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**National Highway  
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# **How-to Guide for Increasing Seat Belt Use in Indian Country**

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<b>16. Abstract</b> <p>This report outlines the process of developing a how-to guide to increase seat belt use in Indian Country, titled <i>Bridging Cultures to Buckle Up: A Guide for Working With Tribes to Increase Seat Belt Use</i>. The guide is designed for State and local officials as well as non-government organizations and advocates who are interested in partnering with Tribes in their areas to improve traffic safety through occupant protection, specifically seat belt use. Its development was made possible through a collaborative effort that included representatives from Indian Country across the United States, including Tribes, nations, bands, villages, pueblos, rancherias, as well as State and Federal transportation safety officials and Tribal liaisons. The report summarizes the activities involved in developing the guide, including convening a Tribal Advisory Council and several virtual working groups in NHTSA's Regions 6 and 10 that involved Tribal and State representatives. During these meetings, participants identified issues to be addressed in the guide; provided input, content, and examples; and reviewed drafts of the guide. The report outlines key themes from the Tribal Advisory Council and working group meetings that inform each chapter. It also highlights some successes and challenges of the project.</p>			
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## Executive Summary

This report outlines the process of developing a how-to guide to increase seat belt use in Indian Country, titled *Bridging Cultures to Buckle Up: A Guide for Working With Tribes to Increase Seat Belt Use* (Barlow et al., 2026). The guide is designed for State and local officials as well as non-government organizations and advocates who are interested in partnering with Tribes in their area to improve traffic safety through occupant protection, specifically seat belt use. Its development was made possible through a collaborative effort that included representatives from Indian Country across the United States, including Tribes, nations, bands, villages, pueblos, and rancherias, as well as State and Federal transportation safety officials and Tribal liaisons.

The guide:

- outlines a framework based on asking questions and listening to build understanding and trust between Tribes and the State and local officials for successful collaboration;
- provides an overview of sovereignty, Tribal land status, and Indigenous Knowledge and practices and their impact on laws, enforcement, partnerships, and data; and
- offers suggestions for designing funding mechanisms to better respond to the needs of Tribes.

Examples and case studies are provided throughout the guide. It also includes an extensive resource section to broaden understanding of the topics covered.

This report summarizes the activities involved in developing the guide, including convening a Tribal Advisory Council and several virtual working groups in NHTSA's Regions 6 and 10 that involved Tribal and State representatives. During these meetings, participants identified issues that needed to be addressed in the guide; provided input, content, and examples; and reviewed drafts of the guide. The report outlines key themes from the Tribal Advisory Council and working group meetings that informed each chapter of the guide. It also highlights some successes and challenges of the project. The guide is a reflection of the leadership, vision, and expertise of the Tribal Advisory Council and working group members.

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## Introduction

This report outlines the process of developing the guide, *Bridging Cultures to Buckle Up: A Guide for Working With Tribes to Increase Seat Belt Use*. This guide is for State and local officials interested in partnering with Tribes in their area to improve traffic safety through occupant protection, specifically seat belt use.

NHTSA sought to understand why seat belt use differed so dramatically in Tribal communities as compared to non-Tribal communities. What are the unique challenges that Tribes face? How can State and local officials better partner with Tribes to improve safety?

The development of the guide was made possible through a collaborative effort of representatives from Indian Country across the United States, including Tribes, nations, bands, villages, pueblos, and rancherias. State and Federal transportation safety officials and Tribal liaisons were also included as collaborators. The project team intentionally incorporated stakeholders' views in order to respond to the needs of the State and local officials and Tribes. Appendix A acknowledges all the participants in the Tribal Advisory Council and working groups over the course of the project.

Because Tribes are unique, there is no perfect term to refer to them collectively. Throughout the guide and in this report, the term "Indian Country" is used to broadly describe Tribal communities (e.g., nations, bands, villages, pueblos, rancherias, and communities) across the United States, and "Tribal lands" to refer to a specific geographic area designated for use by Tribal members. The report uses the term "Tribe" to include all American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) Tribes, villages, and groups.

## Task Order Objectives, Tasks, and Deliverables

The task order had two objectives for the development of the guide.

- **Objective 1:** Better understand the differences in seat belt use among Tribes and the contributing factors that influence seat belt use in Indian country.
- **Objective 2:** Identify effective, culturally tailored, traffic safety countermeasures and models of collaboration between State transportation officials and Tribes to increase AI/AN seat belt use rates.

To accomplish these objectives, the project team:

- Conducted background research on the differences in seat belt use rates among Tribes and the contributing factors that influence seat belt use in Indian Country.
- Convened a Tribal Advisory Council to provide guidance at key points in the guide development process.
- Selected NHTSA Region "sites" for virtual working group meetings.
- Identified effective, culturally tailored traffic safety countermeasures and models of collaboration between State transportation officials and Tribes to increase seat belt use in Tribal communities through working group and Tribal Advisory Council meetings.
- Developed a guide that reflected the input from the working groups, Tribal Advisory Council, and the project team's subject matter experts.

- Drafted a final report to share the process of the guide creation.

This report describes the project activities involved in further detail.

## **Project Partners**

These subject matter experts were involved in this project.

- **Holly Billie** of Tribal Public Health, LLC. Billie facilitated the Tribal Advisory Council and working group meetings and recommended people for participation in both groups. She also reviewed iterations of the guide outline and draft. In this process she made substantial content contributions and edits to the guide content and was an important thought partner in the creative development process of the guide.
- **Dr. Carolyn Crump** and **Robert Letourneau** of the Gillings School of Global Health at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Dr. Crump and Letourneau led the plan for topics to cover in the working group meetings. They were heavily involved in the ideating, planning, drafting, and editing of the guide. They were also important thought partners throughout the process.
- **Jodee Dennison** and **Jerrod Moore**, both formerly of the Albuquerque Area Southwest Tribal Epidemiology Center (AASTEC). Dennison and Moore helped identify potential Tribal Advisory Council and working group members and provided the initial communication with Tribal Advisory Council and working group members. AASTEC is a known and trusted entity by many in the Tribal traffic safety community and was an important outreach and project partner.

The team met regularly throughout the project to ensure that the subject matter experts had meaningful involvement throughout the process and that the guide could benefit from their expertise and input at every stage of information gathering and development.

## Summary of Project Activities

A core principle throughout this project was the recognition that each Tribe has its own unique culture and traditions, as well as specific strengths and needs. There are nearly 600<sup>1</sup> Federally recognized Tribes in the United States, all with customs, traditions, and practices of governing that make them unique.

Consequently, throughout the guide development process, the project team pushed itself to maximize input from a diverse range of Tribal representatives and other professionals who could best speak to Tribal traffic safety by increasing seat belt use on Tribal lands and coordinating and collaborating with State and local officials. The team felt it was equally important to seek input from the guide's intended audience of State and local officials to also speak to their needs and inform their future work to increase seat belt use.

To maximize stakeholder input, the project team:

- convened a Tribal Advisory Council of Tribal leaders and experts in transportation safety who provided additional context, explanations, and alternative perspectives;
- hosted nine regional working group meetings that involved a spectrum of partners including local law enforcement (both Tribal and city/county), Tribal officials and representatives, State Highway Safety Office officials, public health officials, and others with experience and expertise in Tribal traffic safety; and
- sought input from the Tribal Advisory Council and regional working groups throughout the guide development process. Input was sought from the beginning, when identifying what to cover, in informing the content, and in reviewing various drafts of the guide to ensure that the material included reflected the conversations and priorities conveyed in earlier discussions.

### Tribal Advisory Council

The Tribal Advisory Council gave a national perspective to the work by providing additional context, explanations, and alternative perspectives to the regional working group discussions.

