

Legislative Oversight Committee

Questions

Fatalities and Trooper Activity

- In light of the different type of areas patrolled (e.g. rural v. urban), and limited number of Troopers on the road:
 - Does the agency perform analysis and set activity goals for each Troop, based on the type of area patrolled and number of troopers in that area, to ensure the Trooper's time in each region is used in the most effective manner? If so, please provide the most recent activity goals for each Troop; and
 - Does the agency have statewide goals that apply to every Troop regardless of the area patrolled and number of Troopers in the Troop? If so, please provide the most recent statewide activity goals and why they apply across the state.

The South Carolina Department of Public Safety (SCDPS) is committed to the reduction of highway fatalities through the systematic analysis of crash data and the orchestrated implementation of law enforcement countermeasures to address the most common contributors to fatal crashes: Driving Under the Influence (DUI), speeding, and seat-belt noncompliance. SCDPS ensures the consistent sharing of traffic collision trends and the effective execution of enforcement plans by means of the following organizational structure and operational process:

- The Highway Patrol Division, which is primarily responsible for the enforcement of South Carolina's traffic laws, is organized in conglomerates of counties (or Posts) divided among the seven geographical regions (or Troops). This organization allows for the efficient use of available staffing by directing resources to areas that are proven, through systematic data analysis, to have the highest calls-for-service and the highest incidents of both high risk driving behavior and motor vehicle fatalities.
- Troop Commanders are responsible for conducting quarterly assessments of fatality trends within their areas of operation and comparing these movements against the enforcement countermeasures employed during the same period. This information is compiled into reports that are presented at quarterly briefings among the Patrol's Command Staff for the purpose of collectively considering effectiveness and for discussing alternative and/or innovative tactics.
- Subsequent to these quarterly briefings, Troop Commanders develop their enforcement plans for the ensuing three month period and implement the appropriate countermeasures by assigning personnel within the respective Posts (and sometimes supplemental personnel from other Patrol units such as the Motorcycle Unit) to geographical areas and during periods of time that are proven to be most vulnerable to fatal crashes. In addition, Troop Commanders

coordinate with the Law Enforcement Networks, which include city and county agencies, to assist them in their enforcement efforts.

- Troop Commanders monitor the effectiveness of their plans and adjust them as necessary based upon daily reports that provide current fatality data. These reports are disseminated throughout SCDPS by means of e-mail during the work week (i.e. Monday – Friday).
- To provide further support to their fatality reduction efforts, Troop Commanders provide a weekly summary of their enforcement initiatives to the Patrol's two Region Commanders (Upper State and Lower State), who review the reports and provide guidance as required.
- It must also be noted that SCDPS's law enforcement countermeasures are significantly enhanced through the education component of crash reduction. This includes public information through multi-media sources and through the Highway Patrol Community Resource Officer program that assigns Troopers to liaison with media outlets and community organizations.