal efforts, and highlighting differences in enforcement techniques among primary and secondary enforcement States.

This guide was derived from conversations with experienced experts in NTSBE and outlines how to create a foundation for successful implementation (e.g., integrated enforcement), select tactics (i.e., saturation patrols, checkpoints, spotters, channelization), develop communication strategies, and evaluate the success of the effort.

There are notable differences between States that have a primary enforcement seat belt law (in which a vehicle may be stopped and issued a seat belt citation in the vehicle because there are unrestrained occupants) and a secondary enforcement law (in which a seat belt citation may only be issued if the vehicle is stopped for some other reason). The implications of these differences are discussed and a checklist for each situation (primary or secondary) is provided.

The key elements of the checklists are as follows.

- Lay the groundwork.
- Meet with local prosecutor and/or traffic court judge.
- Collect or review data to identify NTSBE locations.
- Select sites for enforcement.
- Choose enforcement tactics.
- Create an operations plan.
- Plan and implement a communications strategy.
- Train officers.
- Conduct NTSBE deployment.
- Measure effectiveness.

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Introduction: Opportunities to Increase Seat Belt Use at Night

The nighttime seat belt problem is found when looking at Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) data, specifically of the 12,931 people who were killed in *nighttime* passenger vehicle crashes in 2021, where 57 percent (or 6,491) were unrestrained. The percentage of people who die unrestrained is greater at night (57%) than during the day (43%) (National Center for Statistics Analysis, 2023).

Nighttime driving creates risks to all road users and is associated with factors such as decreased visibility, compromised night vision, rush-hour conditions, drowsiness, and other impairments (National Safety Council, 2022).

Previous evaluations of NTSBE showed enforcement to be effective to increase seat belt use (Retting et al., 2018; Solomon, Chaffe, & Preusser, 2009; Chaudhary et al., 2005).

Challenges for NTSBE

While there are opportunities to improve safety through increased seat belt use at night, there are challenges with NTSBE, including detection of seat belt use and non-use under low-visibility conditions; officer safety on the roadside; resource allocation of officers amid competing traffic safety and criminal issues; secondary enforcement laws that require traffic stops for violations other than seat belt violations; levels of internal organizational and external public support; and sustainability over time.

Public support for NTSBE is critical. Both enforcement messaging and enforcement resources need to be focused both when and where unrestrained nighttime crashes are taking place to positively affect the rate of unrestrained nighttime fatal crashes.

Purpose of This Guide

This is a *how-to guide* to assist LEAs to successfully plan, execute, and evaluate NTSBE operations in their jurisdictions. The guide is based on information gathered in discussions with traffic safety professionals in a variety of States who have successfully implemented NTSBE and the experience of seasoned law enforcement professionals who have been engaged in occupant protection and enforcement for decades.

Who Should Read This Guide?

LEAs and their staff at various levels, including command decision-makers, patrol officers, and public information officers, will benefit from the detailed information and description of the processes provided in this guide. Prosecutors and legal professionals who work in these jurisdictions will also benefit from a description of this process. Other LEA partners such as law enforcement liaisons (LELs), SHSOs can also make use of this document for planning and budgeting purposes. Finally, this guide is a useful tool for traffic safety researchers and advocates who want to better understand how to study and respond to seat belt non-use at night in their own communities.

A Brief Discussion on the Importance of Procedural Justice

These guidelines are being developed during a time when interactions between law enforcement and the public have drawn additional intensity. The concept of procedural justice is relevant to how NTSBE is perceived and supported by the public. Procedural justice speaks to the idea of

fair processes, and how people's perception of fairness is strongly affected by the quality of their experiences and not only the result of these experiences (Yale Law School, n.d.).

Peoples' perceptions of "procedurally just" encounters are based on four central features of their interactions with legal authorities.

- **Voice:** People are given a chance to express their concerns and participate in decision-making processes by telling their sides of the story.
- **Respect:** All people are treated with dignity and respect.
- **Neutrality:** Decisions are unbiased and guided by consistent and transparent reasoning.
- **Trustworthiness:** Decision-makers convey trustworthy motives and concern about the well-being of those affected by their decisions.

LEAs are encouraged to take these perceptions into consideration as they plan where and how to implement NTSBE (Yale Law School, n.d.). Equity is also of importance when determining NTSBE plans. Organizing NTSBE in conjunction with other countermeasures may help achieve equitable program distribution and reach (e.g., education and outreach).

Organization of This Guide

The guide is organized as follows.

- **Background.** This section provides an overview of occupant protection in the United States, including a discussion of primary and secondary seat belt enforcement laws.
- **Methodology.** This section provides details on how the information featured in this guide was collected.
- **Goals of NTSBE.** This section describes the opportunities to improve safety through NTSBE.
- **Foundations for Success.** This section describes philosophies and actions that can set the stage for implementing successful NTSBE efforts.
- **Tactics for NTSBE.** This section reports on the tactics most employed for NTSBE.
- **Communication Strategies.** This section details the components of an effective communications strategy that can increase awareness, acceptance, and encouragement for seat belt use in coordination with NTSBE activities.
- **Measuring Effectiveness.** This section examines the importance of gathering information about NTSBE activities to learn about their effectiveness as well as look for ways to improve subsequent traffic safety efforts.
- **Addressing Challenges.** This section describes the challenges that exist when implementing NTSBE.
- **Checklists for Planning and Implementing.** This section explores the major components of deploying NTSBE, including separate information for primary enforcement States and secondary enforcement States.
- **Case Studies.** Summaries of NTSBE operations in case study States.

Methodology

The main approach for gathering information was virtual conversations with stakeholders in each State to gather and analyze information to inform the development of project material. Following site selection, the research team developed a discussion protocol focusing on collecting the following types of information.

- Reasons for initiating and maintaining NTSBE efforts (if those efforts are still active) and reasons NTSBE efforts were ended.
- Funding mechanisms for NTSBE and how requirements around funding influenced localities participation in NTSBE.
- Enforcement strategies and tactics used for implementing NTSBE.
- Degree to which NTSBE is/was conducted as a stand-alone enforcement initiative or integrated into other enforcement efforts, or both.
- Public information and education/ community engagement efforts to raise awareness and enable NTSBE.
- Formal and informal process and policies implemented to embed NTSBE into LEAs.
- Training and other efforts to prepare LEAs and LEOs to implement NTSBE.
- Methods related to observing and documenting seat belt use/non-use by officers.
- Roles of different LEA staff (e.g., command, officers, public information officer)
- Timing of information-gathering and reporting.
- Examples of perceived NTSBE successes or missed opportunities.

Identification of Stakeholders

The research team sought to gather information from different types of stakeholders, if available to participate, through conversations and requests for material. These included the following roles.

- State occupant protection (OP) coordinator.
- LEL who worked with OP grantees (if not the OP coordinator).
- State or local public information officer.
- LEA leadership charged with developing or implementing NTSBE.
- Line officers who conducted NTSBE.

Process for Gathering Information

Data was obtained through a combination of telephone and virtual discussions. To the degree that it was possible, the team also collected supporting documents and information to better understand how the LEAs measured their success in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the effort.

Discussion Protocol

A discussion protocol was developed by the team. It outlined potential questions that might be asked of stakeholders in SHSOs and LEAs. See Appendix A for a full description of the following key elements.

- Initiation of NTSBE
- Funding and resource allocation
- Planning and building support for NTSBE
- Implementing NTSBE
- Outreach and engagement
- Measuring success and lessons learned

Thematic Analysis and Synthesis

Thematic analysis is a systematic method for identifying, organizing, and describing themes and patterns across data sets (Nowell et al., 2017, Braun & Clarke, 2012). Braun and Clarke (2006) and King (2004) contended this research method is a useful method for assessing the perspectives of different research participants, highlighting similarities and differences, and generating unexpected insights. Following all information gathering activities, the team familiarized themselves with the information, sought themes and conflicting information, and synthesized the findings.

Materials Development

The next step of the project was the development of material for practitioners. These took the form of four two-page case studies, one for each State's program and a step-by-step process guide. Each case study highlighted the unique characteristic of the State in its implementation of NTSBE. From these activities, the team extracted commonalities and key considerations that may be used by existing and new programs in implementing NTSBE.

Goals of NTSBE

By enforcing seat belt use at night, LEAs can directly reduce the risk of injury and death of drivers and passengers presented by unrestrained crashes. Further, implementing NTSBE efforts (especially as part of an integrated traffic safety campaign) can have an influence on driver and passenger behavior in the future.

Thus, when approaching a traffic stop, officers should consider three different opportunities to create a positive safety outcome.

Preventing Unsafe Traffic Safety Behavior

First, enforcement activities prevent the unsafe action in real time. A driver or passenger who is not wearing a seat belt is prevented, in the moment, from proceeding with the drive while unbuckled.

Visible Deterrents

Second, the visible presence of officers serves as deterrents to other drivers in the community during enforcement activities. In this way, an officer does not need to interact with all vehicle occupants to positively affect road safety.

Behavior Change

Third, through enforcement campaigns, officers can create lasting change in driver and passenger behavior. This can occur because of increasing awareness of the risk of being an unrestrained occupant and increasing awareness of the consequences of not wearing a seat belt (even at night). This increased awareness can result in higher rates of compliance in the future.

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Foundation for Success

Information gathered from LEAs and other organizations indicated that several policy factors play an important role in creating a sustainable nighttime enforcement program. These factors are outlined below. Finding program champions and establishing stable funding are also critical to developing a systemic mindset that can drive consistent resource allocation and support within and between LEAs and the public.

Foundations for a successful NTSBE program are as follows:

- Support from the top
- Data-driven enforcement
- 24/7 seat belt enforcement
- 365 seat belt enforcement
- Inter-agency collaboration
- Integrated enforcement programs

Support From the Top

Enforcement of traffic safety laws is an ongoing, daily focus for LEAs; however, the characteristics of that enforcement related to traffic safety vary based on the competing priorities and resources, culture, and leadership within an agency. States that have demonstrated on-going, consistent NTSBE programs have also documented a commitment by traffic safety leadership to that enforcement. Typically, this is reflected by the SHSO making it a priority and providing sustained funding for NTSBE. Without Federal and/or State special funding through SHSOs, LEAs are often unable to pursue this type of enforcement on their own. NTSBE can require more personnel working more hours which makes it complicated to implement without this funding (e.g., providing for overtime). Strong financial and programmatic support by a SHSO will encourage LEAs throughout that State to focus on NTSBE to improve road safety. With many traffic safety priorities to consider, dedicated funding can be a major factor in a decision by a LEA to prioritize enforcement of seat belt laws at night.

Data-Driven Enforcement

Like any traffic safety initiative, NTSBE should be driven by crash data. Most States have crash databases available to identify when and where the most serious crashes occur that can help direct enforcement activities. Where crash data may not be available, conducting seat belt observational (SBO) studies is an alternative. Every SHSO has experience in conducting or contracting SBO studies and can serve as a resource for LEAs.

24/7 Seat Belt Enforcement Helps Increase Nighttime Focus

A significant philosophy held by law enforcement agencies most committed to seat belt enforcement is not to differentiate between nighttime and daytime enforcement. This “24/7” mindset helps encourage street level enforcement officers to be alert for seat belt violations, among all other traffic enforcement priorities, whenever and wherever they are on patrol. If officers who are operating in a unit without a specific nighttime emphasis are directed by leadership to look for seat belt violations “24/7” (including day and night), they will be more likely to capture nighttime violations than if they are focused on daytime alone. This practice is directly related to the emphasis placed on NTSBE by the top command at LEAs.

365 Seat Belt Enforcement

LEAs participation in national mobilizations like the NHTSA *Click It or Ticket* (CIOT) campaign during specific periods of the year. In many cases, law enforcement agencies may limit seat belt enforcement at other times due to limited resources, competing priorities, or lack of organization support. To reduce the incidence of nighttime unrestrained crashes, law enforcement agencies must sustain enforcement throughout the year. Coupled with a robust communications strategy to make the public aware of their efforts, year-round NTSBE has the potential to reduce needless injuries and deaths related to failure to wear seat belts.

Inter-Agency Collaboration

A significant obstacle for any traffic safety enforcement initiative, including NTSBE, is staffing. Most of the tactics described in this guide involve staffing levels that may exceed the resources available to many smaller law enforcement agencies. Law enforcement in the United States has a proud history of agencies working together to, for example, interdict narcotics shipments, reduce impaired driving and mitigate auto theft. Inter-agency efforts to address nighttime seat belt use have been used in the same manner in many States. Figure 1 depicts a media event highlighting a border-to-border seat belt enforcement event involving State, county, and local law enforcement.



Figure 1. Border-to-border seat belt enforcement media event

Several States have developed and staffed multi-agency enforcement teams to address several safety issues, including seat belt enforcement. These special traffic safety enforcement units, most often funded by a SHSO, are assigned around a State and use crash data to address “hot spots” for nighttime unrestrained crashes and fatalities. Many of these locations identified are in rural areas where law enforcement staffing may be scarce. Collaborative traffic safety teams in such areas can have a significant impact. SHSO LELs are often charged with coordinating these traffic safety teams and are great resources for law enforcement agencies considering NTSBE activities.

Integrated Enforcement Programs

Among States that excel in NTSBE, an emphasis on addressing all traffic safety priorities on every traffic stop is a basic philosophy. For example, enforcement efforts directed at speeding, distracted driving, and impaired driving all offer opportunities to address seat belt use. Being

alert for seat belt enforcement while conducting impaired driving checkpoints is one specific example of focusing on multiple priorities simultaneously.