The team identified and recruited Tribal Advisory Council members based on existing connections and knowledge of their previous work. Council members met three times over the course of the project, including one full-day, in-person meeting to review the draft of the guide. Participants were offered a stipend reimbursement for their participation in each meeting. A notetaker took detailed, transcript-like notes during each meeting.

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<sup>1</sup> Editor's note: According to the annual list published by the Department of the Interior's Bureau of Indian Affairs as of 2026, there are 575 federally recognized Indian Tribes in the United States, 347 in the 48 contiguous states and 227 in Alaska. Source: <https://www.bia.gov/about-us>

### ***Initial Meeting***

The Tribal Advisory Council's initial virtual meeting in March 2023 focused on site selection. Primary topics included:

- issues that should be addressed in a how-to guide for State officials and other entities who would like to work with Tribes to increase seat belt use, and
- advantages and challenges of selecting specific NHTSA Regions for working groups and ideas for potential representatives who could be involved with selected sites.

### ***In-person Meeting***

In April 2024 the Tribal Advisory Council convened a second full-day, in-person meeting in Denver, Colorado, where it reviewed an initial draft of the guide that captured the themes from working group discussions. During the meeting, participants walked through each proposed section of the guide and heard about the working group discussions that informed the section content. As they reviewed each section, participants

- raised issues they felt were missing or lacking in the guide,
- identified areas where additional input was needed,
- reflected on their experiences and whether they had additional examples to include, and
- discussed questions they (from a tribal perspective) would like to be asked by State or local officials that could be included in the guide.

Council members also discussed what an ideal Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) might include related to

- eligibility,
- focus of the opportunity (i.e., meeting the true needs of the Tribe; clarifying objectives),
- funding amount,
- allowable spending (e.g., funding Indigenous Practices),
- funding mechanism (i.e., matching, reimbursement), and
- requirements (i.e., reporting, data sharing, evaluation).

Their discussions provided additional content and considerations as the guide continued to be expanded and iterated upon.

### ***Final Tribal Advisory Council Meeting: Guide Review***

In the final meeting held virtually in June 2024 the Tribal Advisory Council received a mostly final draft of the guide to review in advance of the meeting. At the beginning of the meeting, council members responded to the following poll question.

- How helpful will the guide's content be to State and local officials seeking to work with Tribes to increase occupant protection?

All council members reported they felt the guide was either very helpful or helpful. The rest of the meeting focused on discussing gaps and other changes that needed to be made to the guide.

In their final meeting Tribal Advisory Council members also underscored the importance of ensuring this guide reached its intended audience. They suggested several different organizations and groups the guide should be shared with. As a result of this suggestion, the project team developed an outreach plan, with additional consultation from the Tribal Advisory Council and several working group State officials.

### **Identifying Site Locations/Prioritizing NHTSA Regions for Working Groups**

Given the need to expand input from the diverse Tribal community, the project team opted to identify two NHTSA Regions, rather than localities, as sites for working group meetings. This allowed for input from Tribes and other traffic safety stakeholders from several States; participants involved drew experience from a variety of Tribes, contexts, and policy landscapes.

Initially, the team identified five NHTSA Regions that could host working groups.

- Region 5 (Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, and Ohio)
- Region 6 (New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas, Louisiana, and Mississippi)
- Region 8 (North Dakota, South Dakota, Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, and Nevada)
- Region 9 (California and Arizona)
- Region 10 (Montana, Idaho, Oregon, Washington, and Alaska)

These Regions offered opportunities to explore factors such as culture, seat belt use rates, approach to seat belt enforcement and prevention, relationships models, and past collaborations with State transportation officials.

Other NHTSA Regions were excluded from consideration given that fewer Tribes resided there, as well as the levels of Tribe activity with State transportation officials.

### ***Data to Inform Decision Making***

To inform selection of NHTSA Regions for the working groups, the team identified data elements to explore factors and considerations in States and regions that could affect State and Tribal efforts to increase seat belt use. The elements were drawn from publicly available data sets, reports, and other sources and compiled in a spreadsheet built to compare States and Regions. The elements included

- presence of Tribal liaisons in each State;
- number of law enforcement agencies (LEA) operated by Tribes in the State;
- proportion of land-based Tribes;
- numbers of State and Federally recognized Tribes;
- proportion of State-recognized Tribes to Federally recognized Tribes;
- Tribal population of State and Federally recognized Tribes, including those of only or some AI/AN ethnicity; and
- motor vehicle fatalities by State and among AI/AN people, including total number and crude rates.

These elements are outlined in a table comparing the NHTSA Regions in Appendix B.

### ***Stakeholder Input in Site Selection***

Two stakeholder groups were consulted during the site selection process: (1) the Regional Tribal outreach coordinators at NHTSA and (2) the assembled Tribal Advisory Council. The intent of seeking stakeholder input was to gain a broader understanding of existing State/Tribal relationships as well as existing seat belt countermeasures and practices being implemented in States and Regions.

### **NHTSA Regional Tribal Outreach Coordinator Input**

Overall, the Regional Tribal Outreach Coordinators provided insight on the degree to which there were (or were not) ongoing collaborations, shared promising or best practices to increase seat belt use in the Region, and outlined several challenges facing the State and Tribes.

Many of the issues coordinators raised were added to a list of proposed topics to be discussed with the working groups. This list was then shared with the Tribal Advisory Council at its first meeting to gather further input and to frame what kinds of issues might be discussed in working groups, so that they could be factored into site selection.

### **Tribal Advisory Council Input**

During their first meeting, Tribal Advisory Council members discussed important factors for consideration when selecting the Regions, including

- various geographic locations. The two NHTSA Regions chosen should cover different areas of the country.
- role of Tribal LEAs. States with Tribal LEAs were better situated to support efforts to increase seat belt use.
- motor vehicle fatalities. States with high motor vehicle fatalities would allow exploration of barriers and challenges influencing seat belt usage.
- coordination and collaboration - successes and failures. Include both to explore lessons learned from both.

Some additional criteria the Tribal Advisory Council recommended be considered and incorporated into site considerations were

- ensuring a variety of State and Tribal collaborations,
- inclusion of States with active state-level Tribal liaisons,
- inclusion of State-recognized Tribes,
- known contacts or stakeholders who could be considered as potential working group participants, and
- inclusion of a State with no Tribal lands.

Through a survey, Tribal Advisory Council members rank-ordered the Regions based on which they felt held the most promise to address key topics identified in working groups. They overwhelmingly voted for Regions 6 and 10 as preferred areas for the working groups.

## **Working Group Meetings**

The regional working groups involved a spectrum of partners including local law enforcement (i.e., Tribal, city/county, State, and Bureau of Indian Affairs [BIA]), Tribal officials and representatives, State transportation and safety officials, public health officials, and others. Overall, nine working group meetings were held from May 2023 to May 2024.

All working group meetings were held virtually, which enabled easier participation across the large NHTSA Regions. A core group of participants attended the majority of working group meetings, with additional participants invited depending on the topic being discussed. Participants were offered a stipend reimbursement for their participation in each meeting. A notetaker took detailed, transcript-like notes. The process for translating these notes into the guide content is discussed in the Guide Development section of this report.

Working group meetings were themed around specific topics based on a working group topic distribution plan that the team developed following the first Tribal Advisory Council meeting.

### ***Working Group Topic Distribution Plan***

The Working Group Topic Distribution Plan is included in Appendix C. It tied key topics to project objectives and provided an initial structure for planning all the working group meetings. The project team outlined the following working group topics according to the project objectives.

