RESEARCH PROJECT DESCRIPTION

PROJECT NUMBER:
00473

PROJECT TITLE:
Safety Public Awareness – Phase 3

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:
Daniel S. Turner
Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering
The University of Alabama
Box 870205
Tuscaloosa, AL 35487-0205
(205) 348-9925
dturner@coe.eng.ua.edu

PROJECT OBJECTIVE:
This project will continue to develop a citizen awareness program that focuses on traffic safety education of drivers on topics identified as major safety violations or opportunities to save lives and reduce injuries resulting from traffic crashes.

PROJECT ABSTRACT:
This project will use intensive, targeted public relations efforts to make Alabama drivers more aware of the magnitude and severity of traffic crashes in this state, and will improve their knowledge of safety interventions to minimize crashes, injuries and fatalities. The project will utilize radio, television, articles, and other public relations tools. Specific messages will be directed at alcohol involvement, seat belt use, child restraint use, and work zone safety to maximize improvements in driving behavior. The results of these efforts will be evaluated through a scientific sampling of the changes in attitudes of the target audience.

PROJECT TASK DESCRIPTIONS:
1) Develop and enhance previous public awareness activities.
2) Use radio and TV public service announcements as the primary media to deliver safety messages, supported by paid advertisements (this task is the dominant activity of the project).
3) Produce safety videos for Interstate rest areas and welcome centers.
4) Develop and distribute safety brochures and construction alert messages.
5) Solicit partnerships with the private sector, and improve coordination among involved agencies.
6) Serve as the facilitator and secretariat for a coalition of state safety agencies.
7) Investigate messages and materials that can influence groups that are particularly resistant to normal traffic safety messages.
8) Investigate other potential safety programs that can be added to this project, such as the “Walk Your Children Campaign.”
9) Develop strategic and tactical safety plans to guide future efforts.
10) Evaluate the results of the project.
MILESTONES AND DATES:
Startup – January 1, 2001
All tasks will be conducted concurrently.
Conclude project – December 31, 2001

FUNDING AGENCY:
Alabama Department of Transportation

STUDENT INVOLVEMENT:
Students will be engaged to conduct the telephone calls to sample audiences and to conduct various studies during the project.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER RESEARCH PROJECTS:
This project is a direct continuation of a multi-year effort (UTCA project 99259 was Phase 2 of the overall effort).

TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER ACTIVITIES:
The very nature of this project is to transfer traffic safety information to the public. A secondary objective is to make presentations at technical and professional conferences on this topic.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF THE PROJECT:
This project has the real potential to reduce the consequences of traffic crashes on a large scale. The most effective safety projects today are those that encourage the public to wear seat belts, which is a major thrust of this project.

TRB KEYWORDS:
Traffic crash, public relations, safety programs, seat belt, child restraint, alcohol involvement, DUI