The importance of integrating NTSBE with other traffic safety priorities is especially important for States restricted to secondary enforcement of seat belt laws. Making use of the opportunities present in any traffic safety stop to address seat belt violations is fundamental to improving seat belt use in these States.

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Strategies for NTSBE

When determining NTSBE strategies, there are some global issues to consider that affect both primary and secondary NTSBE.

- When is the best time of night to enforce seat belt violations?
- What kind of special considerations need to be considered based on area where enforcement is planned - rural, suburban, or urban?
- What can be done to address the visibility difficulties in detecting violations after dark?

What is the best time of night to enforce seat belt violations?

NTSBE involves seeking overall traffic volumes that are most conducive to enforcement. The most productive hours will be after the evening rush hour when traffic volumes are not too high but before traffic volumes drop so low that it does not justify higher staffing levels associated with some of the tactics described below.

Often, the ideal hours to enforce seat belt laws (early evening hours) do not match the crash data for when unrestrained serious crashes are occurring (early morning hours). LEAs are encouraged to occasionally allocate resources to these hours, despite the lower traffic volumes, to maximize the public perception that NTSBE is taking place throughout the nighttime hours.

Are there different considerations in rural, suburban, and urban locations?

There are clear advantages to NTSBE in urban and suburban areas. Higher traffic volumes coupled with more ambient lighting aids in identifying violators. In rural areas, try to identify roadways with higher traffic volumes and well-lit intersections for enforcement. The duration of NTSBE efforts in rural areas may be shorter given the lower traffic volumes that decrease further as the evening progresses.

What can be done to address the difficulty in detecting violations after dark?

There are clear visibility issues with identifying seat belt violators at night due to darkness. Window tinting has become much more widespread and exacerbates difficulties in low light.

NTSBE can be directed to areas with higher levels of ambient lighting such as large intersections, roadways adjacent to commercial shopping areas, etc. The use of supplemental, indirect, lighting is also an option that many agencies use. Roadway construction lighting has worked particularly well and is usually available through local public works departments. Shining flashlights or spotlights into vehicles has had mixed reviews with some agencies experiencing large numbers of citizen complaints and others relatively few. The local prosecutor should be consulted on the issue of shining lights directly into vehicles.



Figure 2. An example of night-vision equipment

Night vision equipment (NVE), such as shown in Figure 2, has been an option explored by some agencies for NTSBE. While some LEAs have reported a positive experience with NVE, others have advised that their results have been disappointing either due to the high cost of the NVEs needed to be effective and/or a negative response from the public on their use. Again, the local prosecutor should be consulted on the use of NVE.

The remainder of this section describes the primary tactics implemented for NTSBE. Each tactic is specified as being available in a primary and/or secondary State. These tactics include saturation patrols, checkpoints, spotters, and channelization.

Saturation Patrols

**Applicable to Primary and Secondary Enforcement States*

Saturation (or roving) patrols have been a mainstay of high-visibility enforcement (HVE) for decades and involve focused enforcement in a specific geographic area. LEAs basically flood, or “saturate,” a defined set of roadways with multiple patrol vehicles for a set period of hours in an intensive enforcement effort. Saturation patrols can be applied by individual departments, or through coordination among several agencies to concentrate resources and increase the impact of their efforts.

For primary enforcement States, the NTSBE twist on saturation patrols is that they are conducted in well-lit traffic corridors where seat belt use can be directly observed. Another option is to station a patrol vehicle at a well-lit intersection and observe passing traffic for seat belt violations. This will reduce the mobility factor for these patrols but will also increase the likelihood of identifying seat belt violators.

While saturation patrols are used for primary enforcement States, they are the primary tool available for secondary enforcement States. The need to initiate a traffic stop for another violation combined with the issue of darkness may result in many violators simply buckling up before being approached by the officer. With sufficient staffing assigned to saturation patrols, the volume of traffic stops increases, so the number of seat belt violations encountered during the valid traffic stop for another violation may increase.

Checkpoints

**Applicable to Primary Enforcement States*

Checkpoints are organized, planned, and systematic law enforcement operations designed to identify and address traffic violations. Checkpoints are HVE activities established and conducted in compliance with State/local statutes (where permissible by law). Operational planning for checkpoints ideally defines the location, time frame, and methodology for contacting drivers. Checkpoints require specific ancillary equipment (cones, barricades, artificial lighting, etc.) and heavier levels of staffing and specialized training.

Checkpoints may be used for NTSBE in those States that permit it. More often, checkpoints may be a combined impaired driving/seat belt enforcement countermeasure. Such a dual focus deployment shares staffing, funding, and specialized equipment resources to achieve success in both types of enforcement.

Spotters

**Applicable to Primary Enforcement States*

The use of spotters, coupled with stop vehicles “downstream” from the spotters, is the most widely used NTSBE tactic currently used in the United States. Uniformed or plainclothes officer spotters are typically located at a signalized or stop sign intersection.

Plainclothes officers as spotters are routinely used throughout the United States. Some dress in civilian clothing and others may dress up as utility or roadway workers. Uniformed and plainclothes officers are both used as spotters. There was no clear advantage reported, in terms of enforcement productivity, for either option. However, LEAs should clear the use of plainclothes spotters with their local prosecutor.

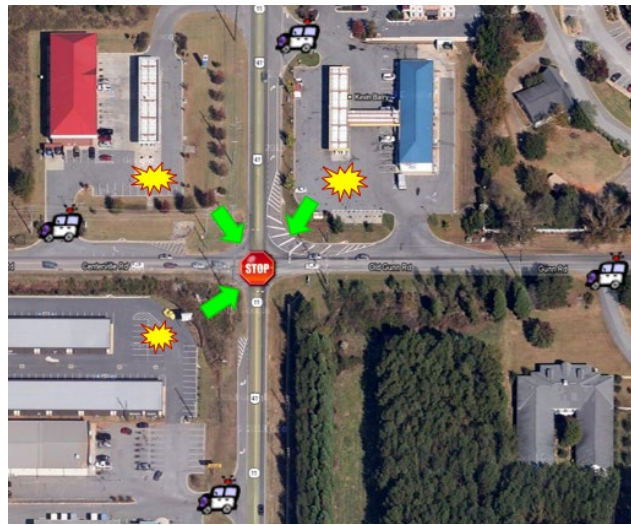


Figure 3. Example site map used for Georgia Governor’s Office of Highway Safety training for officers

The spotter, who may be in a vehicle or on foot, radios the violator information to a patrol or “stop” vehicle assigned to stop violators in the violator vehicle’s direction of travel. Intersections with several legs may or may not have stop vehicles positioned on more than one leg as conditions warrant. Figure 3 denotes one site deployment option for spotters.

The tactic of using spotters has a major advantage for LEAs in that it requires little in the way of specialized equipment. Posting an officer in a safe location at a well-lit signalized intersection or stop sign to observe the inside of slowing or stopped vehicles is a non-threatening way to increase public exposure. The number of stop vehicles can be tailored to the traffic volumes involved. It is an excellent means of encouraging multi-agency enforcement efforts to maximize the impact of the operation. Police motorcycles are useful resources as stop vehicles due to their mobility in heavier traffic.

In most States the spotter officer is the only officer required to testify in court on the violation. In other States the spotter may provide an affidavit regarding the violation and the stop officer testifies. That testimony should include more than a description of the car that is radioed forward to a stop officer. Courts are very receptive to including a description of the driver that will further solidify that the stop officer pulled the right vehicle over.

For areas identified for NTSBE without strong ambient lighting, supplemental lighting used for impaired driving checkpoints can be set up at an intersection to increase visibility without shining directly into vehicles and impairing a driver's vision.

Staffing for these spotter deployments can range from a handful of officers to dozens, depending on traffic volumes and violations encountered. However, the larger the deployment, the more likely that there will be officers involved who have not conducted this type of enforcement before. A pre-enforcement briefing providing safety and procedural training to all staff is highly recommended.

Channelization

**Applicable to Primary Enforcement States*

Channelization is a more sophisticated use of spotters and involves identifying carefully selected traffic corridors where either the roadway naturally serves to slow down speeds when the number of lanes reduce, or vehicle speeds are slowed by artificially reducing lanes via signs, barriers, and cones. Usually this will involve reducing lanes from two or three lanes to one lane to slow traffic down sufficiently to see inside the vehicles safely and effectively.

Passing vehicles are not stopped for screening but are merely slowed down so that the assigned spotter officer standing at the "neck" of the channelization can clearly see into the vehicle for potential seat belt violations. Violations are then radioed ahead to stop officers who will direct vehicles into a safe area for processing. One advantage of this tactic is that it can be productive in identifying violations, but the motoring public is not unduly affected if complying with the law.

Using channelization as a part of NTSBE efforts can be conducted safely with relatively low staffing and equipment. The roadway management devices used to slow and direct traffic also make channelization a relatively safe tactic for officers to use. Figure 4 is an example of a channelization deployment using ancillary equipment to reduce the number of lanes.



Figure 4. Example site map of safety enforcement zone used by Montgomery Police Department, MD

Because of the structured protocols involved including cones, barriers, artificial lighting, lane reductions, etc. for channelization deployments, it may be deemed appropriate, or legally required, that advance signage alerting the public that seat belt enforcement is taking place be installed. Agencies that use such signage reported that it did not seem to significantly affect the number of seat belt violations observed.

Although not targeted specifically to nighttime seat belt enforcement, NHTSA's [HVE Toolkit](#) provides additional guidance and examples for conducting HVE publicity.

Again, because this tactic typically involves many officers, often from several agencies that may not have conducted this type of enforcement before, a pre-enforcement briefing providing safety and procedural training to all staff is highly recommended. As with any traffic enforcement initiative being considered for the first time, channelization protocols should be cleared by the local prosecutor's officer before being implemented.

Additional staffing to consider for these types of deployments are Standard Field Sobriety Test (SFST) and/or drug recognition expert (DRE) officers to assist with impaired drivers encountered. A child passenger safety technician is useful to help educate drivers who are transporting children improperly. Officers dedicated to transporting violators arrested for various crimes may also be needed.

Communication Strategies

Outreach is a key component of a successful campaign like NTSBE. It is recommended that outreach and associated publicity occur prior to enforcement activities, during deployment, and post-deployment to inform all involved what is going to be done, what is being done, why it is being done, and the results of the campaign.

Outreach should be directed to the participating law enforcement agencies, local leaders (mayor, county executive, city council members, etc.), criminal justice stakeholders (courts, prosecutors, etc.), advocacy groups, media, and the public. Gaining the buy-in of officers who will be conducting a NTSBE operation, the buy-in of the public that they are protecting, and the media to share public safety information is important. Time and effort spent throughout the operation in educating the stakeholders about the importance of wearing a seat belt at night will maximize the effectiveness of an NTSBE.

When considering how to best expend resources on outreach and publicity, consider what is doable and plan accordingly to maximize what can be done. To build buy-in with stakeholders, be transparent and upfront about planned NTSBE operations and their purpose.

This section provides guidance on developing and implementing a public outreach campaign for NTSBE efforts.

What Is a Campaign?

The term campaign is used here to describe the various communication strategies that can be used during an enforcement deployment. Effective outreach and publicity use a combination of strategies, and these strategies may differ for each audience as well as different audience sub-groups. For example, strategies directed to the public should take into consideration non-English speaking citizens in the area. Areas with a large Hispanic population, for example, should have outreach material available in Spanish as well as English.

Communication strategies should resonate in the communities where the campaign is implemented. For example, videos for a campaign directed toward a more rural area may show different imagery and road types than videos for a campaign in a more urban area.

Building an Outreach Plan

Developing an outreach plan is necessary to conducting effective outreach and publicity. This plan should identify and provide details that include the following.

- Who is the person managing the outreach effort?
- What is the timing of various components of outreach?
- Who are the key audiences and stakeholders?
- What are the different messages for each audience and stakeholder type?
- What are the strategies to convey the messages?
- What are the features of an action plan for implementing outreach strategies?
- What activities will be used to measure effectiveness?

Management

Prior to conducting any outreach, it is important to determine who will manage the outreach effort. This person will be responsible for the development of an outreach plan, implementing the plan, and conducting follow-up evaluation efforts. They will likely do this in coordination with other stakeholders, but there should be a primary point of contact and owner of the outreach activities, as well as someone to take responsibility for delegating tasks to others.

The level of outreach management will depend on the extent of the NTSBE campaign. For example, a larger statewide or multi-jurisdictional campaign may require a public relations specialist with experience in managing large scale outreach efforts. However, a smaller agency may rely on their public information officer or a public relations specialist at the city or county level. Still smaller agencies may look to the SHSO for guidance and assistance.

Timing

Outreach campaigns for NTSBE deployments can occur over several months, with messaging disseminated before, during, and after the enforcement effort. Campaigns can also be more ad hoc with messages disseminated right before and during, and possibly after, an enforcement effort. Agencies will need to determine how far in advance of the enforcement effort they want to make the public aware of the campaign. Many agencies choose to conduct their NTSBE efforts in coordination with NHTSA's national *CIOT* campaign, typically held in May into June of each year. NHTSA also encourages *CIOT* efforts to coincide with Thanksgiving travel.

The following example timeline was used by the Florida Department of Transportation for its [2021 Click It or Ticket campaign](#). A similar schedule could be used with a focus on NTSBE as part of the overall *CIOT* campaign.