**Objective 1:** Better understand the differences in seat belt use among Tribes and the contributing factors that influence seat belt use in Indian Country.

- A. Environmental or systemic factors that limit the ability of Tribes to increase seat belt use
  - 1. Structural/systemic issues (e.g., infrastructure, funding, Indian Health Service [his] technical assistance, and older vehicles without shoulder harnesses)
  - 2. State and local seat belt use laws
  - 3. Presence of Tribal LEAs (BIA, Tribal, State/municipal)
  - 4. Jurisdiction and sovereignty issues
  - 5. Reservation status of Tribe
- B. Opportunities to increase mutual understanding
  - 1. Data sharing
  - 2. Requirements of State/municipal agencies to work with Tribes
  - 3. Training provided to State/municipal agency staff to work with Tribes
  - 4. Representation of Tribes on State transportation safety groups/meetings

**Objective 2:** Identify effective, culturally tailored traffic safety countermeasures and models of collaboration between State transportation officials and Tribes to increase AI/AN seat belt use rates.

- A. Partnership-building
  - 1. Bridging the gap in Tribal transportation safety disparities among Federal/State/local governments

2. Establishing or expanding relationships between States and Tribes
  3. State/Tribal needs from various levels of government to improve motor vehicle safety
- B. Specific NHTSA seat belt strategies/countermeasures and how they might be applicable to different conditions in the State/Tribal dynamics based on NHTSA's *Countermeasures That Work*, 11th Edition, 2023 (Kirley et al., 2023).
1. Primary enforcement of State law
  2. Primary enforcement of local law
  3. Increase seat belt use law penalties
  4. High-visibility seat belt law enforcement
  5. Nighttime seat belt enforcement
  6. Sustained enforcement of seat belt use law
  7. Supporting enforcement (e.g. communication campaigns)
  8. Strategies for low-belt-use groups
- C. Model approaches (e.g., successes and challenges)

### ***Final Working Group Meeting: Guide Review***

For the final working group meeting, the team convened State and Tribal representatives from both Regions for a 3-hour meeting to walk through a mostly final draft of the guide. This meeting served to both seek detailed critiques on the material developed, as well as to share with members how their input throughout the project informed the development of the guide.

### **Guide Development**

Developing the guide, *Bridging Cultures to Buckle Up: A Guide for Working With Tribes to Increase Seat Belt Use*, heavily relied on input from Tribal representatives from the working groups in providing context and in framing Tribes' perspective on occupant protection for State and local officials.

Given that each Tribe is unique with its own customs and its own history of working with State and local officials, development of the guide involved asking the Tribal representatives the following:

- What did they feel was important for others to know prior to contacting and when working with a Tribe?
- What questions needed to be asked by outside partners to build trust and to understand a Tribe's needs first?
- How could State and local officials create a foundation of respect with Tribes and build partnerships to increase seat belt use?

Every Tribe is different with its own unique customs, history, and decision-making processes. To learn about one Tribe, is to learn about *one* Tribe.

The guide also weaves in the experiences of State and local officials who have worked closely with Tribes.

With this framing in mind, the team developed a process for collecting, analyzing, and reporting findings from the working groups. This process occurred concurrently with working group meetings to allow the data analysis to inform further data collection and question asking at subsequent working groups.

### ***Data Collection and Analysis***

At each Tribal Advisory Council and working group meeting, a notetaker took transcription-style notes. These notes were cleaned and then reviewed for clarity by team members present for the working group. The notes were shared broadly with the team, including subject matter experts who provided initial impressions, clarification, additional background, and insight into the working group discussion. The project team flagged topics and themes that arose repeatedly and potential issues needing additional clarification. The issues raised, including themes and points of confusion, were used to inform subsequent working group meeting agendas.

The team used the finalized working group notes as the foundation for thematic data analysis. Building upon the initial impressions, a team member reviewed the notes again and identified key themes related to the project objectives and worked with others to iteratively expound upon those themes, identifying sub-topics and additional questions for subsequent working groups or requiring further researched. Additional questions emerged from the need to understand the nuances of Tribes' perspectives and to gather more information and examples on programs where States and Tribes successfully (and unsuccessfully) worked to address traffic safety.

Members of the working group would, on occasion, specifically identify a point they wished to be emphasized in the guide. For example, a working group member raised the point, "every Tribe is unique," and several other working group members indicated this was an important point to emphasize in the guide. The final guide therefore notes in ways that each Tribe is unique. Any such points indicated as highly relevant by Tribes were noted as key themes and included in the outline of findings. Other themes from the Working Group Discussions are further outlined in the Key Findings section.

### ***Guide Outline***

Following the eighth working group meeting, the project team explored how key themes could be organized into broad categories to make up the chapters of the guide. Accordingly, the guide was organized into the following chapters:

1. **Introduction to the Guide** provides an overview of the guide's intended audience and how to use and understand its contents.
2. **Fundamentals** discusses Tribal sovereignty and gives a history of Tribes in the United States. It offers suggestions for knowledge sharing and partnership.
3. **Meaningful Engagement** shares ideas for building cultural competence and awareness by asking questions and listening.
4. **How to Get Started** outlines suggestions for building relationships with Tribal leadership and other members of the Tribe.
5. **Data** highlights how a Tribe's sovereignty and history might influence their perspective and some of their considerations in data collection, use, and sharing.

6. **Funding** provides ideas for framing funding opportunities to increase Tribes' ability to partner and respond.
7. **Conclusion** covers key takeaways.
8. **Glossary** outlines definitions of all key terms used in the guide.
9. **Resources** provides additional reading, organized by section, to expand or broaden understanding of the topics covered.

### ***Iterative Drafts of the Guide***

Using the outline and the supporting key points raised from the working groups, the project team developed the first draft of the guide. This initial draft relied heavily on the points raised in the working groups and was drafted as working groups were still being conducted, which allowed this early draft to be shared with the working groups and Tribal Advisory Council during development.

Members of the working groups and the Tribal Advisory Council shared feedback in written form as well as in meeting discussions and highlight when their perspective had not been accurately represented, flag points that were not emphasized strongly enough, and identify additional examples.

The project team SMEs also provided substantive input and extensive feedback in iterations of the guide. The level of detail of these reviews included comments, additional topics and content, and revisions to word choice, particularly those sections which dealt with sensitive or highly specific topics.

### ***Final Draft of the Guide***

Following final subject matter experts (SMEs) and NHTSA reviews, a graphic designer worked with the team to develop a final draft of the guide that included imagery and graphics that were representative of Tribes and their culture.

## **Key Findings**

The following sections summarize the key findings from the working group discussions and how those findings informed the content of the guide chapters.

### **Introduction and Fundamentals**

Beyond introducing the functionality of the guide, the working groups emphasized a certain level of understanding is necessary before engaging Tribes. Some of the themes and core issues are outlined below.

#### **Tribal Advisory Council themes that drove section development and content:**

- Emphasize every Tribe is unique; when learning about a Tribe from a person they will generally only know about that one Tribe.
- Present data in a way that gives dignity to and does not shame Tribes.

#### **Working group themes that drove section development and content:**

- Seat belt enforcement laws can differ between State and Tribal lands.
- Sovereignty dictates who can issue citations, how violations are enforced, and the resulting penalty. Inconsistency and confusion can drive decisions to not enforce seat belt laws. For example, working group participants described people unbuckling or buckling as they pass jurisdictional lines.
- Tribal, State, and local law enforcement have successfully worked together. One example shared by a participant: Memoranda of Agreement (MOA) enable cross-commissioning of officers.

### **Meaningful Engagement With Tribes**

Tribal Advisory Council and working group members frequently described the type of engagement from State and local officials that facilitates successful (or unsuccessful) working relationships.

