



**South Louisiana Chapter
New Orleans**

Traffic Safety Committee Meeting Minutes Wednesday, November 15, 2006

The meeting was held in the 2nd floor Training Room in the ISH Bldg., 4713 Utica St., Metairie, LA. Lunch was served at 11:30 am. The meeting was called to order by Mr. Del Bosarge, Committee Chairman, at about 12 noon. Self introductions were held and the following were present:

Sgt. Ray Bedwell, Jefferson Parish Sheriff's Office, bedwell_ra@jpsso.com
Del Bosarge, Jefferson Parish Traffic Engineering, dbosarge@jeffparish.net
Gloria Calamari, New Orleans Traffic Court
Bob Canfield, Louisiana Highway Safety Commission, RRCBRLA@aol.com
Dan Champagne, ISH, dan.champagne@ish1.com
Beth Inbau, National Safety Council, South LA Chapter, beth@metrosafety.org
Les O'Regan, US Customs, NSC Defensive Driving Instructor, lester.oregan@dhs.gov
Steve Phillipe, Office of Public Health, ssphillipe@dhh.la.gov

The minutes from the past 2 meetings were distributed and accepted without corrections. Ms. Inbau announced that notices and minutes will be posted on the website at www.metrosafety.org.

Mr. Champagne updated the group on the area oil refineries. He also outlined provisions about the fair tax. He recommended that everyone visit www.fairtax.org for more information and then contact their Congressmen to support the bill.

Mr. O'Regan reported that US Customs merged with Immigration & Border Patrol. Many of the employees of the department travel on horses, SUVs and ATVs, which have no seatbelts. They experienced 2 fatalities in the past 2 months. They were just about to begin a safety program before the storm. The storm tore off the roof and the renovations of the building on Canal Street in N.O. will not be completed for 2 years. Supervisors are now being trained and the employees will be trained later.

Mr. O'Regan also reported that US governmental agencies have been recently warned of a new form of synthetic heroin that can be fatal if mishandled.

A discussion about law enforcement's lack of seatbelt use was held. Sgt. Bedwell said that some officers report the seatbelt gets caught in the gun belt. He said he believes the advantages (of increasing survivability) far outweigh the disadvantages.

National Safety Council, South Louisiana Chapter

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Sgt. Bedwell reported one fatality in Jefferson Parish recently. He said the victim was 17 years old and did not have a license.

Sgt. Bedwell also reported that international drivers licenses are difficult to verify. However, the US law requires that drivers also have a US license, but many do not. He also said that anyone who is a resident of the US cannot legally obtain an international license. He also said that the Immigration Department will not pick up an illegal alien stopped by the police unless he/she has committed a felony. He added that law enforcement has difficulty seizing a vehicle with out-of-state plates or registration. Nor or out-of-state drivers covered by LA's "no pay/no play" provision which requires a minimum of \$10,000 auto liability insurance.

Ms. Calamari added that the LA Department of Motor Vehicles will not process any DWI/DUI without a local address.

Mr. Canfield stated that there is a movement underway to make the drivers license the official identification.

Mr. Canfield announced information about the upcoming child safety seat technician class. Sgt. Bedwell said that he and Officer Keifer are certified technicians. Anyone wishing to get a child safety seat checked should call them at 504-465-1480.

Ms. Calamari reported that the N.O. Traffic Court building is still under renovation. They are working from a temporary facility on the West Bank. About 50% of the staff is back but they are receiving about 70% of the number of traffic tickets as before the storm. Their office is not handling expungements yet.

Mr. Canfield distributed a report by AAA on driving costs and a copy of the 7/15/06 Status Report on speeding. He also said that the LHSC has reported that traffic statistics are slightly lower than before the storm. He also reported that the LHSC will be giving GPSs (global positioning devices) to some police departments.

Mr. Canfield reported on the "short crash form" for law enforcement. He said it was approved locally but the federal authorities wanted more information. Sgt. Bedwell said the report for a minor crash takes about 30-40 minutes to complete. Some officers carry photocopying equipment and use it instead of hand writing info like drivers licenses, registrations and insurance documentation.

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Mr. Canfield also announced that the DWI Court that was to begin in New Orleans just before the storm was picked up by Terrebonne Parish and has been a success. N.O. Traffic Court may begin the program when they can return to their building.

Mr. Canfield gave Ms. Inbau several copies of the following:

- Bicycle Safer Journey CD by Federal Highway Administration
- How to Develop a Pedestrian Safety Action Plan book by FHA

These publications will be available on loan from the Safety Council. Please contact Ms. Inbau at 504-888-7618 to arrange pickup.

Ms. Inbau offered for any Traffic Committee member to attend the Defensive Driving Course (DDC) free. Visit the website for the schedule and simply call the office to register. Ms. Inbau reported that the number of companies sending employees to the DDC classes has increased since the storm, which has surprised everyone.

Mr. Bosarge reported that the residents in Old Metairie are asking the Parish Council to enforce the "quiet zone" for the trains. Businesses are also complaining that the trains block traffic for extended periods of time. A recent lawsuit determined that the railroad companies can block traffic. However, Norfolk Southern agreed to try to limit such delays to 10 minutes in that area. Every boxcar of goods equals 3-4 18-wheelers on the road. He also reported that a pedestrian was injured when he tried to cross over a stopped train.

Mr. Bosarge reported that Zeus will hold its 50th anniversary parade on 1/6/07 at 7:30 pm on the Metairie Rd. route. The Fire Dept. is planning to set up on both sides of the route. The Parish is also planning a "family celebration" for the 1st 3 days of the Carnival season, 2/9-11/07. There will be activities where the canal was recently closed, on Veterans at Severn.

The group decided to meet again on **Wednesday, January 17, 2007**, 11:30 am. The fee for lunch will be \$15. The meeting adjourned at about 1:00 pm.

Submitted by: Beth Inbau, NSC President & CEO

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