- Earned Media/Outreach/Social Media (NHTSA, FDOT, and partners): May 10 – June 6, 2021
- Paid Media (NHTSA and FDOT): May 17 – June 6, 2021
- Enforcement Mobilization (law enforcement partners): May 24 – June 6, 2021
- Seat Belt Usage Observation Surveys: June 6 – June 17, 2021
- Public Awareness Surveys: June 6 – June 13, 2021

Agencies that want to do more ad hoc enforcement efforts could consider using material and messaging readily available from NHTSA on Traffic Safety Marketing ([Home | Traffic Safety Marketing](#)), such as the logo in Figure 5, and develop standard press releases, social media posts, posters, and handouts available that can be updated with the data and time for use when needed.



Figure 5. NHTSA Click It or Ticket logo

Key Audiences

A typical NTSBE campaign will have four broad audiences.

- Law enforcement
- General public
- Media
- Local leaders, criminal justice stakeholders, advocacy groups

Within each of these audiences there may be sub-groups. For example, messaging within the public may require developing material in different languages, based on the languages typically spoken by drivers in the area. If an area has seen an increasing number of teen drivers or passengers without seat belts at night, then messaging may need to focus more on teen drivers. The data are often directed at drivers of pickup trucks, where special emphasis on those vehicles may be warranted.

Within the law enforcement audience, messaging to chiefs and sheriffs may focus more on the importance of NTSBE and messaging to officers may focus more on how to effectively conduct NTSBE.

Key Messages

Key messages should be identified for each audience, as well as sub-groups within the broader audience group. The goal of these messages should be to inform why NTSBE is important and how it will be conducted. For NTSBE, campaigns typically place an emphasis on using statistics to demonstrate how it is even more dangerous to not wear a seat belt at night, as shown in the example tweet from the Vero Beach, Florida, Police Department in Figure 6.

Messages for each type of strategy must be developed too. For example, longer text may be used for social media such as Facebook, while shorter text is required for Twitter (now called X). Messages can also be developed for variable message signs, public service announcements, news articles, and other channels depending on the outreach strategies selected.

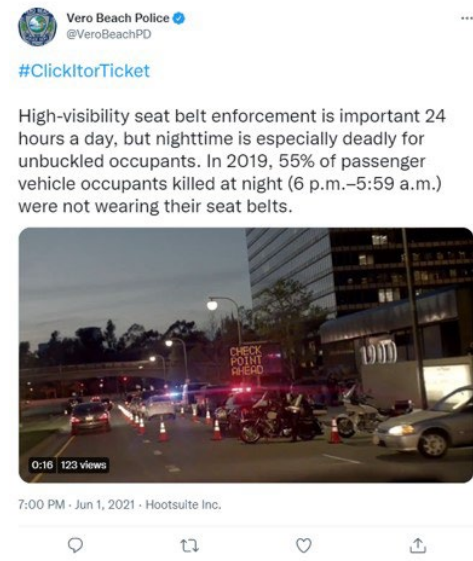


Figure 6. Vero Beach Police Department tweet about the importance of nighttime seat belt HVE.

(Source: <https://twitter.com/VeroBeachPD/status/1399863431101038592>)

Outreach Strategies

Outreach strategies are mechanisms used to reach various audiences. These include press events, online advertising, billboards, posters, social media posts, handouts, paid media such as public service announcements (PSAs) on radio and TV, earned media such as mentions on the local news about campaigns, variable message signs, presentations at community events and schools, and other mechanisms that can spread the word about NTSBE. All public outreach campaigns, including those for NTSBE enforcement, should use two or more outreach strategies to ensure that all target audiences are aware of the campaign, why it is being done, how it is being done, and who is doing it.

NHTSA's National Seat Belt Enforcement Mobilization web site ([Click It or Ticket | Traffic Safety Marketing](#)) includes graphics, ads, PSAs, handouts, media plans, social media plans, and other material in English and Spanish that State and local agencies can use for their own campaigns. This material has been focus-group-tested to ensure it resonates with their intended audiences. Several of these are targeted to NTSBE.

Strategies should be equitable and designed for all relevant audiences. For example, in an area with a high percentage of non-English speaking residents, outreach material should be available in the most spoken languages. In an area that has experienced a rise in crashes involving teens not wearing seat belts, strategies should be targeted toward teen drivers, with information made available at schools and events attended by teens, as well as using mechanisms frequently used by teens such as online advertising and social media.

The outreach plan developed for the campaigns should include a list of strategies, the primary audience for each strategy, the key messages for the strategy, how the strategy will be deployed, when the strategy will be deployed, who is responsible for deploying and monitoring the strategy, and how the strategy will be evaluated. This could be in a table format, as shown in Figure 7, or in another format, such as a spreadsheet or a list. As strategies are deployed, it

should be documented in this checklist along with any feedback that can be used to improve upon the strategy in future campaigns.

Strategy	Target Audience	Key Messages	Location	Timeframe	Who Is Responsible	Evaluation	Complete
Facebook posts	English and Spanish speaking general public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More fatalities occur at night • Officers don't close their eyes at night • HVE is effective (for posting after campaign) 	Park County Police Department Facebook account	Post two weeks prior to campaign, during campaign, and one week after campaign	Sam Jones, Social Media Coordinator	Number of views, number of shares, get public thoughts on posts	Post prior to campaign, May 5, 2021
Posters in restaurants, bars, and local establishments	English and Spanish speaking general public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More fatalities occur at night • Officers don't close their eyes at night 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gas station at Main and Park Streets • Joe's Café • Library • Quick Mart at Second and Fifth Streets 	Post two weeks prior to campaign and remove after campaign	Mary Smith, Public Information Officer	Determine where posters were seen, get public thoughts on posters	Yes on May 5, 2021

Figure 7. Example outreach strategy deployment checklist

The following sections discuss different strategies for other officers and the public and includes key messages that may be important to relay to those stakeholders.

Outreach to Law Enforcement

Outreach to law enforcement will primarily focus on educating officers about the importance of NTSBE and the key messages that they should be sharing with the public. It also may focus on informing chiefs of police and sheriffs about the importance of their officers conducting NTSBE. Educating law enforcement leadership helps to build support for NTSBE campaigns from top down will help campaigns run more smoothly. The NHTSA *CIOT* National Enforcement Mobilization material available at www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov included links to training videos and other material that can be used to educate law enforcement, to include a video specific to law enforcement leadership. Some other examples of outreach strategies for law enforcement that could be used include the following.

- A roll-call educational video that promotes enthusiasm for the NTSBE campaign and explains why the campaign is taking place. This video may also include information

about how to access print material, how to distribute material, and how to handle questions from the public funding (if available).

- A video or PowerPoint presentation targeted toward chiefs and sheriffs that explains the importance of NTSBE and why such a campaign is important.
- A PowerPoint presentation targeted toward officers that explains the campaign. This could be used in place of a video to educate officers during roll call or through other opportunities.

Outreach to Public

Outreach to the public is important to ensuring that constituents are aware of the upcoming nighttime NTSBE campaign, know when it is occurring, and understand how enforcement will be conducted in a fair and equitable manner as it contributes to public safety. As previously mentioned, it is important that public outreach strategies are designed for the appropriate audiences. For example, material in languages other than English should be made available based on the languages commonly spoken in the area where the campaign is taking place.

Law enforcement officers are important sources of information for the public. If they are conducting a NTSBE operation, it is important for them to have key talking points to help them share why wearing a seat belt at night is essential.

Potential public outreach strategies include the following.

- Paid and earned media
- Banners or billboards to place in high traffic locations in communities
- Posters that can be placed in bars, restaurants, public buildings, and businesses
- Mobile and fixed highway displays
- Handouts at events, such as flyers with facts and statistics about nighttime seat belt usage and a web site URL to learn more about NTSBE
- Social media posts
- A PowerPoint presentation targeted toward the public that explains the campaign. Public Information Officers, community traffic safety task force coordinators, or others can give this presentation at community meetings, such as the local chambers of commerce, homeowners association meetings, or other civic groups.
- A PowerPoint and newsletter-type document that could be distributed to community stakeholders, such as court personnel, business leaders and elected officials
- A flier that law enforcement could hand out when they make traffic stops both before and during the enforcement campaign

Outreach to Media

Local media serve as a target audience as well and should be provided with information about the NTSBE campaign so that they are aware of it, understand its importance, and are willing to share this information. This may include a press conference where the chief of police or sheriff speaks about the campaign, press releases informing about the upcoming campaign, its effectiveness after the campaign, and fact sheets and frequently asked questions developed specifically for the media. Information made available to the media should focus on putting a

positive spin on the NTSBE campaign (i.e., improved safety, less fatalities) with the goal of the media focusing on the positives as well when they share information with their audiences.

Outreach to Local Leaders, Criminal Justice Stakeholders, and Advocacy Groups

Outreach to local leaders, criminal justice stakeholders, and advocacy groups is important to gain buy-in and support for NTSBE, as well as to help communicate its importance to the media and public. Outreach to these stakeholders will typically focus on demonstrating how NTSBE has been effective in previous campaigns, how it will be conducted, and how it will be evaluated to make improvements for future campaigns. Chiefs and sheriffs or other leadership positions are likely best to conduct outreach to this target audience, through presentations at relevant meetings, articles that can be posted in publications read by these stakeholders, and press releases distributed to these stakeholders.

Types of Media

There are various types of media that can be used to help spread the word about the NTSBE campaign. This includes paid, earned, and social media.

Paid Media

Paid media marketing types include purchased spots for PSAs, newspaper ads, and paid online advertising or social media ads. Paid media should be conducted in English and other languages that are frequently spoken in the targeted area. Partnerships with local media networks that broadcast in these other languages are important because they help identify paid ad placement opportunities.

Earned Media

Earned media is free marketing that results from effective publicity. For example, shared social media posts, mentions of the NTSBE campaign on the local news, and even citizens sharing information at a meeting that they heard from public outreach efforts, are all examples of earned media.

Social Media

Social media is an effective way of reaching many different target audience types. It is important to consider all types of social media when developing the outreach campaign and to determine what type of social media is most frequently used by the target audiences. For example, Facebook and Twitter (now called X) may be more likely to be used by adults, while Instagram may be more commonly used by teens. Social media posts should be available in English and other languages spoken in the area. Followers should be encouraged to share the posts to help broaden the audience that posts reach.

Social media can be used to inform the public and media about upcoming enforcement campaigns, campaigns as they are taking place, and the effectiveness of campaigns after they are complete. Social media posts should focus on why NTSBE is important and how the campaign will be/is being conducted. Figures 8 to 13 demonstrate different social media posts and show how messaging can differ depending on the social media type.



Figure 8. Hutchinson, KS, Police Department Facebook post, posted after completion of a nighttime seat belt HVE effort.
 (Source: <https://www.facebook.com/HutchPD/posts/3903746989678655>)



Figure 9. City of Darien, GA, Police Department Facebook post to inform about upcoming Click It or Ticket campaign.
 (Source: https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=1328682007231492&id=296878507078519)

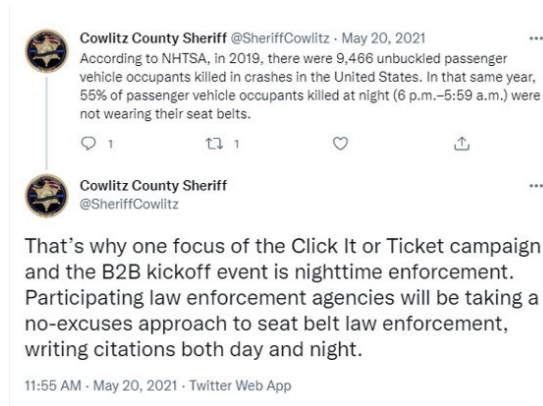


Figure 10. Cowlitz County, WA, Sheriff's Office tweet informing about upcoming NTSBE.
(Source: <https://twitter.com/SheriffCowlitz/status/1395407953654517760>)



Figure 11. Pennsylvania DOT tweet reminding people of the importance of buckling up at night.
(Source: <https://twitter.com/511PAAaltoona/status/1460247967617716230>)



Figure 12. Connecticut State Patrol Instagram post reminding people to buckle up. (Source: <https://www.instagram.com/p/CZ9ps8vu-cY/?igshid=YmMyMTA2M2Y=>)

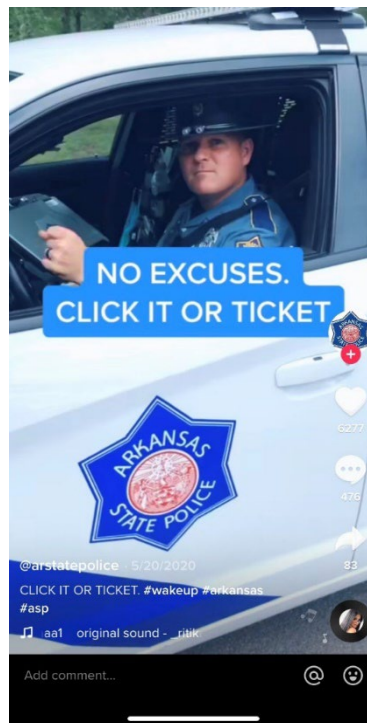


Figure 13. Screenshot from Arkansas State Patrol TikTok video reminding people to click it or ticket. (Source: <https://vm.tiktok.com/ZTdCoqouA/>)

Follow-Up/Tracking Performance

Tracking performance of and evaluating public outreach campaigns for NTSBE is important to ensuring successful future campaigns. Whenever possible and appropriate, public outreach efforts should be evaluated after they are complete to understand how messages were received, who received the messages, what strategies were noticed the most, what needs improvement, and where there are gaps in reaching target audiences. Tracking the number of views, shares, and interactions on social media posts is one way to track performance of a public outreach campaign. Other methods include surveys (in person or via mail or email), focus groups, and interviews to measure public outreach effectiveness. The [NHTSA High-Visibility Enforcement Toolkit](#) provides the following list of questions that may be asked to determine the effectiveness of a public outreach campaign.