#### **Tribal Advisory Council themes that drove section development and content:**

- Tribal Liaison positions are an opportunity to engage with Tribes, particularly if the person in that position is affiliated with a Tribe or already has a strong understanding of specific Tribes in the area.
- State officials need to develop a relationship and understand Tribes, including traffic safety efforts are already underway, their culture, and the needs of the Tribe.

#### **Working group themes that drove section development and content:**

- Tribes need to consistently be at the table to provide input on plans and policy decisions.
- There is a history of the State and/or Federal government giving Tribes money with requirements not aligned with the Tribes priorities.

## **How to Get Started on Working With Tribes**

Members of the Tribal Advisory Council and working groups repeatedly emphasized the need to explicitly describe how to start working with Tribes in the guide.

### **Tribal Advisory Council themes that drove section development and content:**

- Trust and relationship building takes effort, personal reflection, asking questions and listening to responses. To initiate this process, members emphasized the need for State and local officials to “do their homework” and learn about the Tribe prior to reaching out to contact someone in the Tribe.
- Members suggested providing an expansive list of potential partners State or local officials should consider when working with Tribes, including Government Information Officers.

### **Working group themes that drove section development and content:**

- Building relationships is important: State officials should meet with Tribes on Tribal lands at Tribal-hosted events. Trust and relationships are not built at meetings that happen once a year at the State capital.
- It is important to understand who in the Tribe is knowledgeable and cares about traffic safety. Some State officials kept lists of who they needed to contact about different transportation-related issues.
- Trust and relationship building takes time, patience, persistence, and the willingness to ask questions to better learn issues that affect the Tribe.

## **Data**

Two points of friction that frequently emerged when the Tribal Advisory Council and working groups discussed States officials working with Tribes were data and funding. Both groups emphasized how challenging data sharing could be and felt it was important to specifically outline why it could be so difficult and how State and local officials might be able to overcome those difficulties, primarily by ensuring the Tribes benefit from any data agreement and by reducing the administrative burden on Tribes.

### **Tribal Advisory Council themes that drove section development and content:**

- Tribes are sovereign entities that decide when, how, and what data they want to share with the State or locality. Officials outside the Tribe need to acknowledge Tribal sovereignty related to data sharing and understand its potential implications.

### **Working group themes that drove section development and content:**

- Working group members described Tribes sharing data with the State or Federal Government and then not being able to easily access that data later or not receiving the promised funding for providing it.
- When State officials ask Tribes for data, they should clearly outline the benefit to Tribes for sharing their data.
- Data collection can put an administrative burden on Tribes or pose technical challenges.

## **Funding**

Discussions from the Tribal Advisory Council and working groups also provided specific guidance related to funding.

### **Tribal Advisory Council themes that drove section development and content:**

- It is important to acknowledge Tribal governments work differently than State governments when it comes to applying for, receiving, and spending funding.
- Tribal holidays and events can affect a Tribe's ability to apply for funding at a specific time of year.
- Funding should emphasize the needs of Tribes and prioritize their agenda.

### **Working group themes that drove section development and content:**

- Historically, funding opportunities have come with some requirements (e.g., rigid qualifications, required specifically trained personnel, data tracking, intensive reporting, reimbursable only), that can be a barrier for Tribes.
- These barriers influence a Tribe's willingness to accept funding or partner with a funding agency. They also reinforce the perception that funding is a form of the State pushing its priorities, rather than being willing to fund the Tribe's priorities.

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## Successes and Challenges

Several factors contributed to this project's success and are outlined below along with challenges.

### Successes

**Subject Matter Experts.** The SMEs all had extensive experience working with Tribes on traffic safety issues, are considered trusted partners among the Tribal traffic safety community and have extensive networks in Tribal traffic safety. Their ability to facilitate productive conversations, knowledge of pitfalls and language to avoid, and familiarity with issues raised by members of the Tribal Advisory Council and working groups greatly contributed to the project's success.

**Tribal involvement.** There was a great deal of input and project direction from collaborators representing Tribes. As a Navajo member, Holly Billie was uniquely positioned to engage working group and Tribal Advisory Council members in an inclusive way and facilitate meetings that honored their practices. Another Navajo Tribal member, Antoniette "Toni" Short, had extensive experience with Apache and Caddo Tribes in Oklahoma.

**Importance of the topic.** The majority of the Tribal Advisory Council and working group participants felt the guide met an important need and wanted to respond to that need.

**Consistent working group participation.** Recruitment and retention of working group participants can be challenging. However, the team successfully maintained a consistent group of working group members even though they met several times a year. Contributors to the consistent participation include:

- Stipend reimbursement for participation. These allowed the project team to recognize and thank participants for sharing their time and expertise.
- Virtual format. The virtual format maximized involvement and allowed meetings to be scheduled around the demands of busy participants. Further, the demands on time were less because travel was not required. This format also allowed the project team to collect a broader representation of stories and examples that took place in Tribes across large regions of the United States.

**Iterative approach to guide development.** By analyzing working group notes for themes over the course of the project, the team was able to share the themes with project participants and expand on those initially identified through follow-up discussions with the working groups and Tribal Advisory Council. For example, working group members wanted to emphasize certain nuances around the need for traffic safety initiatives on Tribal lands. It was important to them that data shared publicly did not convey the message that Tribes were "failing" in terms of traffic safety. The working group members iteratively reviewed how this topic was addressed in the guide until it was successful in representing their perspective. Similarly, the SMEs provided feedback on many draft versions of the guide. It was in this process the project team was successful in determining not just *what* information should be presented, but *how* information should be presented.

## Challenges

**Understanding the guide cannot be all-encompassing.** Each Tribe has its own unique culture and traditions, as well as specific strengths and needs. There was no way for the guide to list everything a local or State official might need to know related to occupant protection about any and every Tribe. However, throughout the discussions, Tribal representatives in the working groups and the Tribal Advisory Council members frequently remarked on the importance of local and State officials taking the time to learn about the Tribal communities with whom they wanted to work, including their traditions, customs, and history.

- Question-focused format. To encourage readers to learn more about Tribes in their jurisdictions, the guide includes questions they could consider either asking themselves or Tribes, depending on the question.
- Extensive resource list. The guide also includes an extensive resource list and ideas for different ways that officials can learn more about Tribes in their areas.

**Covering sensitive topics.** In this guide, there are many nuanced issues that can be fraught with misunderstandings related to how they might affect occupant protection. Several iterations and reviews from different representatives were needed to strike the right balance in the text of the guide.

**Collecting examples and stories.** There have been some strong successes and partnerships developed in Indian Country to improve traffic safety and increase seat belt use. There are many dedicated transportation safety experts among Tribes. However, other than Tribal Injury Prevention Cooperative Agreement Program grantees, the stories and successes of traffic safety work in Indian Country are not widely shared in academic literature or via the internet. Many of the stories in the guide that provide insight into how Tribal seat belt campaigns might be tailored are not from publicly available sources, but from the working group and Tribal Advisory Council members. These stories provide important resources for others working in this field and the project team shared some examples beyond occupant protection that might be applied to a program to encourage seat belt use.

**Framing conversations based on seat belt countermeasures.** In working group discussions, the project team tried to match NHTSA's seat belt strategies and countermeasures (Kirley et al., 2023) with specific regions where they anticipated that some work might have been done around certain countermeasures (e.g., nighttime seat belt enforcement).

