



**South Louisiana Chapter
New Orleans**

Traffic Safety Committee Meeting Minutes Wednesday, April 18, 2007

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:

Del Bosarge, Jefferson Parish Traffic Engineering, dbosarge@jeffparish.net
Bob Canfield, Louisiana Highway Safety Commission, RRCBRLA@aol.com
Carol Champagne, Jefferson Parish Special Events, fax 736-6778
Dan Champagne, ISH, dan.champagne@ish1.com
Beth Inbau, National Safety Council, South LA Chapter, beth@metrosafety.org
Marc Ducote, Louisiana Highway Safety Commission, mcducote@bellsouth.net
Terry Fairchild, Naval Support Activity, terry.fairchild@navy.mil
Dorothia Halligan, dhalligan@jeffparish.net
Dan Jatres, Regional Planning Commission, djaties@norpc.org
Greg Lowero, Jefferson Parish Sheriff's Office
Connie Pogue, AT&T, connie.pogue@bellsouth.com
Donald Redman, AAA, dredman@aaamissouri.com
Sgt. Antoine Rodrigue Jr., Lafourche Parish Sheriff's Office
Seve Serna, Federal Highway Administration, seve.serna@fhwa.dot.gov
Steve Strength, LA Dept. of Transportation & Dev., stevestrength@dotd.state.la.us
Fred Terluin, Louisiana Highway Safety Commission, fterluinj@cox.net
Lawrence Williams, Naval Support Activity, Lawrence.williams1@navy.mil

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.

Ms. Inbau challenged the group to reframe from referring to traffic incidents as "wrecks," "collisions" or "crashes," not "accidents." The group agreed to fine anyone who uses "accidents" \$1 per occurrence beginning at the next meeting.

Officer Lowero reported that the red-light running cameras have not been installed in Jefferson Parish yet. JPSO issued 46 tickets for running signal lights in March. Staffing continues to be a problem in traffic enforcement. However, JPSO re-established a 2-person enforcement squad today to focus on complaints and patrols. The department is averaging 5-6 crashes per day for each person in the Traffic Division. That does not leave much time for enforcement. He reported that there were 2 fatalities in March. Hit & runs are up. Undocumented aliens are also a problem, which the District Attorney's Office is working on also. He said the staffing of the districts is almost back to pre-Katrina levels.

National Safety Council, South Louisiana Chapter

P O Box 858, Kenner, LA 70063-0858

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Mr. Strength reported that the Motorist Assistance Program (MAP) has been extended from Loyola in Kenner to I-510, including I-610. There are 5 vans. He was asked about drainage along the interstate and he said the sound walls have drainage openings.

Mr. Serna reported on the Safe Routes to School Program. He said funding may be available through this program to enhance signage and street markings around schools. City streets departments may qualify. Also, funds may also be available through Local Roads (LA Transportation Research Center) grants on an annual basis. He said to contact Marie Walsh for details.

Mr. Williams reported that the military safety themes for this summer include pedestrian safety and drowsy/distracted driving. Mr. Redman commented that the military produces excellent safety-related material for distribution.

Mr. Jatres reported that the Regional Planning Commission is working on the Safe Routes to School Program. 10 projects have been selected for reimbursement funding. DOTD is planning a training session in 9/07 on how to apply for funding which will be available in 2008. They had an overage of funds for 2005-06 due to the hurricanes, so they hired a contractor to fund state-wide road improvements. He also said that on 6/25-27/07 there will be a design workshop for traffic engineers for pedestrian & bike safety held at the Amoco Bldg. in NOLA. The Commission meetings are the 2nd Tuesday monthly at 12:30 pm in their 21st floor office. Meetings are open to the public.

Mr. Ducote and Mr. Terluin reported that the LHSC has issued breath testers to St. John, St. Tammany and Houma for use at their checkpoints.

Mr. Canfield distributed Vehicle-Related Fatalities report and Realtime Stats. He also distributed a list of proposed legislation that LHSC will support:

- A. Alcohol ignition interlock devices for all DWI convictions
- B. Require all adults in back seats to buckle up
- C. Ban hand-held cell phone usage while driving
- D. Increased penalties for drag racing

His list stated that the drivers license point system would not be pursued at this time.

