

Transportation fatalities rank third as the cause of lost years of life in the United States (behind heart disease and cancer). The goal of the Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS) Safety Data Initiative is to improve the quality of transportation safety data so risk factors can be identified, quantified, and minimized.

Safety in Numbers



www.bts.gov



Safety Data Initiative

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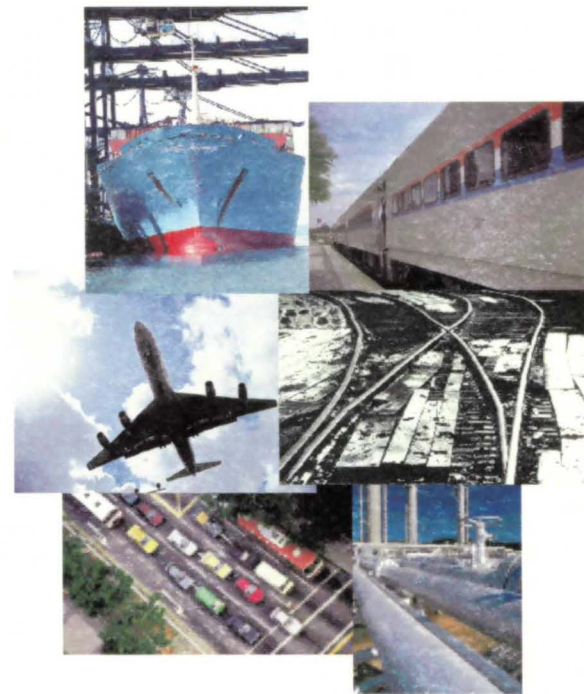
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U.S. Department of Transportation



SAFETY DATA INITIATIVE



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Safety

In order to make informed decisions that will make travel safer, the U.S. Department of Transportation needs quality data from a mix of sources. DOT's Bureau of Transportation Statistics is advancing efforts to refine and standardize this data by:

- *Improving the quality, comparability, and timeliness of existing data,*
- *Collecting better data on accident circumstances, precursors, and leading indicators,*
- *Expanding the use of technology in data capture, and*
- *Improving analytical capability.*

9 Research Projects focus on improving DOT safety data:

Reengineering DOT data programs to:

- Assess major data collection systems, and
- Identify areas for possible improvement

Benefit: Enhance safety with better data by developing targeted inspection, education, regulatory, and research programs.

Advancing the timeliness of safety data to:

- Provide safety data on a monthly basis, with no more than a 30-day lag.

Benefit: Identify trends earlier, take corrective actions, and reduce transportation-related injuries and deaths.

Developing better data on accident precursors or leading indicators to:

- Determine what information on risk factors (precursors) is needed.

Benefit: Preventing injuries by implementing more effective intervention measures.

Expanding the collection of "near-miss" data to all modes to:

- Study existing near-miss systems,
- Identify potential benefits and problems, and
- Explore the transferability of near-miss reporting from aviation and maritime to other modes.

Benefit: A coordinated effort across DOT for implementing voluntary reporting systems.

Exploring options for using technology in data collection to:

- Find alternatives to paper-based data collection, common for safety data, which is labor intensive, costly, and prone to a variety of errors.

Benefit: Use of advanced technology in data collection will improve timeliness and quality.

Developing common criteria for reporting injuries and deaths to:

- Identify and inventory definitional inconsistencies, and
- Develop common principles for describing the circumstances of accidents, deaths, and injuries.

Benefit: Initiation of a DOT-wide standard for coding key data.

Developing common denominators (exposure measures) for safety measures to:

- Develop sources for estimates of exposure data where there are currently gaps, and
- Develop techniques for collecting exposure data.

Benefit: Exposure measures defined to characterize transportation safety in a comparable way for similar or equivalent circumstances.

Developing common data on accident circumstances to:

- Determine information needed to identify the causal chain for individual accident investigations, and
- Research use of technology for generating consistent accident information across various environments.

Benefit: Facilitate statistical analysis across a wide variety of accidents and modes.

Expanding, improving, and coordinating safety data analysis to:

- Assess the safety data analysis capability for each of the modes;
- Identify best practices, resource needs, and lessons learned for each of the modes; and
- Create a forum for sharing research findings or best practices in research methods.

Benefit: Improved analysis leads to better informed policy decisions, performance interpretations, and program assessment.