**Ensuring the guide is used.** Several members of the Tribal Advisory Council expressed concern that the guide would not be shared broadly, in which case their efforts, expertise, and time would be wasted (i.e., the project would be akin to previous government initiatives that had not resulted in meaningful change to their communities). As a result, the project team worked with the SMEs to develop an outreach plan for the guide and sought additional input from Tribal Advisory Council and working group members on additional communication channels where the guide should be shared.

## Conclusion

This project emerged from a need to understand why seat belt use differs between Tribes and their neighboring non-Tribal communities. Though it was understood that Tribes face unique challenges, this project sought to better define these challenges, highlight their influence on potential collaborations with State and local officials, and offer a new framework for these officials to consider if they want to respectfully engage, support, or collaborate with Tribes. Repeatedly, Tribal representatives involved in this project emphasized it was important for State and local officials to take the time to learn more about the Tribes they wanted to engage and consider questions to ask to learn more about a Tribe's culture, their history, and their approach to traffic safety.

The guide resulting from this work, *Bridging Cultures to Buckle Up: A Guide for Working With Tribes to Increase Seat Belt Use* (Barlow et al., 2026), uses a question-asking framework with tools, ideas, and suggestions State and/or local officials can use to meaningfully engage with a Tribe to save lives and improve seat belt use.

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## References

- Barlow, A., Redden, C., Billie, H., Letourneau, R., Crump, C., King, K., Symoun, J., & Davis, L. (2026, June). *Bridging cultures to buckle up: A guide for working with tribes to increase seat belt use* (Report No. DOT HS 813 805). National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. <https://doi.org/10.21949/efnc-ed47>
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## **Appendix A: Tribal Advisory Council and Working Group Members**

## **Tribal Advisory Council**

Tribal Advisory Council members, leaders, and experts in transportation safety, provided additional context, explanations, and alternative perspectives to regional working group discussions throughout the project.

- Captain Nancy Bill, Navajo Nation, Indian Health Services (retired)
- Michia Casebier, M.G. Tech-Writing, LLC
- Sheila Cozzie, Montana State Highway Traffic Safety Office
- Monte Fronk, Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Tribal Emergency Management
- Jenn Russell, Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, Centers for American Indian & Alaska Native Health
- Chief Victor Rodriguez, Isleta Pueblo Police Department
- Antoinette (Toni) Short, Navajo Nation, representing Apache Tribe of Oklahoma
- Ron Shutiva, Acoma Pueblo, New Mexico Department of Transportation (retired)
- Julie Villa, Yurok Tribe, California Rural Indian Health Board, Inc.

Holly McKinney of the Centers for American Indian and Alaska Native Health joined the first Tribal Advisory Council meeting, as Jenn Russell was not able to attend. Ophelia Spencer of the Navajo Tribe and a partner through AASTEC also joined the daylong meeting in Denver to review the first guide draft.

## **Regional Working Groups**

Regional working groups involved a spectrum of partners including local law enforcement (both Tribal and city/county), members of NHTSA's Regional Office, Tribal officials and representatives, Highway Safety Office officials, public health officials, and others. Some Tribal Advisory Council members also participated in these working groups. Several Federal stakeholders also joined the groups from time to time, including representatives from BIA, IHS, and several NHTSA Regional program managers.

### **NHTSA Region 6 (New Mexico, Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, Mississippi)**

- Tabatha Austin Harris, NHTSA Regional Program Manager
- Kimberly Belone, Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Lieutenant Chris Arnall, Oklahoma Department of Public Safety
- David Bales, Indian Health Services - Oklahoma City
- LaVina Spotted Bear Clark, Kaw Nation, Kaw Nation Injury Prevention Coordinator
- Rhonda Fair, Oklahoma Department of Transportation
- DeAnne Pete, Navajo Nation, Indian Health Services - New Mexico
- Chief Victor Rodriguez, Isleta Pueblo Police Department
- Trooper Mike Shanholtzer, Oklahoma Department of Public Safety

- Antoinette (Toni) Short, Navajo Nation, representing Apache Tribe of Oklahoma
- Ron Shutiva, Acoma Pueblo, New Mexico Department of Transportation (retired)
- Beth Siow-Deutsawe, Pueblo of Laguna Department of Public Safety
- Shelli Stephens-Sidham, Safe States Alliance
- Major Garrett Vowell, Oklahoma Department of Public Safety
- Lieutenant Colonel Joe Williams, Oklahoma Department of Public Safety

**NHTSA Region 10 (Alaska, Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana)**

- Sheila Cozzie, Montana State Highway Traffic Safety Office
- William Falls Down, Crow Tribe, BIA Law Enforcement (retired), Traffic Safety Advocate
- John Grinsell, Northern Cheyenne Tribe, Northern Cheyenne Investigative Services
- Carolyn Holthoff, Oregon Department of Transportation
- Margy Hughes, Alaska Department of Health (retired)
- HollyAnna Littlebull, Yakama Tribe, Yakama Tribal Transportation Department
- Tam Lutz, Lummi Nation, Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board
- Kelly Mason, Oregon Transportation Safety Office
- Patricia Sioux Ramos, Northern Cheyenne Tribes Injury Prevention
- Penny Rarick, Washington Traffic Safety Commission
- Sam Sinclair, NHTSA Program Manager
- Craig Smith, Fort Peck Tribes, Fort Peck Community College
- Hillary Strayer, Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium
- Jordan Vandjelovic, Indian Health Services – Montana and Wyoming

## **Appendix B: Site Selection Matrix**

Purpose of document: To outline characteristics, data, and other factors for NHTSA regions being considered for working group sites

NHTSA Region	States With Fed/State-Recognized Tribes	State Tribal Liaison (Y/N)	# Tribally Operated LEAs in State				Proportion of Land-Based Tribes (State and Federally Recognized Tribes) <sup>↓</sup>	Number of Federally Recognized Tribes	Number of State-Recognized Tribes <sup>↑</sup>	Tribal Population (State and Federally Recognized Tribes) <sup>°</sup>				Proportion of State-Recognized Tribe to Federal	Awarded Federal Funds for Traffic Safety in Last 5 Years		
			0	<5	5-9	10+				Total Population With Only American Indian and Alaska Native Ethnicity	Proportion With Only American Indian and Alaska Native Ethnicity Population to State Population	Total Population With Some American Indian and Alaska Native Ethnicity	Proportion With Some American Indian and Alaska Native Ethnicity Population to State Population		IHS	BIA	FHWA
Region 5	Minnesota	Yes				X	84.6%	12	1	68,641	1.2%	157,651	2.8%	8%	5	12	7
	Wisconsin	Yes				X	100.0%	11	0	60,428	1.0%	144,572	2.5%	0%	4	4	0
	Indiana	No	X				100.0%	1	0	26,086	0.4%	139,443	2.1%	0%	0	0	0
	Michigan	Yes			X		100.0%	12	4	61,261	0.6%	246,458	2.4%	33%	0	0	7
Region 6	Mississippi	No		X			100.0%	1	0	16,450	0.6%	53,729	1.8%	0%	0	0	0
	Louisiana	No		X			28.6%	4	10	31,657	0.7%	103,128	2.2%	250%	1	1	4
	Texas	No		X			100.0%	3	0	278,948	1.0%	794,062	2.7%	0%	0	0	0
	Oklahoma	Yes				X	3.2%	37	3	332,791	8.4%	633,831	16.0%	8%	14	25	0
	New Mexico	Yes				X	60.9%	23	0	212,241	10.0%	263,615	12.4%	0%	4	10	0
Region 8	North Dakota	No	X				100.0%	4	1	38,914	5.0%	55,777	7.2%	25%	1	4	0
	South Dakota	No		X			100.0%	9	4	77,748	8.8%	98,842	11.1%	44%	2	6	0
	Wyoming	Yes	X				100.0%	2	0	13,898	2.4%	27,480	4.8%	0%	0	0	0
	Colorado	No		X			100.0%	2	0	74,129	1.3%	207,787	3.6%	0%	0	0	1
	Utah	Yes		X			100.0%	8	0	41,644	1.3%	87,234	2.7%	0%	0	0	0
	Nevada	Yes				X	62.1%	18	11	43,932	1.4%	105,790	3.4%	61%	7	1	0
Region 9	Arizona	Yes				X	100.0%	20	5	319,512	4.5%	453,560	6.3%	25%	16	12	23
	California	Yes			X		65.4%	107	24	631,016	1.6%	1,409,609	3.6%	22%	9	1	37
Region 10	Montana	Yes		X			100.0%	7	1	67,612	6.2%	100,578	9.3%	14%	5	4	27
	Washington	Yes				X	96.7%	29	4	121,468	1.6%	313,633	4.1%	14%	0	13	0
	Oregon	Yes			X		90.9%	10	3	62,993	1.5%	185,726	4.4%	30%	3	0	0
	Idaho	No		X			100.0%	4	1	25,621	1.4%	65,552	3.6%	25%	2	1	3
	Alaska	Yes		X			0.0%	227	9	111,575	15.2%	160,287	21.9%	4%	5	0	90