- Did the message reach the target audience?
- Does the public know the tag line?
- Did the public pay attention to the message?
- Does the public believe there was increased enforcement?
- Does the public perceive a greater risk of receiving a citation or being arrested?
- Did the public change their behavior because of the media messages?

The responses to these questions can be used to revise strategies and messages for the next campaign as well as identify new strategies and messaging that may be better perceived by the target audiences.

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Measuring Effectiveness

What does it mean to measure effectiveness of NTSBE? Measuring effectiveness requires collecting information that describes the enforcement effort and allows a LEA to tell a story about how well the enforcement effort met its goals.

Why Measure Effectiveness?

There are several reasons why measuring effectiveness is important during and after a nighttime seat belt awareness campaign, including:

- Demonstrating why the NTSBE operation was important to officers involved in the operation and to the public.
- Identifying challenges and lessons learned; understanding how to improve future NTSBE deployments (including training, communications, tactical deployment).
- Documenting the effectiveness of a tactics at sites, including resources and costs allocated; officer and public safety; and number of motorists reached and overall public awareness.
- Suggesting different or better data collection and analysis to assess traffic safety at different locations.

What Information?

This section describes a broad range of information that an LEA can use to assess effectiveness of NTSBE. However, LEAs need only collect information relevant to the goals of the enforcement effort; this may vary based on the size and complexity of the effort, the tactics employed, and the desired results.

Questions that might be asked:

- How many violations were issued? What type? Where? During what hours?
- How many officer contacts were completed? Where? During what hours?
- What is the perceived traffic safety impact?
- What communications elements were used, how many, when, and directed at what audiences? PSAs? Social media interactions? Televised media?
- What was the level of public awareness? Did the public support this effort?
- What were officers' attitudes about the NTSBE effort? How could training and communication be improved?
- Did any safety issues occur (i.e., issue with seat belt rather than choice)?
- Were inter-agency efforts effective? Why or why not?
- Were selected tactics effective? What elements worked very well? What challenges occurred and how were they mitigated?
- What environmental factors might have affected enforcement? Weather? Local events? Other visibility issues? Low or high traffic volumes?

Some examples of information are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Example of information that might be used to evaluate effectiveness

Category of Information	Information to Gather
Characteristics of Enforcement	Number of unique deployments by location/date/time
	Number of contacts with motorists and others (pedestrians, bicyclists, etc.).
	Length of NTSBE campaign
	Location characteristics (e.g., lighting, traffic volume)
	Number of seat belt violations
	Number of child restraint violations
	Number of other violations
	Number of officers on-site
Tactical Level of Effort	Number of officers deployed
	Amount of overtime
	Challenges in allocating officers
	Equipment challenges or needs
	Cost per day or per location
	Number of unsafe events or near misses
	Issues related to visibility
Intra- and Inter-Organizational Engagement	Questions asked by officers
	Questions asked by partners
	Training needs identified
	Quality of inter-agency coordination and communication
	Other lessons learned
Level of Outreach and Community Engagement	Materials used (e.g., <i>CIOT</i>)
	Delivery channels used (e.g., social media, print media)
	Number of outreach activities
	Number of people reached (e.g., social media engagement, surveys)
	Reported acceptance and support (versus complaints and voiced concerns)
	Delivery channels used (e.g., social media, print media)
	Number of outreach activities
	Number of people reached (e.g., social media engagement, surveys)

How to Collect and Use the Information

There are various ways to evaluate the information that is collected.

- In some cases, information can be recorded in diary or list format. An example of this would be recording any challenges that arise along the way as an inventory to understand areas to make changes. Another example would be writing down questions that officers ask during training or in the field, so that these may become part of the next operations plan and training sessions.
- Archiving edits to the operational plan can show changes made to improve the deployment.
- Descriptive information uses very simple statistics to count (and describe the number of events that occurred (e.g., number of observed violations during a given hour at a given location).
- More advanced statistics allow for comparisons of different situations. Such analysis is probably most useful to assess more complex enforcement efforts that occur over multiple locations or multiple years to assess changes (e.g., are the number of observed violations higher during certain hours?).

To assure that information is gathered consistently and in a useful format, an LEA should consider the following factors.

- Who oversees information gathering and is responsible for making sure information is collected consistently?
- Who is collecting the information? Do they understand their task and how to carry it out consistently?
- How can information be collected using existing processes to make it as easy as possible and minimize misunderstandings?
- In what format should the information be recorded? Where will information be stored (e.g., a spreadsheet, a checklist, a form)?
- If simple or complex statistics are desired, who will do this?

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Addressing Challenges

NTSBE results in demonstrable traffic safety benefits, but there are also several challenges that should be considered and prepared for as an NTSBE operation is being planned. Some common challenges to planning and implementing a NTSBE deployment are listed below.

Gaining buy-in from leadership and other officers can be difficult at times.

Consider using crash data to make the case. How many unrestrained crashes are occurring at night versus the daytime? Is there a trend in your locality? Consider conducting seat belt observational studies to demonstrate what level of non-compliance exists at nighttime versus daytime to help motivate officers.

The public may not support NTSBE enforcement operations.

Outreach and communication are key to building public support. Let constituents know why they are at increased risk if they do not wear a seat belt at night. Share the location and plan for the operations via PSAs and social media. Seek help from the media in telling the story.

Competing traffic safety issues can result in a lack of funding for NTSBE

There are many competing traffic safety issues for funding at the State, county, and local levels. Specific funding for NTSBE should be identified and secured, as needed. If specific funding is not available, consider dedicating regular patrol time to NTSBE when circumstances allow.

Low visibility and tinted windows can make detecting seat belt use difficult.

Location is important. Try and maximize ambient light. The location should be a place where traffic stops frequently and (or) moves at slow speeds, like intersections.

Both legal and illegal window tinting of vehicles can be a significant obstacle in identifying unrestrained drivers. Tint meters measure the amount of visible light transmitted through glass. For those States that permit the use of tint meters by law enforcement, they can be used to identify violations of a State's window tinting laws.

Sometimes places that were identified during the day do not work well for NTSBE operations because of lighting, low visibility, and traffic flow changes.

Assess planned sites during the hours planned for the operation to be prepared. Have back-up sites in mind if the original site chosen does not work as planned.

Officer safety on the roadside must be addressed.

Make sure to plan sites for the operation where spotters and enforcement officers can be posted outside of the traffic flow.

Low traffic volumes can be associated with low patrol activity when working at night.

Select a location with a higher volume of traffic, but do not pick a place where vehicles are traveling so fast, that it is difficult to see inside them. Be prepared to change locations if traffic volumes warrant.

Resource availability and allocation may be challenging amid competing priorities.

Maximize traffic safety enforcement resources by integrating NTSBE with other agency priorities such as impaired or aggressive driving.

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Checklists for Planning and Implementing

The purpose of this section is to highlight important issues to consider and questions to ask when undertaking a NTSBE effort.

Figure 14 provides the overall structure to support LEAs and their partners in planning and implementing NTSBE.

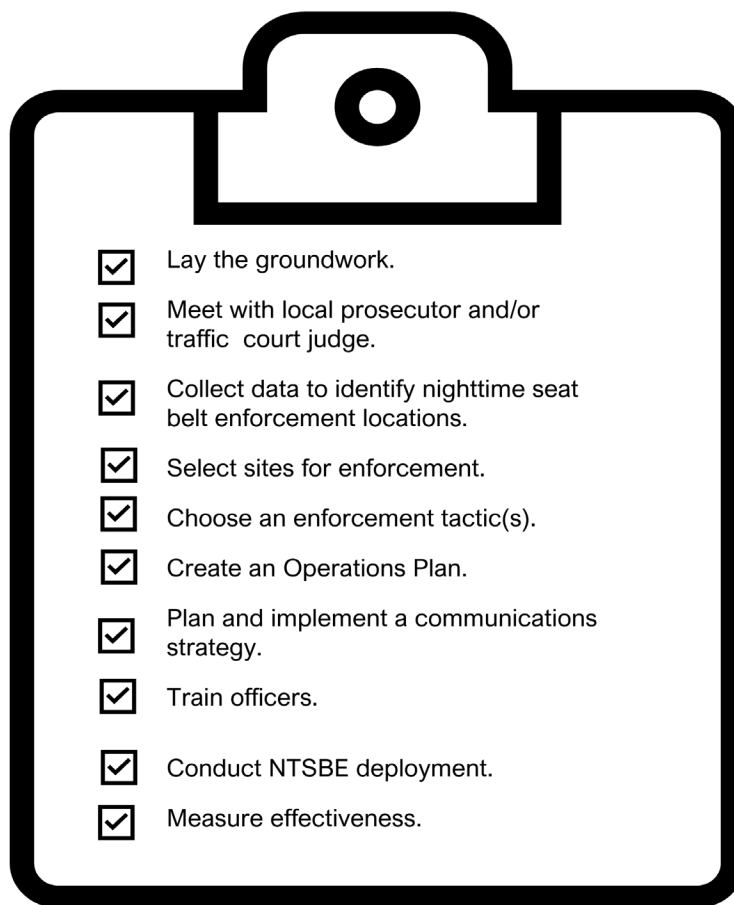


Figure 14. Best practices when implementing NTSBE

It is important to note that these activities may be conducted out of sequence or simultaneously. As different decisions are made, it may be useful to revisit different earlier activities (e.g., identify additional resource needs based on the tactic selected).

Below are two different versions of the checklist to assist LEAs and their partners. While sharing some similarities, the first checklist is for States with a primary enforcement law, and the second is for States with a secondary enforcement law.

Checklist: Primary Enforcement States

Lay the Groundwork

As discussed in the previous section, there are factors that can make a NTSBE effort more successful, including having a thoughtful and collaborative outlook about traffic safety issues.

Some important questions to think about:

- Who are the champions for this effort? Who will provide leadership and direction?
- Is there community support for NTSBE? Why or why not? If not, how will that be addressed? What community members (e.g., residents, businesses, traffic safety advocates) should be engaged in this effort?
- What does the data tell us about crashes, where they are happening, and seat belt non-use? What are the characteristics of the problem?
- What sources of funding are available? Is funding dedicated to NTSBE?
- Is there support within the LEA for NTSBE? Why or why not? If not, how will that be addressed?
- What members of law enforcement are important to conducting the enforcement effort? Command? Patrol officers? Public information officers?
- Are there opportunities to collaborate with other LEAs?
- Are there opportunities to build on upcoming enforcement efforts or national campaigns, such as *CIOT*?
- What are the objectives and desired outcomes for NTSBE? What does a successful NTSBE experience look like?

Meet With Local Prosecutor and/or Traffic Court Judge

Gaining support and direction from your prosecutor and court at the outset on what acceptable enforcement looks like is a critical step before implementing NTSBE. Every primary seat belt enforcement State has unique laws on their books for the enforcement of seat belt violations. Even within States, there may be distinctions between what one court may allow versus another.

Some important input includes:

- Which NTSBE strategies and tactics are acceptable in this jurisdiction?
- If needed, who will appear in court? The spotter/observer? The citing officer who made the traffic stop or both officers?
- Must the spotter/observer keep the violator vehicle in sight until the traffic stop? Or are radio communications sufficient between the spotter/observer and the stopping officer?
- What information must be communicated to the stopping officer concerning the violation?
- Must the spotter/observer be in uniform or are plain clothes deployments permitted?
- If the enforcement results in many citations issued, how will the court manage that influx?

Collect Data to Identify NTSBE Locations

The gold standard for implementing any traffic safety countermeasure is using crash data to identify the time and locations for enforcement. NTSBE should include searching available crash databases for serious crashes, and if possible, trends of where serious crashes are occurring that

also may involve unrestrained occupants. This will allow the design of enforcement resources for those times and locations. Crash data may be available at the State, county, or local level.

In addition to crash data, seat belt observational studies (SBO) are also valuable tools in identifying locations for NTSBE. Agencies may consider conducting SBO studies at locations selected for NTSBE enforcement before and after enforcement to help gauge the effectiveness of that enforcement in changing seat belt use behavior.

Measuring traffic volumes at potential locations for NTSBE during the time periods being considered for enforcement is also important to ensure that sufficient volumes exist to support the allocation of the significant law enforcement resources involved.

Select Sites for Enforcement

Preferably using crash data and/or SBO studies, locations are then chosen for NTSBE. The host agency will have in-depth knowledge of their jurisdiction to best identify these locations.

Some considerations for selecting locations include:

- The safety of the public as well as the officers assigned to enforcement. Appropriate traffic volumes, good sight lines, sufficient ambient or artificial lighting, low pedestrian traffic all contribute to a safer enforcement environment.
- Monitoring potential enforcement locations during the time periods when enforcement will take place. Day time characteristics including traffic volumes, parking patterns, etc. may significantly change during nighttime periods. This can lead to unsafe enforcement situations.
- Does the roadway environment support the installation of ancillary equipment such as traffic cones/barricades, artificial lighting, and advance signage, if used.

Choose an Enforcement Tactic

Choose a tactic that is appropriate for the enforcement sites selected and the staffing levels anticipated. Whether or not there will be two or more agencies participating in the NTSBE may determine how many law enforcement resources can be assigned, which will also influence which tactics can be used. An example of the use of tactics might be the planned conversion of staffing from a channelization tactic to saturation patrols over the course of a deployment when traffic volumes decrease.

Considerations include the following.

- Given the data-driven approach and sites selected, which tactics are most feasible?
- Are resources sufficient and available to support the enforcement effort?
- What equipment is required to implement the enforcement tactic chosen?
- What issues need to be considered to ensure the safety of the officers and public?

