PROJECT NUMBER: 99238

PROJECT TITLE: A Crash Reduction Strategy: Training Transportation Safety Professionals in Alabama to Manage Drivers with Diminished Capabilities

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PROJECT OBJECTIVE:
Prior research has indicated that diminished capabilities of drivers (e.g. visual, cognitive, and/or physical impairments) elevate the risk of motor vehicle collisions. The purpose of this project is to optimize the management of the current transportation system in Alabama as it pertains to the identification of drivers with diminished capabilities.

PROJECT ABSTRACT:
This project will provide information to help optimize the management of the system to identify drivers with diminished capabilities at the Department of Public Safety (DPS) and in law enforcement agencies statewide. This will ultimately enhance the safety of all Alabama roadways.

Phase I of the study focuses on the identification of the current system (i.e., guidelines, laws, practices) for dealing with drivers with diminished capabilities, and an examination of how these guidelines are implemented. Phase II consists of the development a training program to educate transportation and safety professionals (e.g., law enforcement
officials, DPS staff, DPS Medical Advisory Board) about strategies for identifying high-risk drivers with diminished capabilities. Phase III includes the statewide transfer of the educational curriculum developed in this project through distance learning initiatives.

PROJECT TASK DESCRIPTIONS:

Task 1: Policy review and current practice evaluations
   1a) Law enforcement agencies
   1b) DPS license examiners
   1c) DPS medical advisory Board

Task 2: Product development
   2a) Literature review
   2b) Project development
   2c) Project development
   2d) Final project

Task 3: Technology transfer
   3a) Curriculum approval from appropriate State offices
   3b) Distance learning setup
   3c) Pilot testing and revisions
   3d) Statewide implementation

MILESTONES AND DATES:
Start project: Jan 1999
Task 1: Jul - Oct 1999
Task 2: Nov 1999 - Feb 2000
Task 3: Mar - Jun 2000

TOTAL BUDGET:
One-year project: UTCA $50,000; total budget $100,000.

STUDENT INVOLVEMENT:
Four to six student/trainee assistantships will be made available through this project. Students from all three University of Alabama campuses will be encouraged to apply for the assistantships positions.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER RESEARCH PROJECTS:
There are no other UTCA projects similar to this one.

TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER ACTIVITIES:
Transfer activity will primarily be achieved through educating and training the relevant transportation safety personnel. The use of short courses and distance learning allows the information and research results to be packaged in a form that can be directly implemented, utilized and applied in appropriate transportation settings across the State of Alabama. Results from this project will be reported in the form of publications and presentations at national research organizations such as the Transportation Research Board, the National Safety Council, the American Public Health Association and others.
POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF THE PROJECT:
This project will lead to improved and more-consistent identification and monitoring of drivers with diminished capabilities. Although it is difficult to quantify the reductions in crashes, injuries and fatalities, they will certainly occur in a high benefit-cost ratio.

TRB KEYWORDS:
Law enforcement personnel, traffic safety education, unsafe drivers, and accident-prone drivers.