See State Tribal Liaison tab

Source: Tribal Enforcement (2008). Published by the U.S. Department of Justice. Research team has not found an updated reference.

<sup>↓</sup> Based on tribes identified by U.S. Census with reservation or off-reservation land

Source: BIA

<sup>↑</sup> Identified by calculating the difference between the Tribes recognized by BIA and those listed in the Census (which includes State-recognized Tribes).

Source: U.S. Census

Source for federally recognized Tribes: BIA. Source for State-recognized Tribes: Census which includes both

**Site Selection Matrix (continued)**

Purpose of document: To outline characteristics, data, and other factors for NHTSA regions being considered for working group sites

NHTSA Region	States With Fed/State-Recognized Tribes	Tribal Population (State and Federally Recognized Tribes) <sup>o</sup>				Awarded Federal Funds for Traffic Safety in Last 5 Years		
		Total Population With Only American Indian and Alaska Native Ethnicity	Proportion With Only American Indian and Alaska Native Ethnicity Population to State Population	Total Population With Some American Indian and Alaska Native Ethnicity	Proportion With Some American Indian and Alaska Native Ethnicity population to State Population	IHS	BIA	FHWA
Region 5	Minnesota	68,641	1.2%	157,651	2.8%	5	12	7
	Wisconsin	60,428	1.0%	144,572	2.5%	4	4	0
	Indiana	26,086	0.4%	139,443	2.1%	0	0	0
	Michigan	61,261	0.6%	246,458	2.4%	0	0	7
Region 6	Mississippi	16,450	0.6%	53,729	1.8%	0	0	0
	Louisiana	31,657	0.7%	103,128	2.2%	1	1	4
	Texas	278,948	1.0%	794,062	2.7%	0	0	0
	Oklahoma	332,791	8.4%	633,831	16.0%	14	25	0
	New Mexico	212,241	10.0%	263,615	12.4%	4	10	0
Region 8	North Dakota	38,914	5.0%	55,777	7.2%	1	4	0
	South Dakota	77,748	8.8%	98,842	11.1%	2	6	0
	Wyoming	13,898	2.4%	27,480	4.8%	0	0	0
	Colorado	74,129	1.3%	207,787	3.6%	0	0	1
	Utah	41,644	1.3%	87,234	2.7%	0	0	0
	Nevada	43,932	1.4%	105,790	3.4%	7	1	0
Region 9	Arizona	319,512	4.5%	453,560	6.3%	16	12	23
	California	631,016	1.6%	1,409,609	3.6%	9	1	37
Region 10	Montana	67,612	6.2%	100,578	9.3%	5	4	27
	Washington	121,468	1.6%	313,633	4.1%	0	13	0
	Oregon	62,993	1.5%	185,726	4.4%	3	0	0
	Idaho	25,621	1.4%	65,552	3.6%	2	1	3
	Alaska	111,575	15.2%	160,287	21.9%	5	0	90

<sup>o</sup>Source: U.S. Census.

## **Appendix C: Working Group Topic Distribution Plan**

## Working Group Membership

Each Region's working group will:

1. Include members recruited because they have a broad perspective about AI/AN seat belt use, so they can identify problems or barriers to seat belt use or suggest examples of efforts (e.g., countermeasures, model programs) in their and other states and Regions to increase seat belt use.
2. Include at least one Tribal Advisory Council member.
3. Meet 5 times, virtually for 2 to 3 hours, and:
  - a. Not exceed 9 non-Federal employees at each meeting.
  - b. Can include Federal employees at each meeting (e.g., 5 or 6 so total number of attendees  $\leq 15$ ).
  - c. Include a core group of at least 4 or 5 members who will be invited to participate in all meetings.
  - d. Invite others to participate in select meetings based on their specific knowledge of the meeting's discussion topics (these members might attend several meetings, but not all 5)

## Working Group Topics

The following topics have been identified for the two project objectives:

**Objective 1:** Better understand the differences in seat belt use among Tribes and the contributing factors that influence seat belt use in Indian Country.

- A. Environmental or systemic factors that limit the ability of Tribes to increase seat belt use.
  1. Structural/systemic issues (e.g., infrastructure, funding, and IHS technical assistance)
  2. State and local seat belt use laws
  3. Presence of Tribal LEAs (e.g., BIA, Tribal, State/municipal)
  4. Jurisdiction and sovereignty
  5. Reservation status of Tribe
- B. Opportunities to increase mutual understanding.
  1. Data sharing
  2. Requirements of State/municipal agencies to work with Tribes
  3. Training provided to State/municipal agency staff to work with Tribes
  4. Representation of Tribes on State transportation safety groups/meetings

**Objective 2:** Identify effective, culturally tailored traffic safety countermeasures and models of collaboration between State transportation officials and Tribes to increase AI/AN seat belt use rates.

- A. Partnership-building
  1. Bridging the gap in Tribal transportation safety disparities among Federal/State/local governments
  2. Establishing and/or expanding relationships between States and Tribes
  3. State/Tribal needs from various levels of government to improve motor vehicle safety
- B. Specific NHTSA seat belt strategies/countermeasures and how they might be applicable to different conditions in the State/Tribal dynamics  
(<https://www.nhtsa.gov/book/countermeasures/seat-belts-and-child-restraints/countermeasures>):

1. Primary enforcement of State law (1.1)
  2. Primary enforcement of local law (1.2)
  3. Increase seat belt use law penalties (1.3)
  4. High visibility seat belt law enforcement (2.1)
  5. Nighttime seat belt enforcement (2.2)
  6. Sustained enforcement of seat belt use law (2.3)
  7. Supporting enforcement (e.g. communication campaigns) (3.1)
  8. Strategies for low-belt-use groups (3.2)
- C. Existing approaches (e.g., successes and challenges)

### Working Group Meetings (N=9) by Topic Discussion Frame and Region

The table below shows that the discussion frames are different for each Region.