Create an Operations Plan

It is the responsibility of the host agency to create an operations plan for the deployment. The purpose of an operations plan is to consider and document all aspects of the deployment to provide a shared understanding of roles, responsibilities, process, lines of communication, and schedule.

Steps to consider for an operations plan:

- Identify which agency (if more than one) will serve as the host agency.
- Determine the staffing level needed to conduct NTSBE using the tactic selected. Staffing levels can be as low as three officers or can be more than 20 officers, depending on the complexity of the tactic chosen and the road environment. It may be preferable to split larger numbers of officers assigned to multiple locations depending on the tactic chosen.
- Determine the time and duration of the deployment. The timing of the enforcement will often occur during the evening hours after rush hour and before traffic volumes dwindle. However, it is important to note that the times for deployment should reflect the data collected. Often crashes happen in the later nighttime and early morning ; such information should determine the best time for NTSBE. Enforcement should be balanced between time periods generating higher activity and time periods where unrestrained serious crashes take place.
- Typically, 2-to-4-hour deployments are considered the optimal range to achieve satisfactory enforcement levels combined with a reasonable length of commitment of valuable enforcement resources.
- Assign a supervisor from the host agency to conduct any training needed as well as to manage the deployment. That supervisor will have been directly involved in site selection.
- Assign a “safety officer” to oversee the overall safety environment of the deployment. For smaller deployments, that may be the supervisor. For larger deployments, it should be another officer as the managing supervisor may be distracted due to other responsibilities.
- Secure all necessary ancillary equipment needed (lighting, signage, traffic cones, etc.) and arrange for transportation and set up at the time and location chosen. Where permitted by law, tint meters may also be an option.
- Photos of the deployment site as well as positioning of officers assigned may be considered for later courtroom use.

Plan and Implement a Communications Strategy

Effective communication is essential to making sure accurate information is shared and to communicate the value of the enforcement activities. Communication should be established among LEAs and their partners as well as the public.

When considering communications among the LEAs and partners, important questions include:

- What information do the enforcement partners need and when?
- What information from partners is needed? For example, does the prosecutor have guidance on implementing a particular tactic?
- What are the key questions and concerns of the partners? How can they be addressed?
- What training is required for officers? What perceived or real barriers need to be overcome?

When considering communication to the public, the following factors are important to maximize awareness and trust.

- Be as transparent as possible.
- Release PSAs and social media messages highlighting the NTSBE effort, where it will be, and why it is important to community safety.

- Consider conducting media interviews or a ride-along with members of the media so that they can better understand and share the importance of NTSBE.

Train Officers

Officer training about how to conduct the enforcement is most important for the initial implementation of NTSBE by an agency and when multiple agencies are involved. It is usually incumbent on the host agency to conduct this training.

LEAs can also provide their officers training programs specific to occupant protection, such as the Traffic Occupant Protection Strategies program (TOPS) and the Below 100 program. These programs offer LEAs excellent information on occupant protection education and enforcement as well as stress the importance to officers that they must always wear their seat belts.

Training for a primary enforcement NTSBE deployment should include:

- Brief discussion on the importance and rationale behind NTSBE. Development of a script detailing why the LEA is enforcing seat belt laws at night should be considered for the officers to use in communicating with motorists stopped during the deployment.
- Detailed description of the deployment tactic being used. This will include the roles of each officer assigned.
- A specific depiction of the enforcement locations being used including how staffing will be assigned, where they will be located, and their roles. A staging map of each deployment site including location of ancillary equipment and personnel assignments will be helpful.
- A safety presentation to minimize the possibility of harm to the public and to participating officers. This will include the importance of wearing reflective vests, care in positioning both personnel and vehicles at the deployment, and safe vehicle stopping instructions and locations for each site.
- The hours of deployment, officer transport to the scene including pre-set up of additional equipment, if used.
- Administrative issues including how to record hours dedicated to the deployment and relevant court information.

Conduct NTSBE Deployment

As the previous sections describe, planning is a critical part of a NTSBE effort. The next step is to conduct the deployment itself.

Factors that are important to a successful deployment include:

- Stage law enforcement resources and equipment at enforcement sites selected. Limit officer down time by setting up equipment prior to the main force of officers assigned to the enforcement arriving.
- Provide a pre-enforcement onsite briefing to answer any questions that may arise. Conditions originally planned for at the site may have changed since the officer briefing.
- Conduct enforcement using established procedures and information in the operations plan. Be alert to changes in traffic volumes or patterns that may affect the operation.
- Constantly monitor scene to mitigate safety issues that might affect the officers and/or the public. Changing weather conditions is a prime example of a safety issue that may preclude a continuation of enforcement activities.

- Conduct an onsite debriefing at the end of the deployment to assess what went well and what adjustments may be needed for future deployments. Encouraging officer input will pay dividends for future deployments.

Measure Effectiveness

An often-overlooked aspect is determining the effectiveness of NTSBE. This information is important in that it demonstrates successful use of LEA resources, establishes potential traffic safety outcomes, and provide information that can be used to improve subsequent enforcement efforts including but not limited to further NTSBE.

The following factors should be considered.

- Did the enforcement activity meet the objectives established at the beginning of the effort?
- What challenges arose and how were they managed? Challenges might include those that are related to resource allocation, partnerships and inter-agency communication/collaboration, safety, public acceptance, and training and officer performance.

Checklist: Secondary Enforcement States

As previously discussed, enforcing NTSBE is especially difficult in secondary enforcement States. It is important to stress that integrating NTSBE with other traffic safety priorities has the highest potential to affect non-seat belt use in these States. For example, enforcement efforts directed at speeding, distracted driving and impaired driving all offer opportunities to enforce seat belt violations.

Still, there are opportunities to directly target NTSBE in secondary enforcement States. The tactic most identified as legally acceptable in these States is saturation patrols and this checklist will target that tactic.

Lay the Groundwork

As discussed in the previous section, there are factors that can make a NTSBE effort more successful, including having a thoughtful and collaborative outlook about traffic safety issues.

Some important questions to think about include:

- Who are the champions for this effort? Who will provide leadership and direction?
- Is there community support for NTSBE? Why or why not? If not, how will that be addressed? What community members (e.g., residents, businesses, traffic safety advocates) should be engaged in this effort?
- What does the data tell us about crashes, where they are happening, and seat belt non-use? What are the characteristics of the problem?
- What sources of funding are available? Is funding dedicated to NTSBE?
- Is there support within the LEA for NTSBE? Why or why not? If not, how will that be addressed?
- Identify which members of LEAs are important to conducting the enforcement effort? Command? Patrol officers? Public information officers?
- Are there opportunities to collaborate with other LEAs?

- Are there opportunities to build on upcoming enforcement efforts or national campaigns, such as *CIOT*?
- What are the objectives and desired outcomes for NTSBE? What does a successful NTSBE experience look like?

Meet With Local Prosecutor and/or Traffic Court Judge

Gaining support and direction from your prosecutor and court at the outset on what acceptable enforcement looks like is a critical step before implementing NTSBE. Every secondary seat belt enforcement State has unique laws on their books for the enforcement of seat belt violations. Even within States there may be distinctions between what one court may allow versus another. Some important input includes:

- Which NTSBE strategies and tactics are acceptable in this jurisdiction?
- If the enforcement results in many citations issued, how will the court manage that influx?

Collect Data to Identify NTSBE Locations

The gold standard for implementing any traffic safety countermeasure is using crash data to identify the time and locations for enforcement. NTSBE should include searching available crash databases for serious crashes, and if possible, trends of where serious crashes are occurring, that also may involve unrestrained occupants to target enforcement resources to those times and locations. Crash data may be available at the State, county and/or local level.

In addition to crash data, seat belt observational studies (SBOs) are also valuable tools in identifying locations for NTSBE. Agencies may consider conducting SBO studies at locations selected for NTSBE enforcement before and after enforcement to help gauge the effectiveness of that enforcement in changing seat belt use behavior.

Measuring traffic volumes at potential locations for NTSBE during the time periods being considered for enforcement is also important to ensure that sufficient volumes exist to support the allocation of the significant law enforcement resources involved.

Select Sites for Enforcement

Preferably using crash data and/or SBO studies, locations are then chosen for NTSBE. The host agency will have in-depth knowledge of their jurisdiction to best identify these locations.

Some considerations for selecting locations include:

- The safety of the public as well as the officers assigned to enforcement. Appropriate traffic volumes, good sight lines, sufficient ambient lighting, low pedestrian traffic all contribute to a safer enforcement environment.
- Monitoring potential enforcement locations during the time periods when enforcement will take place. Day time characteristics including traffic volumes, parking patterns, etc. may significantly change during nighttime periods. This can lead to unsafe enforcement situations.

Choose an Enforcement Tactic

Conducting NTSBE in a secondary enforcement State will have a significant impact on the tactics employed. Due to the legal requirement that a primary enforcement violation be observed first before a citation may be written for a seat belt violation, many of the tactics identified in this guide are not applicable to secondary seat belt enforcement States. Whether or not there will be multiple agencies participating in the NTSBE effort will determine how many law enforcement resources can be assigned.

Saturation patrols is the only tactic generally available for secondary enforcement States thus limiting the enforcement options available for dedicated NTSBE.

Considerations include:

- Are resources sufficient and available to support the enforcement effort?
- What issues need to be considered to ensure the safety of the officers and public?

Create an Operations Plan

It is the responsibility of the host agency to create an operations plan for the deployment. The purpose of an operations plan is to document all aspects of the deployment to provide a shared understanding of roles, responsibilities, process, lines of communication, and schedule.

The basic tactic permitted in a secondary seat belt enforcement State are saturation patrols where traffic stops are first made for other traffic violations and seat belt violations are subsequently observed.

Steps to consider for an operations plan:

- Identify which agency (if more than one) will serve as the host agency.
- Determine the staffing level needed to conduct NTSBE. Staffing levels can be as low as three officers or can be more than 20 officers, depending on the complexity of the tactic chosen and complexity of the road environment. It may be preferable to split larger numbers of officers assigned into multiple locations.
- Determine the time and duration of the deployment. The timing of the enforcement will often occur during the evening hours after rush hour and before traffic volumes dwindle. However, it is important to note that the times for deployment should reflect the data collected. Often crashes happen in the later nighttime and early morning hours; such information should determine the best time for NTSBE. Enforcement should be balanced between time periods generating higher activity and time periods where unrestrained serious crashes take place.
- Where permitted by law, tint meters may be an option.
- Typically, 2-to-4-hour deployments are considered the optimal range to achieve satisfactory enforcement levels combined with a reasonable length of commitment of valuable enforcement resources.
- Assign a supervisor from the host agency to conduct any training needed as well as to manage the deployment. That supervisor will have been directly involved in site selection.
- Assign a safety officer to oversee the overall safety environment of the deployment. For smaller deployments, that may be the supervisor. For larger deployments, it should be another officer as the managing supervisor may be distracted due to other responsibilities.

Plan and Implement a Communications Strategy

Effective communication is essential to making sure accurate information is shared and to communicate the value of the enforcement activities. Communication should be established among LEAs and their partners as well as the public.

When considering communications among the LEAs and partners, important questions include these.

- What information do the enforcement partners need and when?
- What information from partners is needed? For example, does the prosecutor have guidance on implementing this tactic?
- What are the key questions and concerns of the partners? How can they be addressed?
- What training is required for officers? What perceived or real barriers need to be overcome?

When considering communication to the public, the following factors are important to maximize awareness and trust.

- Be as transparent as possible.
- Release PSAs and social media messages highlighting the NTSBE effort, where it will be, and why it is important to community safety.
- Consider conducting media interviews or a drive-along with members of the media so that they can better understand and share the importance of NTSBE.

Train Officers

Officer training about how to conduct the enforcement is most important for the initial implementation of NTSBE by an agency and when multiple agencies are involved. It is usually incumbent on the host agency to conduct this training.

LEAs can also provide their officers training programs specific to occupant protection, such as the Traffic Occupant Protection Strategies program (TOPS) and the Below 100 program. These programs offer LEAs excellent information on occupant protection education and enforcement as well as stress the importance to officers that they must always wear their seat belts.

Training for a Secondary Enforcement NTSBE deployment should include:

- Brief discussion on the importance and rationale behind NTSBE. Development of a script detailing why the LEA is enforcing seat belt laws at night should be considered for the officers to use in communicating with motorists stopped during the deployment
- Detailed description of the deployment tactic being used. This will include the roles of each officer assigned.
- A specific depiction of the enforcement locations being used including how staffing will be assigned, where they will be located, and their roles. A staging map of each deployment site personnel assignments will be helpful.
- A safety presentation to minimize the possibility of harm to the public and to participating officers. This will include the importance of wearing reflective vests and safe vehicle stopping instructions and locations for each site.
- The hours of deployment and officer transport to the scene.

- Administrative issues including how to record hours dedicated to the deployment and relevant court information.

Conduct NTSBE Deployment

As the previous sections describe, planning is a very critical part of a NTSBE effort. The next step is to conduct the deployment itself.

Factors that are important to a successful deployment include these.

- Provide a pre-enforcement onsite briefing to answer any questions that may arise.
- Conduct enforcement using established procedures and information in the operations plan.
- Constantly monitor scene to mitigate safety issues that might affect the officers and/or the public. Changing weather conditions is a prime example of a safety issue that may preclude a continuation of enforcement activities.
- Conduct an onsite debriefing at the end of the deployment to assess what went well and what adjustments may be needed for future deployments. Encouraging officer input will pay dividends for future deployments.

