RESEARCH PROJECT DESCRIPTION

PROJECT NUMBER:
01458

PROJECT TITLE:
Statewide Alcohol-Involvement Coordinator

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 OBJECTIVES:
The overall goal of this project is to increase coordination and communication on alcohol involvement in traffic crashes in Alabama. By constantly moving this topic closer to the forefront in safety agencies, traffic safety accomplishments will occur. Current traffic safety programs will be supplemented by providing an individual to serve as statewide coordinator in the area of alcohol involvement. The coordinator will assist in organizing and conducting current activities, while coordinating with related agencies and organizations to deliver maximum reduction of crashes, injuries and fatalities per dollar expended.

PROJECT ABSTRACT:
The Safety Management Action, and Resources Taskforce (SMART) was created in 2000 by multiple agencies and organizations in Alabama. More than 50 individuals volunteered their time to create and implement a coordinated traffic safety plan. They represented nine state agencies, three federal agencies, five units of local government, two universities, and other organizations. Participants adopted a draft safety plan, identified the top safety issues, and established priorities. For each priority issue, two agencies were assigned for action. Reducing alcohol involvement in crashes was one of the two highest rated priority issues.

After statewide priorities were established, the overwhelming issues became (1) how to continue to coordinate traffic safety activities among so many agencies and organizations, and (2) how to measure progress and adjust priorities and action assignments. The issue was compounded by the fact that every player in the picture already had a crowded plate before SMART was established. This proposed project addresses those issues, by providing one individual whose primary job assignment is to improve alcohol program coordination and to decrease alcohol acceptance and use among Alabama drivers.

PROJECT TASK DESCRIPTIONS:
1) Develop or revise the alcohol-involvement aspects of the strategic plan, achieve approval, coordinate with others, and begin execution.
2) Track issues that might impact goals and objectives.
3) Identify conditions and activities necessary to maintain eligibility for federal funding of alcohol-use programs, and organize activities to ensure that eligibility is secured.
4) Develop strategies to decrease alcohol involvement.
5) Prepare grant applications for appropriate federal and other funding of alcohol-involvement programs.
6) Coordinate alcohol-involvement programs with CTSPs (community traffic safety planners).
7) Coordinate with law enforcement agencies to ensure that the most effective times and locations are being subjected to selective enforcement.
8) Work with other agencies and organizations that have alcohol involvement programs.
9) Evaluate the results of crash data and other surveys as the basis for planning new programs.
10) Develop oral or written reports for diverse audiences (stakeholders, legislators, public, etc.)

MILESTONES AND DATES:
Startup – October 1, 2001
All 10 tasks will be conducted concurrently
Conclude project – September 30, 2002

FUNDING AGENCY:
Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs

STUDENT INVOLVEMENT:
No direct student involvement is anticipated for this project.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER RESEARCH PROJECTS:
This is a companion proposal to 01457, which provides a restraint-use coordinator for state safety programs.

TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER ACTIVITIES:
No plans have been made for specific technology transfer activities, but they will occur as natural byproducts of the activities of the coordinator.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF THE PROJECT:
This project has the real potential to reduce the consequences of traffic crashes on a large scale. Alcohol-related accidents are strongly over-represented in fatal accidents, and reducing alcohol acceptance and use bears a strong potential for saving lives.

TRB KEYWORDS:
Traffic crash, safety programs, DUI, alcohol use, safety coordinator, crash reduction