Mtg.	Topic Frames by Region	
	Region 6: OK, NM, TX, LA, MS	Region 10: MT, WA, OR, ID, AK
1a	How environmental/systemic factors negatively influence AI/AN seat belt use. (Obj.1.A)	--
1b	--	How environmental/systemic factors have been addressed to increase AI/AN seat belt use. (Obj.1.A)
2a	Barriers that limit working relationships among states and Tribes related to seat belt use. (Obj.1.B)	--
2b	--	Steps that can be or have been taken to increase mutual understanding between states and Tribes related to seat belt use. (Obj. 1.B)
3a	How countermeasures, evidence-based strategies, interventions, and Indigenous approaches [a, b, c, d] have been used to increase AI/AN seat belt use. <sup>a</sup> (Obj. 2.B)	--
3b	--	How countermeasures, evidence-based strategies, interventions, and Indigenous approaches [w, x, y, z] have been used to increase AI/AN seat belt use. <sup>b</sup> (Obj. 2.B)
4a	Steps <u>Tribes</u> can take to build partnership with States to increase AI/AN sea belt use (Obj. 2.A) <sup>c</sup>	
4b	Steps <u>States</u> can take to build partnership with Tribes to increase AI/AN seat belt use. (Obj. 2.A) <sup>d</sup>	
5	Draft review. Additional existing approaches (e.g., examples, recommendations, stories) to share from other parts of Indian Country. (Ob. 2.C) <sup>e</sup>	

<sup>a</sup> Region 6 discussed the following countermeasures: State primary enforcement seat belt use laws; increased seat belt use law penalties; short-term, high-visibility seat belt law enforcement; and high visibility communications and outreach (supporting enforcement).

<sup>b</sup> Region 10 discussed the following countermeasures: local primary enforcement seat belt use laws; nighttime seat belt enforcement; sustained enforcement; and promotion strategies that target low-belt-use groups.

<sup>c</sup> Participants were Tribal representatives from both Regions 6 and 10.

<sup>d</sup> Participants were State representatives from both Regions 6 and 10.

° Meeting 5 joined together State and Tribal representatives from Regions 6 and 10 (still no more than 9 non-Federal participants) for a longer 3-hour meeting to discuss feedback on a draft of the Guide and to gather more examples and success stories for inclusion in the Guide.

### Working Group Meetings by Meeting, Region, Frame, and Questions

Mtg.	Reg.	Frame	Questions
1a	6	How environmental / systemic factors negatively influence AI/AN seat belt use. (Obj. 1.A)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Structural/systemic issues               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Infrastructure: To what degree does transportation safety staff turnover at the State/Tribal level contribute to <u>lower</u> AI/AN seat belt use?</li> <li>b. Funding: How does transportation safety funding at State/Tribal level present <u>challenges</u> for increasing AI/AN seat belt use?</li> <li>c. IHS TA: To what degree do limitations in IHS TA contribute to AI/AN <u>lower</u> seat belt use?</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. State and local Laws: How do State and local laws and penalties create <u>challenges</u> for increasing AI/AN seat belt use?</li> <li>3. Presence of and engagement by Tribal Law Enforcement (e.g., BIA, Tribal, State/municipal):               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. How does limited enforcement of laws contribute to <u>lower</u> seat belt use?</li> <li>b. How does limited officer training in seat belt use countermeasures lead to <u>lower</u> seat belt use?</li> <li>c. How do cultural differences (not just Tribal culture, but also agency) between law enforcement entities lead to <u>lower</u> seat belt use?</li> </ol> </li> <li>4. Jurisdiction and Sovereignty Issues:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. How do jurisdiction issues contribute to <u>lower</u> AI/AN seat belt use?</li> <li>b. How do sovereignty issues exacerbate <u>lower</u> AI/AN seat belt use?</li> </ol> </li> <li>5. Reservation status: To what degree does not having a land-based reservation contribute to <u>lower</u> AI/AN seat belt use?</li> </ol>
1b	10	How environmental / systemic factors have been addressed to increase AI/AN seat belt use. (Obj. 1.A)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Structural/systemic issues               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Infrastructure: To what degree has transportation safety staff longevity at the State/Tribal level contributed to <u>increased</u> AI/AN seat belt use?</li> <li>b. Funding: How does state and/or Tribal transportation safety funding contribute to <u>increased</u> AI/AN seat belt use?</li> <li>c. IHS TA: To what degree does IHS TA help to <u>increase</u> AI/AN seat belt use?</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. State and Local Laws: How have State and local laws and penalties been used to <u>increase</u> AI/AN seat belt use?</li> <li>3. Presence of and engagement by Tribal Law Enforcement (e.g., BIA, Tribal, State/municipal):               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. How has enforcement <u>increased</u> seat belt use?</li> <li>b. How has officer training in seat belt use countermeasures <u>increased</u> seat belt use?</li> <li>c. How have cultural differences (not just Tribal culture, but also agency) between law enforcement entities been addressed to <u>increase</u> seat belt use?</li> </ol> </li> <li>4. Jurisdiction and Sovereignty Issues:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. How have jurisdiction issues been addressed to <u>increase</u> AI/AN seat belt use?</li> <li>b. How have sovereignty issues been addressed to <u>increase</u> AI/AN seat belt use?</li> </ol> </li> <li>5. Reservation status: How has <u>increasing</u> seat belt use varied among Tribes with land-based reservations?</li> </ol>

Mtg.	Reg.	Frame	Questions
2a	6	Barriers that limit working relationships among States and Tribes related to seat belt use. (Obj. 1.B)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How effective is the relationship between States and Tribes where you work?</li> <li>2. What are the reasons that Tribes have <u>not worked</u> with States to address seat belt use? What are reasons that States <u>have not had effective relationships</u> with Tribes?</li> <li>3. What <u>barriers</u> affect working relationships among States and Tribes related to seat belt use? <i>These are some issues that our team has identified (data sharing, State requirements, training, representation), what are others that we should be discussing?</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Data sharing: How have limits to data sharing affected working relationships between States and Tribes? Were there missed opportunities to address seat belts?</li> <li>b. State requirements: How has the <u>lack of requirements</u> of State/municipal agencies to work with Tribes affected AI/AN seat belt use (e.g., cultural training)?</li> <li>c. Training: How has a <u>lack of training</u> for State/municipal agencies affected AI/AN seat belt use? What kinds of trainings should Tribes have to work with States?</li> <li>d. Representation: To what degree is Tribal participation in State meetings welcomed (e.g., are Tribes given an opportunity to share their concerns)? Do you believe that Tribes are included in State decisions? How does <u>lack of representation</u> on State transportation safety groups/meetings affect Tribal seat belt use?</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
2b	10	Steps that can be or have been taken to increase mutual understanding between States and Tribes related to seat belt use. (Obj. 1.B)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What are some ways mutual understanding has been <u>increased</u> between States and Tribes related to seat belt use? <i>These are some that our team has identified (data sharing, State requirements, training, representation), are there others that we should be discussing?</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Data sharing: How has data sharing helped identify opportunities to <u>increase</u> seat belt use? How has it affected States' and Tribes' ability to work together?</li> <li>b. State requirements: How have requirements of State/municipal agencies to work with Tribes led to <u>increased</u> AI/AN seat belt use? What are reasons that Tribes decided to work with their State? How was Tribal leadership convinced to work with States?</li> <li>c. Training: How has training provided to State/municipal agency staff helped to <u>increase</u> AI/AN seat belt use? How has training helped Tribes increase seat belt use?</li> <li>d. Representation: How has representation on State transportation safety groups/meetings helped to <u>increase</u> AI/AN seat belt use? How has inclusion of Tribes influenced State decisions about increasing seat belt use? Do you have examples of how Tribal concerns have been addressed at the State or local level?</li> </ol> </li> </ol>