Measure Effectiveness

An often-overlooked aspect is determining the effectiveness of NTSBE. This information is important in that it demonstrates successful use of LEA resources, establishes potential traffic safety outcomes, and provides information that can be used to improve subsequent enforcement efforts including but not limited to further NTSBE.

The following factors should be considered.

- Did the enforcement activity meet the objectives established at the beginning of the effort?
- What challenges arose and how were they managed? Challenges might include those that are related to resource allocation, partnerships and inter-agency communication/collaboration, safety, public acceptance, and training and officer performance.
- What was the effect of the effort on observed and/or self-reported seat belt use among occupants?
- Did people in the community report hearing about the effort, and if so, did they report that the program influenced their perceptions and behaviors?

Case Studies

This section highlights the work of four States - Georgia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Washington - in implementing NTSBE. The scope and scale of the NTSBE effort varies by State and are reflected in the tactics and approaches that they used.

Each State featured analyzed State data identifying NTSBE as an important State issue that merited an intentional, coordinated response. This marked the beginning of planning and action surrounding NTSBE for these States.

The next sections summarize the findings associated with each State's NTSBE program considering the following program elements.

- Scope and mission of State's NTSBE operations.
- NTSBE leadership and program development.
- Collaboration and coordination efforts with partners.
- NTSBE planning and tactics.
- Funding.
- Communication and outreach.
- Lessons learned.

Pennsylvania

Scope and Mission

Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) reaches approximately 750 police departments across the State through 50 Police Traffic Services (PTS) grants. PTS grants combine four streams of money to support: occupant protection, impaired driving, aggressive driving, and pedestrian safety. The grants support CIOT mobilizations and sustained occupant protection throughout the year. Grantees agree to conduct 50 percent of seat belt enforcement at night. NTSBE is often conducted through joint seat belt and impaired driving deployments.

Leadership and Program Development

PennDOT champions NTSBE and requires grantees to conduct 50 percent of seat belt enforcement at night. Pennsylvania is a secondary seat belt law State, which affects how NTSBE is conducted.

Partnership Coordination and Collaboration

The two primary partners that support PennDOT's NTSBE initiative are the Highway Safety Network (HSN) and Pennsylvania sheriffs' departments.

HSN is a non-profit dedicated to supporting highway safety programs, initiatives, and campaigns. It provides technical support to PTS grantees through LELs who serve as intermediaries and communicators between the State and its grantees. LELs from HSN provide a link between the Pennsylvania SHSO and law enforcement agencies for NTSBE. LELs reach out to chiefs of police and PTS coordinators to support regional planning, encourage participation in key initiatives, provide information about upcoming enforcement mobilizations, coordinate trainings, and provide other grant technical support.

The Pennsylvania sheriffs' departments also participate in impaired driving checkpoints where seat belt use is targeted. They do not take enforcement action but provide additional security and prisoner transport.

Planning to Implement NTSBE

Pennsylvania law enforcement primarily identify locations by using a combination of crash data and environmental factors that promote safe and effective NTSBE. Crash data is primarily used to identify when and where fatal crashes are occurring. The primary environmental factor considered when selecting an enforcement location is the presence of lighting. Without sufficient lighting, it is difficult for spotters to look into the vehicle to see if a seat belt is being worn. Some agencies rely on citizen complaints or traffic volumes to identify target corridors.

Finding a champion among leadership has been an important factor in Pennsylvania's success. Champions not only coordinate across various departments to conduct NTSBE, but they are often responsible for getting officers to participate in the enforcement campaign. In Pennsylvania, champions have done this by stressing the importance of nighttime enforcement and empowering officers to affect traffic safety. They also encourage officers to stay before and after scheduled shifts to conduct nighttime enforcement, especially amidst staffing issues and shortages. Last, champions often play a role in educating officers how to properly conduct NTSBE.

NTSBE Tactics

Pennsylvania is a secondary seat belt law State, and so its law enforcement primarily addresses NTSBE enforcement through impaired driving enforcement activities and with roving and saturation patrols. Seat belt enforcement is often supplemental to impaired driving, aggressive driving, and speeding enforcement. Officers are typically asked to look at seat belt compliance whenever a driver is stopped for a different violation. If the driver is not wearing a seat belt, the officer can issue a second citation for the seat belt violation. LEAs set up traffic enforcement zones that concentrate on a small area of roadway which has been identified by crash data or citizen complaints. LEOs treat commercial carriers differently in Pennsylvania as they can be stopped for not wearing seat belts under Federal law. Additionally, because commercial seat belts are typically reflective, they are easier to see at night, making it easier to enforce.

The scheduling of NTSBE operations depends heavily on its location. The majority of NTSBE operations occur between 6 p.m. to 6 a.m. This was expanded from 9 p.m. to 4 a.m. in response to officers' concerns about poor lighting and to work around shift-related challenges. In rural areas officers typically only conduct NTSBE until midnight due to the lower traffic volumes. Officers in rural areas have also noted that traffic volumes tend to be highest between 9 p.m. and 12 a.m.

Some departments schedule special event details to promote and/or enforce proper seat belt use. For example, one department had a request for nighttime enforcement from Child Protective Services in an at-risk community. The detail was placed near a community center and served as more of an educational opportunity instead of an opportunity to give out citations. Additionally, officers have conducted teen mobilization efforts near high schools where officers enforce seat belt use after school hours and after evening sporting events.

Communication and Outreach

Before officers are deployed in an NTSBE mobilization, a press release is drafted and released to the public. This information is typically shared on social media outlets through various departments. Additionally, the enforcement area will be marked with signs to let the public know that there is an active detail. The information included in the press releases is mainly guided by the existing grant requirements, but the messaging tends to emphasize safety improvements.

The Pennsylvania Highway Safety Office has a position dedicated to communications planning who hosts bimonthly roundtable meetings with regional project coordinators, PTS grantees, and LELs from HSN to share ideas and coordinate media events to maximize impact. The State communications officer develops the scope and theme of CIOT or other State efforts. Local departments are then encouraged to localize the information, incorporate local data, or emphasize messaging that is meaningful to their residents.

Local police departments also reach out to other local and State partners to expand their outreach efforts including health departments, the State chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, passenger safety advocates, hospital and trauma groups, and survivor advocates. Additionally, local police departments will partner with local sheriff's offices and State police when possible.

Lessons Learned

Pennsylvania LEAs have worked to address several challenges to implementing NTSBE. Some of their keys to success are outlined below.

- **Data-informed decision-making.** The Pennsylvania Crash Information Tool (PCIT) provides grantees real-time crash information to make data-informed decisions about NTSBE deployments. Reports include time of day and week, type of crash, and restraint use.
- **Gaining buy-in from leadership.** Using the PCIT, LELs have gained buy-in by providing real time information about what is happening in localities and to highlight fatalities that have occurred. In some areas, particularly in rural areas, where unrestrained fatalities may be rare, different data, such as impaired or aggressive driving crash data can be used.
- **Identify a champion.** An internal champion can advocate peer-to-peer for the importance of NTSBE, communicate plans for conducting NTSBE, and cultivate a culture from within to make it possible.
- **Funding.** Overtime pay is an important incentive to encourage extra hours for NTSBE. Typically, NTSBE is done more often once grant funding has been distributed.
- **Shift Work.** Many Pennsylvania law enforcement officers work 12-hour shifts. Only a select number of officers will participate in working extra hours after a long shift. LEAs tried to conduct 9 p.m. to –midnight NTSBE in departments with 12-hour shifts to mitigate staffing issues. PennDOT also expanded its NTSBE enforcement window to 6 p.m. to 6 a.m.
- **Flexibility.** Police departments have had success in encouraging officers to do NTSBE by letting them choose the hours when they would conduct enforcement.
- **Lighting.** NTSBE must be conducted in well-lit areas. Asking officers to stop vehicles in remote, poorly lighted areas creates safety issues.
- **Driver response.** Some drivers will claim that they took their seat belt off when they were stopped. Law enforcement officers usually felt that this was just an excuse, but it is hard

to prove otherwise. Officers were encouraged to write a written warning instead of a citation. They also used a written script to help them feel more comfortable engaging drivers about seat belts. The same education-based script was used all the time so that they could feel prepared.

Georgia

Scope and Mission

The Georgia Governor's Office of Highway Safety (GOHS) encourages multi-agency coordination to support integrated enforcement of its primary seat belt law. This approach has been applied to NTSBE.

Leadership and Program Development

Georgia is supported by a staff of full-time LELs. Its law enforcement efforts are primarily focused on four main areas: seat belts, impaired driving, speeding, and distracted driving. Nighttime seat belt enforcement is woven primarily into its occupant protection work, but also into the other three. GOHS has strongly encouraged police departments to conduct 24/7 seat belt enforcement.

GOHS further encourages State trooper participation by including NTSBE as part of the performance goals for Georgia State Patrol. They do not specify a numerical target for citations issued but communicate that NTSBE was a focus.

NTSBE in Georgia is supported heavily by the Thunder Task Force. Formed in 2005 under the GOHS, the task force was created to "detect Georgia's high-crash corridors and reduce mounting highway deaths and serious injuries by introducing a high-visibility law enforcement presence to help stabilize the extreme and illegal driving behaviors of careless motorists who cause those crashes." The task force primarily assists local law enforcement by providing them with the resources, including manpower, and training they need to conduct enforcement activities.

Partnership Coordination and Collaboration

Georgia is divided into 16 Traffic Enforcement Networks, supported by LELs and network coordinators. Every law enforcement agency has the opportunity to act as a network coordinator over time. When the GOHS decided to prioritize NTSBE, they enlisted network coordinators to coordinate the effort.

Grant funded network meetings were an easy way to share information and coordinate operations. The meetings have a monthly training topic, such as NTSBE, and afterward participants team up to conduct multijurisdictional check points, often in areas that would not have the resources to facilitate them otherwise. State troopers work hand-in-hand with localities.

Planning to Implement NTSBE

The GOHS conducts training to teach officers how to properly conduct NTSBE. This training not only covers the importance of seat belt laws, but also instructs officers on how to select suitable enforcement sites, identify manpower requirements, assign responsibilities among officers, and collect data. As part of the presentation, participating officers are shown crash statistics, both national and Georgia-specific. Additionally, information on existing seat belt and hands-free laws was included in the presentation. Training activities can be initiated by a local police department or sheriff's office. Officers may notice an increase in the number of violations

or traffic fatalities and request the Thunder Task Force to assist with identifying the problem, conducting training, and leading enforcement exercises.

NTSBE is not always seen as a planning and resource intensive activity. For some Georgia districts, these operations are a “spur of the moment” activity. Other localities develop 6-month enforcement calendars with activities planned around special events.

NTSBE Tactics

Spotting is the primary tactic used in Georgia for NTSBE. LEA employ spotters who call out violators to waiting officers stationed farther down the road. They also use check points for impaired driving, which target seat belt enforcement, combined with saturation patrols. They will often disperse officers around a check point area to catch drivers trying to avoid the check point.

In addition to local LEA campaigns, GOHS employs its Thunder Task Force and Heat Teams to support NTSBE through large-scale operations that draw many officers to an area that has requested help. The Thunder Task Force conducts 4 or 5 high-visibility, multijurisdictional operations every year that involve approximately 100 officers. NTSBE is woven into these efforts. Taskforce activities always draw a lot of media attention. When conducting operations, Heat Team members screen for violations while local police handle vehicle searches, sobriety tests, citations, and arrests. NTSBE is factored into these operations. Prior to conducting an operation, leaders coordinate with prosecutors and the court system and request a special court date, since they are inundated with citations afterward.

Heat Teams are highly trained, elite teams that are supported through GOHS grants. Officers are trained in SFRT, child passenger safety, and advanced roadside impaired driving (ARIDE). They will soon launch a phlebotomist program to allow officers to draw blood for drug testing. Heat Team members rotate through local jurisdictions, and support Thunder Taskforce initiatives including NTSBE efforts throughout the year.

Data-Informed Enforcement

The State tracks real-time data through the Georgia Electronic Accident Reporting System (GEARS). Electronic crash reporting with geolocated crashes is completed for over 90 percent of all reported crashes. If, for example, there are more pickup truck fatalities where seat belts are often not used, then officers are encouraged to focus on pickups. LEAs are encouraged to use GEARS to identify locations that would particularly benefit from NTSBE.

Funding

GOHS requires NTSBE details from police departments who receive grant funding. The State also provides additional resource support through personnel, vehicles, and equipment.

Communication and Outreach

Georgia concentrates on public education as much as enforcement. During the daytime, the focus is more on education while the nighttime is focused on enforcement. As part of Georgia’s efforts to educate the public about seat belt use, the GOHS employs a rollover simulator to conduct demonstrations. The purpose of the simulator is to simulate a crash so that the audience can see the results of being both unrestrained and properly restrained.

For national or State campaigns, such as the Thunder Task Force or CIOT, the State Communications Team develops template press releases and social media messages to send to

local agencies. Outreach material not only notifies the public on when and where the enforcement activities are taking place, but also focuses on education. LELs believe in being fully transparent on why enforcement activities are taking place and typically encourage law enforcement officials to step in front of the camera to put a positive spin on enforcement activities, such as improved safety. Additionally, LELs promote the creation of Facebook pages to discuss enforcement activities with the public and to further disseminate educational material.

Lessons Learned

A big challenge in NTSBE operations is having sufficient lighting to see the seat belt violations. Spotters must have a clear unobstructed view.

The GOHS and local LEAs have done a lot of creative problem solving to address this issue. Georgia LEAs have used spotlights, but they do not work as well locations that are able to take advantage of ambient street lighting. Officers place vehicles on either side of the road to illuminate the inside of the vehicle with their headlights, but it's still difficult to get the light at an appropriate angle.

