

Final



**South Louisiana Chapter
New Orleans**

Traffic Safety Committee Meeting Minutes Wednesday, November 19, 2008

The meeting was held at the State Police Troop B Station. Lunch was served at 12 noon, compliments of the National Safety Council Chapter. The meeting was called to order by Mr. John Exnicios, at about 12:15 pm. Self introductions were held and the following were present:

Scott Boyle, Louisiana Department of Transportation, 437-3120
Patty Clesi, LSU Trauma Center-New Orleans, pdough@lsuhsc.edu, 903-4296
Kathy Drbul, Louisiana Department of Transportation, kathydrbul@dotd.la.gov, 437-3119
Patricia Edwards, Louisiana Operation Lifesaver, patriciaedwards@dotd.la.gov, 225-921-8381
John Exnicios, Krebbs, LaSalle, Lemieux Consultants, exnicios@kllconsultants.com
Terry Fairchild, Naval Support Activity, terry.fairchild@navy.mil, 678-2235
Bridget Gardner, LSU MCLNO Trauma Center, bgardn@lsuhsc.edu, 903-3181
Beth Inbau, National Safety Council, South LA Chapter, beth@metrosafety.org, 888-7618
Rene' Nieto, National Safety Council, South LA Chapter, rene@metrosafety.org, 888-7618
Sgt. John Pollard, St. Charles Sheriff's Office, jpollard@stcharlessheriff.org
Donald Redman, AAA, dredman@aaamissouri.com
Sgt. Antoine Rodrigue Jr., Lafourche Parish Sheriff's Office, antoine-rodrigue@lpso.net
Sgt. John Simmons, Jefferson Parish Sheriff's Office, jms_6896@yahoo.com, fax 504-465-1497
Steve Strength, LA Dept. of Transportation & Dev., stevestrength@dotd.la.gov
Brad Tassin, Beverly Industries, bradt@beverlyinc.com, 858-2925

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

Sgt. Simmons gave the citation statistics for Jefferson Parish for September: 561 total citations, 16 red light running, 125 speeding, 13 signs, 195 crashes, 52 injuries, 89 hit & runs, 13 DWIs, 977 complaints. The stats for October were 1270 total, 23 red lights, 516 speeding, 89 signs, 293 crashes, 73 injuries, 119 hit & runs, 4 DWIs. He also reported that the JPSO has 5 vehicles equipped with license plate recognition devices. Their use has resulted in the identification of stolen vehicles.

Mr. Strength reported on several DOTD projects: Huey P. Long Bridge, where land closures will begin soon and vertical clearance will be temporarily reduced; I-10 in Metairie, which should be completed 1/09; I-310 where overlay activities are still causing daytime closures but is almost completed. He also reported that the 2nd annual Safe Routes to School workshop was held last week in New Orleans. Money is available through a federal program which can be used for training crossing guards and conducting bike rodeos. Call Chalanda Cole at 504-437-3114 for more info. The new funding cycle begins 1/1/09 and is a reimbursable program.

Metropolitan Safety Council of the New Orleans Area, Inc.
dba National Safety Council, South Louisiana Chapter
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Mr. Boyle reported on other DOTD projects: Causeway and Jefferson Hwy. where lane closures will begin 12/08 and will be completed 1/09; signal project on Jefferson Hwy. should be completed in 1-2 months from St. George to Leonidas.

Mr. Strength added that most of this construction is funded by federal aid programs, but some cutbacks are expected with the state budget. The state is trying to phase out its reliance on the taxes collected on gas to fund government activities.

Sgt. Rodrigue reported that Lafourche Parish has been experiencing traffic and crash problems due to the West Larose LA1 bridge work. He also said that a detour to Hwy. 308 to Cutoff has been in place because the pontoon bridge is out of service.

Sgt. Pollard reported that St. Charles Sheriff's Office issued the following citations in October: 12 DWIs, 327 total, 152 crashes which resulted in 3 fatalities.

Mr. Strength also said that he believes the vehicle in Gretna checking for speeding and red-light running is only issuing only warnings at this time.

Ms. Edwards reminded the group that Operation Lifesaver is available for free presentations on railroad safety. However, volunteers are needed in the New Orleans area. She also said that the "Officer on Train" events are being conducted around the state, where law enforcement officers ride in the front of trains to observe driver behaviors at railroad crossings.

Ms. Gardner reported that LSU Trauma Center has been re-verified as a Level 1 Trauma Center. She also said that the area has no Level 2, 3 or 4s. The nearest is Shreveport. She also said that they are hosting a child safety technician course in January at Troop B. The course is free, but there is a \$60 administrative fee per person.

Ms. Gardner also reported on the injury prevention program presented to sophomores in area high schools. The 7-hour course trains about 30 students per week in the old Hotel Dieu hospital. She also said that child safety seats are checked every Wednesday at Troop B and that no appointment is needed.

Mr. Fairchild reported that the Naval Support Activity in Algiers is scheduled to be closed in 2010. The area will become the Federal City. The test pilings are being driven now.

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Mr. Redman reported that AAA is recommending parents spend at least 50 hours teaching their children to drive. Ms. Inbau added that the National Safety Council agrees. AAA predicts that travel for the Thanksgiving will be slightly down from previous years. In our region, only 8.8 million will be on the road from Wednesday – Sunday.

Mr. Redman also stated that he will focus on the red-light-running cameras after the holidays. He suggested that the emphasis should be on public safety and not on revenue. He also said that cities and parishes should assure that conventional countermeasures (i.e. engineering and design) should be in place before considering installing the cameras. He also suggested that revenues should be dedicated to improving and enhancing the intersections.

Mr. Tassin said Beverly Industries is considering a cell phone policy and asked the group for advice. National Safety Council has sample policies available and the local chapter will be happy to share their information. At least, the policy should prohibit hand-held devices while driving. Mr. Nieto also explained that interior cameras are available to record the behavior of drivers. They have proven to deter unsafe behavior for some companies.

Mr. Exnicios reported that the work at Lakeside Shopping Center has been completed with the opening of the new Macy's and 1400-car parking garage. He and his company, Krebbs, designed the traffic round-about and garage. He encouraged everyone to see the round-about. Use the Veterans Blvd. entrance. Round-abouts are getting more popular to control traffic flow.

Mr. Strength reported that the DOTD will be holding a 1½ hour workzone training class Friday at 9 am. All law enforcement officers who work DOTD construction details must attend.

The next meeting will be on **Wednesday, January 21, 2009**, 11:30 am at the chapter office at 4713 Utica St., Metairie. The lunch will complimentary, unless otherwise announced.

The meeting adjourned at about 1:30 pm.

Submitted by: Beth Inbau, NSC President & CEO