Mtg.	Reg.	Frame	Questions
3a	6	How countermeasures, evidence-based strategies, interventions, and Indigenous approaches [a, b, c, d] have been used to increase AI/AN seat belt use. <sup>a</sup> (Obj. 2.B)	<p><i>Note: repeat questions below for each countermeasure discussed</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How difficult is it to implement [enter countermeasure] in the community where you work or live?</li> <li>2. How successful is [enter countermeasure] in increasing seat belt use?</li> <li>3. How has [enter countermeasure] been used to increase AI/AN seat belt use?</li> <li>4. How has [enter countermeasure] been tailored to promote seat belt use in AI/AN communities?</li> <li>5. What Indigenous approaches have been used to promote seat belt use through [enter countermeasure]?</li> <li>6. What challenges are involved in implementing [enter countermeasure]? How could those challenges be addressed?</li> <li>7. Are there other opportunities, programs, or interventions to encourage seat belt use that we should also discuss today?</li> </ol>
3b	10	How countermeasures, evidence-based strategies, interventions, and Indigenous approaches [w, x, y, z] have been used to increase AI/AN seat belt use. <sup>b</sup> (Obj. 2.B)	
<p><sup>a</sup> Region 6 discussed the following countermeasures: State primary enforcement seat belt use laws; increased seat belt use law penalties; short-term, high-visibility seat belt law enforcement; and high visibility communications and outreach (supporting enforcement).</p> <p><sup>b</sup> Region 10 discussed the following countermeasures: local primary enforcement seat belt use laws; nighttime seat belt enforcement; sustained enforcement; and promotion strategies that target low-belt-use groups.</p>			

Mtg.	Reg.	Frame	Questions
4a	6, 10 <sup>c</sup>	What steps can <u>Tribes</u> take to build partnerships with States to increase AI/AN seat belt use? (Obj. 2.A)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Group Discussion on White House Guidance on Indigenous Knowledge [see OSTP &amp; CEQ, 2022 in References] <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. How can <u>States support Tribes</u> in developing initiatives that are informed by Indigenous Knowledge to increase seat belt use?</li> <li>b. What can <u>Tribes</u> do to encourage States to integrate Indigenous Knowledge into its approach to increase seat belt use?</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. We are developing a “How to Guide” for State representatives about working with Tribes to increase seat belt use, what should be included in the Guide about developing relationships between Tribes and States?</li> <li>3. What steps can <u>Tribes</u> take to reduce disparities in AI/AN seat belt use?</li> <li>4. Where do <u>Tribal</u> transportation safety officials start when trying to establish/develop relationships with States? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. What worked well in developing relationships with State/local reps?</li> <li>b. What challenges did they experience when working with State entities?</li> <li>c. How did they overcome them? What helped them improve relationships?</li> </ol> </li> <li>5. What should <u>Tribal</u> transportation staff know in advance of trying to establish partnership with the State?</li> <li>6. What support do Tribes want and need from State/local government (e.g., TA, funding, in-kind contributions) to increase AI/AN seat belt use?</li> <li>7. Think about your <u>successful initiatives with State partners</u> (seat belt or other initiatives), what made those partnerships successful?</li> <li>8. We are meeting with State representatives next month to hear their thoughts about collaboration with Tribes, what should we be asking them?</li> </ol>
4b	6, 10 <sup>d</sup>	What steps can <u>States</u> take to build	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Group Discussion on White House Guidance on Indigenous Knowledge <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. How can <u>States</u> integrate Indigenous Knowledge into existing efforts to increase seat belt use?</li> </ol> </li> </ol>

Mtg.	Reg.	Frame	Questions
		partnerships with Tribes to increase AI/AN seat belt use? (Obj. 2.A)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b. What governance procedures are needed to incorporate the guidance into <u>State processes</u>?</li> <li>c. Are there existing programs, policies, or funding levers that could better incorporate Indigenous Knowledge?</li> <li>2. We are developing a “How to Guide” for State representatives about working with Tribes to increase seat belt use. If this Guide comes across your desk, what information would you want to have about working with Tribes? What should your colleagues know (or others who do not work as much with Tribes)?</li> <li>3. What steps can <u>States</u> take to reduce disparities in AI/AN seat belt use?</li> <li>4. Where do <u>State</u> transportation safety officials start when trying to establish/develop relationships with Tribes?               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. What worked well in developing relationships with Tribes?</li> <li>b. What barriers have they had in working with Tribes and how well did they address them?</li> </ol> </li> <li>5. What should <u>State</u> transportation staff know in advance of trying to establish partnership with a Tribe? What advice would you give?</li> <li>6. What support should <u>States</u> offer to increase AI/AN seat belt use (e.g., TA, funding, in-kind contributions)?</li> </ol> <p>Think about successful partnerships that you have had with Tribes, what were some key factors?</p>
<sup>c</sup> Participants were Tribal representatives from both Regions 6 and 10.			
<sup>d</sup> Participants were State representatives from both Regions 6 and 10.			
5	6, 10	Existing approaches (e.g., examples, recommendations, stories) to share from other parts of Indian Country. (Obj. 2.C) <sup>e</sup>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Guide Sections: Introduction and Fundamentals               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. What did you think about the Introduction section/ What about the Fundamentals? Do you think the ‘Fundamentals’ Section is in the correct order with other sections (i.e., should it come later in the Guide?)</li> <li>b. What else do you feel needs to be covered to help State officials learn more about the Tribes in their area?</li> <li>c. Do you feel like this Guide sets the right instructions/helpful tone?</li> <li>d. How well does the Guide summarize Tribal sovereignty and lands? Are these the right examples? Are there other examples that you could think of?</li> <li>e. What are some examples of Indigenous Knowledge related to traffic safety seat belt use?</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Guide Section: Meaningful Engagement               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. What do you think about this section?</li> <li>b. Do you feel like this section would help a State or local official understand the role of cultural competency and cultural humility in their work?</li> <li>c. Are there other examples of State government or localities working to increase their staff’s understanding and awareness of Tribes’ perspective, traditions, and culture?</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Guide Section: How to Get Started               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Review the topics in this section one at a time and consider the questions below for each topic:                   <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Building relationships with Tribes</li> <li>ii. Engage Tribal leadership on traffic safety</li> <li>iii. Learn from Tribes about factors that influence their seat belt use</li> </ol> </li> <li>b. Is this information helpful? What’s missing for State and local officials? Are these the right examples? Are there other examples that you can think of to include?</li> </ol> </li> <li>4. Guide Section: Data               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Are there additional challenges that have not yet been addressed?</li> </ol> </li> </ol>

Mtg.	Reg.	Frame	Questions
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b. How well have we identified opportunities for Tribes to work with States around data collection and sharing? Are there others we should include?</li> </ul> <p>5. Guide Section: Funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Are there other challenges or opportunities related to funding that have not been covered?</li> <li>b. Is the example of the notice of funding opportunity (NOFO) helpful? Are there additional changes that should be made?</li> <li>c. What are some funding successes or failures that could be shared as examples?</li> </ul> <p>6. Final Takeaways</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Are there gaps or major concerns with the draft that should be taken into consideration?</li> <li>b. We have been thinking about all the potential users and uses of the Guide. We have begun broadening the Guide’s focus beyond seat belts to include other issues related to occupant protection, such as child passenger safety, drowsy driving, and distracted driving. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. What do you think about this change in focus? If the Guide were broadened in scope, what would you name it?</li> <li>ii. We expanded the guide to local officials as well. Is that a good fit?</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>We are considering a motivational-type of ‘call-to-action’ conclusion section for this Guide, as opposed to re-stating content that was included in prior sections of the Guide. What do you think of this approach?</p>
<p><sup>e</sup> Meeting 5 joined together State and Tribal representatives from Regions 6 and 10 for a longer meeting to discuss feedback on a draft of the Guide and to gather more examples and success stories for inclusion in the Guide.</p>			

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