Mr. Canfield also reported that the number of fatalities exceeded 1,000 for 2006. Speeding & DWIs remained the main causes. LHSC will begin its 100 Days of Summer Heat on Memorial Day which will increase enforcement in the participating areas. He reported that a Minnesota court ruled the red-light running cameras illegal in that area. He will send the website article to the Council for distribution to the Traffic Committee members.

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Mr. Redman reported that gasoline prices have risen \$.80 per gallon since February with no explanation, yet the price of a barrel of crude oil is down \$10 since then.

Mr. Strength reported that DOTD has records amounts of roadway construction statewide. DOTD went through the Federal Highway Administration, not FEMA, for the damage from the 2 hurricanes. He reported on the I-10 widening project and service road work in Metairie. He also reported on the Twin Span project, the Rigolets project, the Barataria widening and the Peters Road projects. He added that by 7/07 there will be additional detection systems during peak hours. The Regional Transportation Center is still planned to be built at Veterans @ Pontchartrain and will be run by the RPC. The projected start date is 6/07 and completion date is early 2009. He said the I-10 @ Causeway interchange construction is planned to begin 12/07. Mr. Strength also reported that 6 traffic cameras are back in service on I-10. Go to www.dotd.la.gov.

Mr. Canfield reminded everyone that 5-1-1 traffic update telephone number is available and should be used BEFORE driving, not while driving.

Mr. Bosarge reported on the W. Esplanade project which is almost completed on the east-bound side. The west-bound side work will start thereafter and should be completed by 7/07. He reported on the 2 Laplace projects and the Destrehan project. The Kawanee Bridge @ Elmwood Canal will be closed for 22-24 months while a new bridge is constructed. He also reported that all the canal pumping stations worked well after the canals were re-worked. J.P. Council approved the red-light running cameras but not on the details.

Mr. Champagne reported that the required background checks required by the Coast Guard for all personnel working in certain petro-chemical facilities is very burdensome, with a 6-week turnaround. He also said that all oil refineries in the U.S. are operating at maximum capacity. Mr. Redman added that since about 15 cities/jurisdictions in the country require specific blends of fuel, the refineries are having a difficult time keeping up with demand because of the time it takes to switch their processes. He said that if the refineries could concentrate on one formula, they could increase inventory and perhaps bring prices down.

Mr. Strength added that clean air standards apply to maintenance & construction operations. They can't widen certain roads unless they are made more efficient.

Ms. Pogue reported that BellSouth is now AT&T. They are again looking to train drivers. Ms. Inbau offered information on the National Safety Council's Defensive Driving Courses.

Ms. Halligan asked the law enforcement if there were any laws prohibiting truck float riders on trucks driven to & from the parades. A rider fell from the truck on the way back to the den. No

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one at the meeting knew of any law prohibiting this but all agreed it was unsafe and should be prohibited.

Ms. Inbau asked law enforcement about their policies on safetybelt usage, as they are not exempt from the state law. All agencies present said their policies require safetybelt usage except in extreme circumstances.

Mr. Redman announced that AAA has a Great Battery Round-Up to properly dispose of used batteries. Go to www.aaa.com for details. He also suggested that before red-light running cameras are installed, the intersections be considered for re-design and/or adjustment of light cycles.

Mr. Strength stated that there is a conflict in the state law about yellow signal lights. It is legal to enter an intersection on yellow but not to be in the intersection on red.

Mr. Redman and Ms. Inbau agreed to contact State Rep. A.G. Crowe or other legislator (interested in traffic safety) to be a guest speaker at the Traffic Safety Committee meeting in July or August.

Ms. Inbau reminded the group that Betsey Tramonte from Operation Lifesaver (RxR safety) will be the guest speaker at the 6/13/07 Traffic Safety Committee meeting.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at about 1:50 pm.

The next meeting will be on **Wednesday, May 16, 2007**, 11:30 am. The fee for lunch will be \$15. The meeting adjourned at about 1:50 pm.

Submitted by:
Beth Inbau
NSC President & CEO

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