GOHS provided each of their LELs with generators and balloon lights, to illuminate roadways without blinding drivers. This equipment is also used at impaired driving checkpoints. Some LEAs reported regularly using them, while others preferred to only conduct operations in places with sufficient ambient lighting.

In Gainesville, the police department worked closely with traffic operations to use red light cameras to spot seat belt infractions. Officers sitting in the camera room can zoom into vehicles using the cameras and then call-in violations to officers stationed at the intersections.

Maryland

Scope and Mission

Maryland began conducting NTSBE in 2011 under a NHTSA research grant and has developed trainings and operations procedures to support LEAs in this enforcement effort. Maryland is a primary seat belt law State.

Leadership and Program Development

Montgomery County developed the existing NTSBE program, which was then adopted by Prince George's County. The program was a result of wanting to create an enforcement strategy that did not interfere with the public unless they were violating the law.

Maryland police departments appear to have a different relationship with LELs than departments in other States. LELs will sometimes host joint enforcement operations and are most active on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. However, officials from Montgomery and Prince George's counties typically communicate and collaborate without assistance from LELs, due to an existing close relationship.

Partnership Coordination and Collaboration

Jurisdictions regularly coordinate and work together in conducting nighttime seat belt operations. When planning a channelization, Montgomery and Prince George's counties will typically invite smaller municipal departments and State troopers to participate and contribute officers.

Additionally, smaller departments will often approach both counties with problems they're having in hopes of gaining access to resources they may not have.

On occasion, two or more counties may collaborate to host joint operations. One example of collaborative efforts in Maryland is a planned joint enforcement operation along the Maryland/Washington, DC border. The area has recently been experiencing an increase in crashes, so a few departments are collaborating to tackle the issue.

Planning to Implement NTSBE

Prior to conducting a NTSBE operation, a training would be held for all participating officers. Some of the key points covered in the trainings include:

- Channelizations are NOT checkpoints. In checkpoints, vehicles are individually stopped. Instead, channelizations slow traffic so that officers see into vehicles for seat belt and other violations.
- The only vehicles that are stopped are vehicles with a violation to be addressed.
- When making a channelization plan, identify well-lit roadways with safe pull off areas. Use ancillary lighting where needed.
- Review what the enforcement plan is beforehand, including an overview of the site plan and everyone's roles and responsibilities.
- Provide tips on how to approach drivers and pull them over into a safe area.

NTSBE Tactics

The primary NTSBE tactic that Maryland uses is channelization, which began as part of an effort to develop a technique that would not substantially affect the motoring public unless they were violating the law. Channelizations are implemented as part of their Safety Enforcement Zones efforts. The zones target high volume traffic areas, where approximately 1,600 to 2,000 vehicles typically flow through a single site. Channelization locations are selected using crash data. Drivers are made aware of channelizations using "safety enforcement zone ahead" signs, lights, and cones. This is primarily to let drivers know that there is police activity ahead.

The flow of traffic is filtered down to one lane using traffic cones. Traffic will naturally slow down when lanes are reduced which allows an observation officer or spotter to see violations and pull over vehicles more easily. The spotter is positioned near the beginning of the taper to look for violations. The spotter radios violations ahead and the other officer directs drivers with violations out of the traffic flow. Drivers with no observed violations can remain in the traffic stream and continue driving out of the enforcement area.

Channelizations not only target seat belt enforcement but can target various enforcement campaigns. This method lends itself to common violations associated with distracted driving, impaired driving, and the identification of equipment violations.

Maryland also uses saturation patrols but considers them not as successful or resource effective as channelizations in catching NTSBE violations.

Timing

In the winter, NTSBE starts early – after 5:30 p.m., but in the summer it starts closer to 9 p.m. due to later sunsets. Channelizations are typically run from 10 p.m. to 3 a.m. but can be ended earlier if traffic volume is low and a saturation method deemed more effective.

Funding

Most of the funding comes from the Maryland Highway Safety Office and is earmarked for occupant protection or impaired driving. The State also contributes equipment, such as lights, cones, and generators. Some agencies do operations with their own funding due to the success of the enforcement method.

Communication and Outreach

NTSBE enforcement activities are coordinated with social media campaigns and local media. Agencies often prepare a press release and encourage local media outlets to come out to enforcement locations to highlight on the news. Maryland's CIOT enforcement is coupled with NHTSA's announcement of its national campaign to leverage media outreach.

Lessons Learned

Some of the key lessons that Maryland LEAs learned as they developed and refined their NTSBE operations, include these.

- Preparation and training are important. The channelization supervisor or an experienced officer needs to be on the scene to ensure that everything is implemented as planned. Training beforehand is important so that everyone knows what they are doing and how to do it correctly.
- Prosecutor approval. Before starting enforcement activities, officers cleared all their plans with local prosecutors. By getting backing from prosecutors and local courts, they prevented pushback later.
- Differentiate between checkpoints and channelizations. There are so many rules associated with checkpoints. It is important to be clear with officers running channelizations that these are not checkpoints and that the enforcement effort does not impede flow of traffic to the level of a checkpoint.
- Use crash data for site selection. Identify where the most crashes are happening and target those areas.
- Safety is huge. When working at night, it is important to make sure that both the motoring public and officers' safety are protected. For larger deployments, a safety officer is assigned to ensure that officers are keeping safety in mind over the entire course of the deployment.

Washington

Scope and Mission

Washington's NTSBE campaign was developed by the Washington State Patrol and, at its high point, involved as many as 75 State, county, and local law enforcement agencies.

Leadership and Program Development

The NTSBE program began in 2007 through the Washington Traffic Safety Commission (WTSC). It was created as part of a contract with NHTSA. At the time, little information on NTSBE was available so the program was developed with a lot of intentional feedback from all partners, including sheriffs' departments, police departments, district attorneys, and the WTSC. Changes and recommendations were made based on trial and error. Several strategies were tested

before the most effective procedure was found. Additionally, the program developers collected a lot of information by observing State patrol officers as they worked at night.

Partnership Coordination and Collaboration

The WTSC engaged partners and potential supporters by building in mechanisms to let them know what was being planned around NTSBE and what to expect. As part of the NTSBE campaign, the WTSC circulated a newsletter for community stakeholders, such as court personnel, business leaders and elected officials to let them know why NTSBE was important. It also intentionally sought opportunities for feedback from key partners on its NTSBE as it was being developed, such as the State district attorney's office. Some of the ways that WTSC engaged specific partners are included below.

- **Prosecutors.** Before launching NTSBE, project leaders met with prosecutors to discuss their plan and get feedback. They wanted to make sure that any tickets written would stand up in court. The team then emphasized the legal requirements for NTSBE citing in roll call trainings.
- **Media.** Press releases and talking points were developed highlighting why NTSBE was important. Local reporters were invited on ride-alongs to cover operations. Partnerships with Spanish-speaking radio and television stations were intentionally cultivated.
- **Business owners.** Some Washington State Patrol sergeants visited businesses in enforcement areas to provide information about pending NTSBE. Businesses also posted signs in their windows.
- **Multiagency collaboration.** The WTSC coordinated with the State Patrol, sheriffs, and police departments to involve law enforcement across the State in the project.

Planning to Implement NTSBE

WTSC worked to gain buy-in and earn support from law enforcement agencies. Highway patrol leaders involved in developing the campaign held data-driven, mini-trainings with law enforcement across the State to educate them about the project and to promote enthusiasm for NTSBE among patrols. It also developed a roll-call training video that explained why the project was happening and how grant funding could be accessed by agencies.

NTSBE Tactics

Washington primarily used spotters for its NTSBE operations, which typically involved coordinated enforcement efforts of two to six officers. One officer acted as the spotter, or observer, and would call ahead to stop vehicles to identify unbuckled motorists. Spotters parked at intersections with their headlights aimed across the intersections. Spotters also positioned their patrol cars at the top of expressway off ramps where vehicle speeds were reduced, and violations were more visible. Stop vehicles were positioned at the bottom of the ramps.

Timing

Usually, officers started at sunset or early evening and worked in 4-to-5-hour timeframes. After 4 hours, officers were usually burned out. Later at night, there would be less traffic, but officers encountered more impaired drivers.

Funding

The program was initially launched using contract funds from NHTSA.

Communication and Outreach

The WTSC matches every dollar spent on enforcement with a dollar spent on public education. When the WTSC launched an NTSBE project, it promoted high visibility with a large publicity campaign of earned and paid media. Washington is a primary seat belt law State.

WTSC used NTSBE as an opportunity for educating the public about the importance of seat belts and to raise awareness on impaired driving crashes where seat belts were not used.

Some key points that were incorporated into the campaign included these.

- Seat belts are important.
- The likelihood of impaired drivers increases during the evening hours.
- The best defense against an impaired driver is the use of a seat belt.

The campaign involved paid and earned media, the State DOTs variable messages on freeways, and along roadways. Additionally, campaign information was often distributed by local businesses through reader boards. WTSC spread the message broadly to the public but also sought out specific avenues to target Hispanic populations through local media partnerships and played Spanish public service announcements on Spanish channels.

Lessons Learned

After implementing NTSBE with several LEAs, the WTSC developed a “lessons learned” report that outlined suggestions for future operations. Some of the key points are included below.

- Location is important. Select a location with a higher volume of traffic, but do not pick a place where vehicles are traveling so fast, that it is impossible to see inside them. The location should be a place where traffic stops frequently or moves at slow speeds, like intersections.
- Sometimes places that were identified as good locations during the day did not work well at night because of lighting and visibility issues.
- Use a separate radio channel to communicate with other team members working on the NTSBE operation.
- Select an experienced officer as the observer. They will be more confident in finding violators compared to an officer new to enforcement.
- It was easier for motorcycle officers to conduct NTSBE traffic stops.
- To increase enforcement activity, locate the stop vehicle out of viewing range from vehicles being observed.
- Consider having a DRE or narcotics dog available for traffic stops where drugs are suspected.
- Many officers raised concerns about traffic volumes dropping off (after 10 p.m., 12 p.m.) and low patrol activity as a result.
- Illegally or even legally tinted windows can be a problem. On hot summer nights, often people roll down windows that make it easier to spot unbuckled motorists.

Conclusions

This section provides an overview of the material developed in this project, the case studies, and process guide.

While the States' NTSBE programs were quite different, there were some important commonalities related to how data informed when and where NTSBE operations should be implemented, how seat belt enforcement was integrated with other safety priorities, how operations were coordinated collaboratively across LEAs, and how operations were communicated.

Data Driven Enforcement

Like any traffic safety initiative, NTSBE should be driven by crash data. Almost every State has relatively sophisticated crash data bases available to identify when and where enforcement should be directed. These case studies highlight how States use data to inform where enforcement efforts should focus and when they could maximize their impact. Public support for NTSBE is positively affected by demonstrating a need for that enforcement and focusing those efforts in locations where they are most needed allows scarce law enforcement resources to go where the data shows it is needed most.

Integrated Enforcement Programs

In 2020 nighttime fatalities increased by 11 percent despite fewer miles travelled. This increase is largely attributed to impaired driving, speeding, and not wearing a seat belt (NCSA, 2021). All four States included as case studies recognized the connection between these risky driving behaviors and often targeted all three when conducting NTSBE. Integrating their enforcement efforts allowed officers to maximize funding and always scarce law enforcement personnel resources. For example, check points (where permitted) for nighttime impaired driving enforcement provide a significant opportunity for seat belt enforcement in primary and secondary States; including the States included in this document. Washington State incorporated increased impaired driving at night into educational messaging to encourage people to use seat belts at night to protect themselves.

Cooperative Enforcement Strategies

A significant obstacle for any traffic safety enforcement initiative, including NTSBE, is staffing. Some of the tactics described in these case studies involve staffing levels that may be beyond that available to many smaller law enforcement agencies, if they work alone. The case studies highlight how law enforcement maximized their capacity to enforce seat belts by leveraging partnerships with SHSOs and coordinating with other local and county law enforcement agencies and State Highway Patrols or State Police to staff multi-agency enforcement teams to address multiple risk driving behaviors, include seat belt use.

Communication and Outreach

One important component of NTSBE is letting the public know what will be happening. Sharing information about the nighttime enforcement plans through press releases and other social media channels offers an opportunity to raise awareness and provide education about the importance of wearing a seat belt.

Trial and Error

The case study States emphasized the need to be flexible and trying several different approaches. It took time to figure out tactics that worked best, timeframe for operations, productive intersections with the right flow of traffic (not too high or too low), the best way to maximize lighting, and the right ratio of observing officer to chase vehicles for the traffic volumes involved.

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Appendix A: Discussion Protocol

A discussion protocol was developed by the team. It outlined potential questions that might be asked of stakeholders within SHSOs and LEAs. Described in detail below, the key elements included:

- Initiation of NTSBE
- Funding and resource allocation
- Planning and building support for NTSBE
- Implementing NTSBE
- Outreach and engagement
- Measuring success and lessons learned

Initiation of NTSBE

Purpose:

- Understand impetus by State for encouraging NTSBE (if it was encouraged)
- Clarify rationale and reasons behind initiating NTSBE at the local level

Background:

- Understanding the rationale involved in initiating NTSBE and whether ultimately NTSBE lived up to expectations can be helpful for other States or jurisdictions considering NTSBE.

Potential questions for the SHSO:

We would like to learn more about the impetus for NTSBE at the State level and some of the initial reasons behind the State's support for NTSBE.

