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The Rural Safety Innovation Program – An Overview and Status Update

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USDOT Commitment to Safety

- Safety Council formed to tackle critical transportation safety issues
- Goals are to further enhance the safety focus and improve the impact of safety programs
- Action oriented, data driven, emphasize open dialogue about common issues and provide a forum for fresh ideas and new perspectives.
Rural Safety Innovation Program

- Rural Safety Initiative kicked-off in 2008 (Rural Safety Innovation Program is one element)
- Innovative options to help reduce highway fatalities
- Assist rural communities in addressing highway safety problems
Rural Safety Innovation Program Goals

- Improve safety on local and rural roads
- Document best practices and lessons learned
- Promote national awareness and interest
- Promote the use of ITS technologies
- Adapt the use of proven ITS technologies
Rural Safety Innovation Program

Procurement Process

- Funding drawn from available portions of the Delta Region Transportation Development Program (DRTDP) and the ITS program
- A two-phased application process was employed
  - 80 Phase I applications
  - 24 applications were selected to be developed into comprehensive proposals
Rural Safety Innovation Projects (ITS Funded)

- Caltrans
- Colorado Department of Transportation
- Illinois Department of Transportation
- Iowa Department of Transportation
- Kansas Department of Transportation
- Minnesota Department of Transportation
- South Carolina Department of Transportation
- King County, Washington Department of Transportation
- Wisconsin Department of Transportation
South Carolina Department of Transportation

- Safety Challenge
  - Speed, wet weather and roadway departure crashes

- Strategy
  - Use of variable speed limit (VSL)
  - CMS connected to both speed and weather sensors
  - Video surveillance

- Goal
  - Reduce speed-related and hydroplaning crashes
Iowa Department of Transportation

- Safety Challenge
  - Collection and reporting of crash data

- Strategy
  - Traffic and Criminal Software (TraCS)
  - Improve the accuracy and completeness of crash data

- Goal
  - Electronically transmit and load the data into the state’s statewide crash database
Safety Challenge
  - Speed related crashes in rural works zones

Strategy
  - Use of real-time information about speed violators to support enforcement

Goal
  - Reduce speed violations and the number of speed related incidents at work zones on rural highways.
Individual Project Evaluations

- Combination of evaluation studies that examine system component performance and the systems impact.
- Institutional and technical challenges, as well as lessons learned and best practices.
- Early engagement of independent evaluator.
Contact Information

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