- What kinds of factors were involved in deciding to support NTSBE? How did the State learn about the concept/effectiveness of NTSBE?
- In what ways has the State encouraged NTSBE among LEAs? Has it been a requirement in LEA grant agreements (e.g., x percent of OP money or hours must be spent during NTSBE)? Or is it presented as an option?
- Has State support affected NTSBE implementation in local jurisdictions, and if so, how? Follow-up: How have LEAs participated in NTSBE? How many LEAs participate in NTSBE? How has the number of participating jurisdictions changed over the years?
- How much of a priority NTSBE for the SHSO? If it is a priority, do you have any information on why NTSBE was prioritized?

Potential questions for LEA leadership:

We would like to learn more about the impetus for NTSBE at the local level and some of the initial reasons behind your department's support for NTSBE.

- About how long has your agency been conducting NTSBE?
- Can you provide any information about how the NTSBE initiative got started?
- Are you aware of any factors behind the decision to conduct NTSBE?
- How has the State supported NTSBE in the jurisdiction your agency serves?
- Has support for NTSBE changed over time? Are city leaders and/or the community supportive?

Funding and Resource Allocation

Purpose:

- Understand how State funding and related grant requirements influenced local level participation in NTSBE efforts
- Appreciate how State requirements may have changed NTSBE at the local level
- Identify other funding mechanisms for NTSBE

Background:

- State funding and requirements enable NTSBE implementation at the local level, whether through funding occupant protection targeted grants or CIOT campaigns. Some States have reported that changes to NTSBE requirements resulted in less or more NTSBE adoption at the local level.

Possible background documentation to collect:

- State Highway Safety Plan

Potential questions for the SHSO:

We would like to spend a few minutes talking about the funding and resources allocated for NTSBE.

- Did State funding shape NTSBE implementation? If so, in what ways?
- Were any Federal funds used to start and/or continue NTSBE (e.g., NHTSA grants)? If so, were there any requirements for NTSBE at the local level? *[If yes, what were they?]*
- Have there been changes to funding or funding requirements over the years of NTSBE implementation? If so, did they affect LEA participation? Could you talk more about how they influenced LEA participation?
- Have any changes arising from changing community or leadership support? If so, is the change specific to seat belt enforcement or traffic enforcement overall?

Potential questions for LEA leadership:

We would like to spend a few minutes talking about the funding and resources allocated for NTSBE.

- Was a specific budget established for NTSBE, or was NTSBE conducted as part of the LEA's ongoing traffic enforcement activity? If so, was it conducted through other traffic safety grants (e.g., impaired driving, distracted driving) or using the LEA's own financial resources?
- Did State funding direct NTSBE implementation in your area? If so, which State funding?
- In what ways did funding affect the timing, duration, and resources used for NTSBE?
- What requirements were tied to the funding? If there were no requirements, how would this change your calculation to conduct NTSBE?
- Other than funding, what were other considerations in starting NTSBE?

Planning and Building Supports for NTSBE

Purpose:

- Understand any policy, programmatic framework, and training put in place to support or institutionalize NTSBE at the local and/or State level
- Identify natural linkages between NTSBE and other ongoing strategic efforts that may tie into planning

Background:

- NTSBE involves intentional planning and effort on many levels. NTSBE can require significant funding, staffing, and training commitments by LEAs. Efforts to institutionalize NTSBE and provide a framework that can be built upon, rather than recreated, either by LEAs or at the State level. Ongoing support or encouragement of NTSBE among LEAs may reduce barriers involved in implementing NTSBE. For other LEAs to adopt NTSBE, it will be important for them to understand the scope of planning required for it to be successful.

Potential questions for the SHSO:

We would like to gain a better understanding of the different ways that you and your colleagues in the SHSO may have helped plan or pave the way for NTSBE for LEAs.

- Was the SHSO involved in planning for NTSBE? If so, who was behind the planning and implementation of your NTSBE initiative? Who did you decide to engage from your agency? What about other State or local partners? Why were those colleagues chosen?
- Have you been involved in any efforts to incorporate NTSBE into the State Highway Safety Plan or other strategic planning document? If so, can you tell me more about them?
- Has NTSBE been incorporated into the State's CIOT campaign? If so, how?

Potential questions for traffic enforcement lead or LEO lead for NTSBE:

We would like to better understand what preparation and planning you did as an agency prior to implementing NTSBE.

- Could you tell me a little more about the planning that your agency did prior to implementing NTSBE? Who was engaged from your agency to help with the planning? Follow-up: Could we take a walk through the ways that each of the colleagues that you just mentioned were involved in the planning?
- Were any elements, such as training, operation plans, or manuals developed in advance of or because of implementation? If so, could you tell me more about them and provide copies?
- Were line officers engaged in the planning process at all? If so, in what ways were they involved?
- Was any type of officer training related to NTSBE provided (rollcall or other)? If so, what was covered in the training? Follow-up: If so, was additional training conducted on tactical methods to promote safety while conducting nighttime operations? In retrospect, are there issues you covered that did not need to be included? Or topics that you will make sure to include next time?

- How did you gain buy-in from fellow officers? What incentivized (or dissuaded) participation and support for the program? Was there any pushback from officers?

Potential questions for LEOs who participated in NTSBE:

We would like to get an understanding of the planning and preparations involved in conducting NTSBE and what it was like from your perspective.

- How did you first learn about your department's plans to conduct NTSBE? Initially, how did you feel about NTSBE? Potential follow-up: What reasons were provided by your commanding officers to support NTSBE? Did you find these reasons persuasive? Follow-up: Alternatively, did you have to "sell" the concept of NTSBE up the command chain? To city leaders?
- Can you tell me about how you and fellow officers were prepared to conduct NTSBE? Potential follow-up: Were you or other line officers engaged in the planning process? If so, what was involved?
- Was any type of officer training related to NTSBE provided (rollcall or other)? If so, could you walk me through what was covered? In retrospect, are there other topics that you would like to have included next time?
- Did your agency develop the training or was it provided by the SHSO?

Implementing NTSBE

Purpose:

- Identify specific strategies, tactics, and resources involved in conducting NTSBE
- Understand how seat belt use/non-use was documented

Background:

- NTSBE can be implemented in a range of different ways, and it is important to understand the ways in which different locations implemented NTSBE, how effective these methods were perceived to be, and the degree to which other jurisdictions might be able to emulate or modify these methods for their own purposes.

Possible background documents:

- NTSBE standard operations plan
- Rollcall/officer training elements
- Protocols for identifying seat belt use/non-use

Potential questions for the SHSO:

- Was the initiative coordinated across LEAs? If so, how and to what degree?
- Did the State provide technical assistance or support for LEAs implementing NTSBE? If so, can you tell me more about the kind of support provided? How was it provided? (e.g., LELs, roll call video training, web-based training)

Potential questions for traffic enforcement lead or LEO lead for NTSBE:

- Were any specific strategies or tactics identified for implementation of NTSBE? If so, can you tell me more about which specific strategies or tactics were undertaken as part of the nighttime enforcement effort? Potential follow-up: How frequently did they occur?

For what duration? What worked? What do you think could have worked better? How were they communicated to the public?

- Was NTSBE conducted on its own or integrated into other traffic enforcement efforts (i.e., speed, impaired driving). If so, how did that happen?
- Was NTSBE conducted on a sustained basis over time or was it conducted in waves?
- Did NTSBE occur outside of grant-funded overtime shifts? Did it occur only during occupant protection-related mobilizations or how did you determine when to employ NTSBE? (e.g., In connection with community events? Weekends? Seasonally?)
- What law enforcement resources were required for NTSBE? Potential issues to follow-up on: Number of officer hours, number of officers involved, special patrols, overtime, integrated with other duties.
- How were locations for conducting NTSBE selected?
- Were any protocols established to observe driver and passenger seat belt use at night?
- Who from your department was engaged in implementing NTSBE?
- How was the initiative perceived by fellow officers before and after the implementation period?

Potential questions for LEOs who participated in NTSBE:

We would like to learn more about what it was like for you in the field when you were conducting NTSBE.

- Were any specific strategies or tactics identified for implementation of NTSBE? If so, can you tell me more about which specific strategies were undertaken as part of the nighttime enforcement effort? Potential follow-up: How effective did you feel these strategies were?
- Could you walk me through a typical shift that involved NTSBE? Potential follow-up: What types of locations did you cover? How did you determine whether drivers or passengers were wearing seat belts?
- Was NTSBE conducted on its own or integrated into other traffic enforcement efforts (i.e., speed, impaired driving). If so, how did that work when you were out in the field?
- Did you feel NTSBE was successful? If so, in what ways? If not, why?
- Did officers encounter any challenges? If so, could you describe them?
- How was the initiative perceived by fellow officers before and after the implementation period?

Outreach and Engagement – Partners, Communication, and Media

Purpose:

- Explore how community and partner engagement furthered NTSBE efforts
- Understand the role of traditional and social media in promoting NTSBE

Background:

- Communication to the public and key partners (e.g., the courts, the community) via direct information provision and media engagement is an important aspect of NTSBE. For instance, it could be important to connect with the courts to prepare them for more citations on the dockets. Informing the community on the purpose and goals of NTSBE is

critical. Understanding how these assets are engaged and leveraged within localities and States could be useful for other jurisdictions when planning NTSBE.

Possible background documents:

- Press releases and press conferences
- Social media messages and templates
- Any paid media attention

Potential questions for the SHSO:

We would like to understand different ways that partners and media may have supported NTSBE planning and implementation.

- Did you reach out to partners to either inform them about the NTSBE or ask for their help? Potential follow-up: If so, what partners did you reach out to? What did you ask of them? If not, why not?
- Did you coordinate efforts across partners (e.g., talking with the courts to prepare them for more citations on the dockets)?

Potential questions for traffic enforcement lead or LEO lead for NTSBE:

We would like to understand different ways that partners and media may have supported NTSBE planning and implementation.

- Did you reach out to partners to either inform them about the NTSBE or ask for their help? Potential follow-up: If so, what partners did you reach out to? What did you ask of them? If not, why not?
- Did you coordinate efforts across partners (e.g., talking with the courts to prepare them for more citations on the dockets, multijurisdictional events)?

Potential questions for public information officer:

We would like to understand different ways that partners and media may have supported NTSBE planning and implementation.

- Did you reach out to partners to either inform them about the NTSBE or ask for their help? Potential follow-up: If so, what partners did you reach out to? What did you ask of them? If not, why not?
- Did you coordinate efforts across partners (e.g., talking with the courts to prepare them for more citations on the dockets)?
- Were press releases published about the seat belt enforcement initiative?
- Were press conferences held prior to and/or after NTSBE initiatives?
- If so, was the content internally developed or from another source? If another source, what source?
- If the department developed messages for print, electronic or social media, was the message tailored to a target audience? If so, in what ways?
- Is NTSBE advertised through social media? If so, how? Did other partners engage in social media and other outreach efforts? Did any of these partners contribute to paid or earned media efforts?
- Is any information available regarding public response to the NTSBE initiative?

- What lessons learned or recommendations, if any, would you give to other LEAs interested in developing a similar initiative?

Measuring Success

Purpose:

- Catalogue successes and lessons learned from NTSBE

Background:

- Whether or not data was tracked to catalogue the success of NTSBE, it is important to understand how State and local enforcement agencies define and measure success when conducting NTSBE and what lessons they learned in the process. NTSBE may also influence the agencies' efforts in other areas, such as impaired driving.

Possible background documents:

- NTSBE standard operations plan
- Rollcall/officer training elements
- Virtual walk-through (asking LEOs to walk through an evening of NTSBE implementation)

Potential questions for the SHSO:

There is/was a lot of time, funding and effort put into conducting NTSBE. We would like to spend a little time about the success you had as well as any lessons learned.

- How would you define success for NTSBE? Do you think the NTSBE conducted most recently was successful? If so, in what ways was it successful? If not, why?
- Was success measured? Could you tell me a little more about how it was measured? Potential follow-up: If you asked States to collect or track data, what data? Did LEAs provide the data you requested? What data do you feel is most important to track?
- Was success communicated to the public? If so, how?
- Was success communicated internally within the law enforcement agency? If so, how?
- What recommendations would you give to other SHSOs interested in developing a similar initiative?
- Are there any aspects of the NTSBE initiative you would have done differently?

Potential questions for traffic enforcement lead or LEO lead for NTSBE:

There is/was a lot of time, funding and effort put into conducting NTSBE. We would like to spend a little time about the success you had as well as any lessons learned.

- How would you define success for NTSBE? Do you think the NTSBE conducted most recently was successful? If so, in what ways was it successful? If not, why?
- Was success measured? If so, could you tell me a little more about how it was measured? Potential follow-up: If you collected or tracked data, what data did you collect? What data do you feel is most important to track?
- Was success communicated to the public? If so, how?
- Was success communicated internally within the law enforcement agency? If so, how?
- What lessons learned or recommendations, if any, would you give to other LEAs interested in developing a similar initiative?

- Are there any aspects of the NTSBE initiative the department would have done differently?
- Did any challenges arise during implementation, and if so, how did the LEA address them?

Potential questions for LEOs participating in NTSBE:

There is/was a lot of time and effort put into conducting NTSBE. We would like to spend a little time about the success you had as well as any lessons learned.

- How would you define success for NTSBE? Do you think the NTSBE that was conducted most recently was successful? In what ways was it successful?
- Are there any aspects of the NTSBE initiative that the department would have done differently?
- Did any challenges arise when you were in the field conducting NTSBE? If so, what adjustments did you make?
- What lessons learned or recommendations, if any, would you give to other LEAs interested in developing a similar initiative?

DOT HS 813 537
March 2024



U.S. Department
of Transportation
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Traffic Safety
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