

Washington Traffic Safety Commission 2009-2011 State Operating Budget

Part 1 Strategic Plan and Performance Measures for 2009-2013

Agency: 228 Washington Traffic Safety Commission

Date: June 13, 2008

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WASHINGTON
Traffic Safety
COMMISSION

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I. Mission statement

The mission of the Washington Traffic Safety Commission is to reduce deaths and serious injuries resulting from motor vehicle collisions by implementing programs designed to address driver behaviors through coordinated efforts of federal, state, tribal, and local agencies. These programs are guided by Washington State's Strategic Highway Safety Plan: Target Zero.

II. Statutory authority

Statutory Functions of the Washington Traffic Safety Commission (RCW Chapter 43.59):

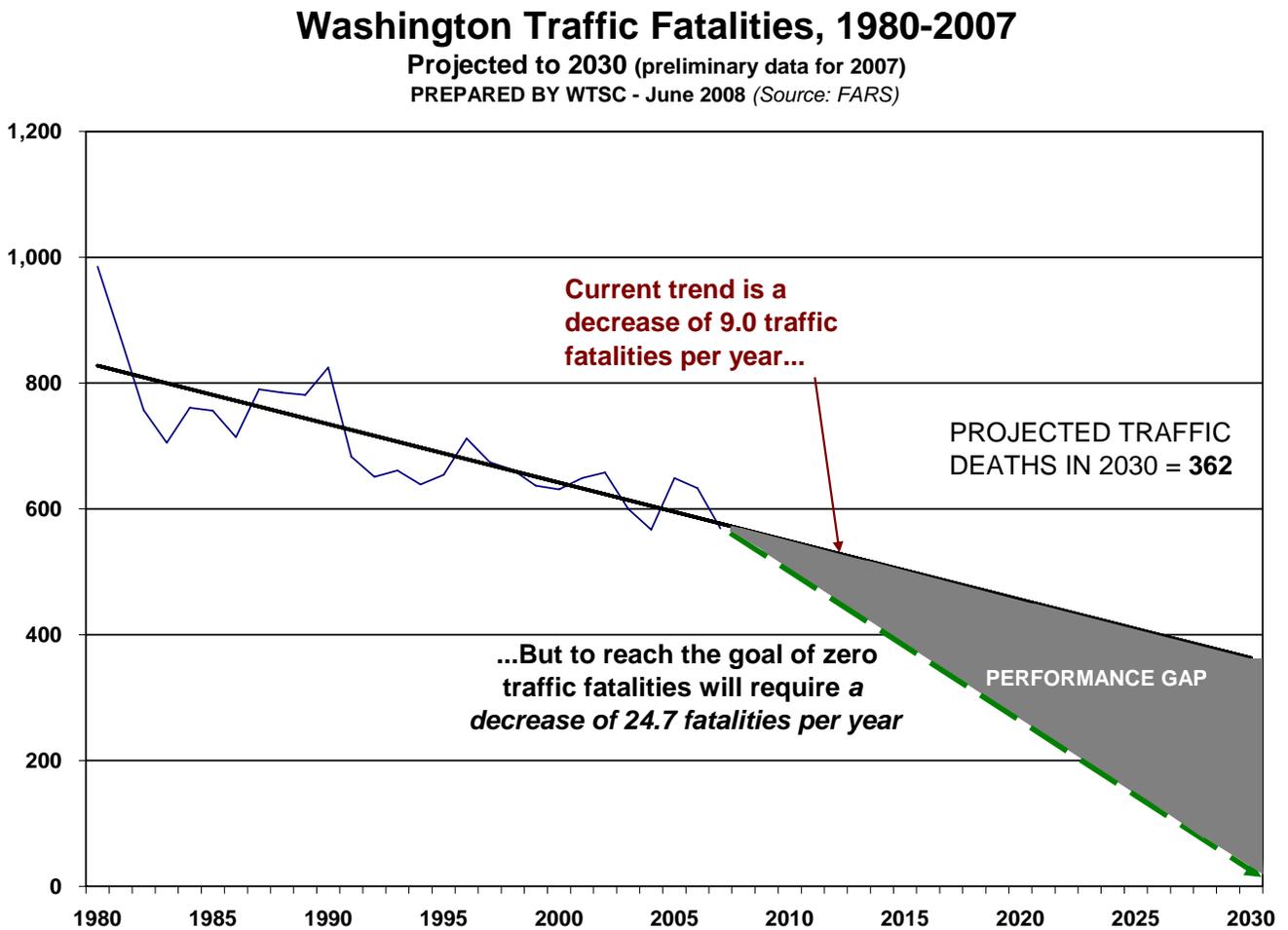
- Find solutions to the problems that have been created as a result of the tremendous increase of motor vehicles on our highways and the attendant traffic death and accident tolls;
- Plan and supervise programs for the prevention of accidents on streets and highways; including but not limited to educational campaigns designed to reduce traffic accidents in cooperation with all official and unofficial organizations interested in traffic safety;
- Coordinate activities at the state and local level in the development of state-wide and local traffic safety programs;
- Promote uniform enforcement of traffic safety laws;
- Establish standards for investigation and reporting of traffic accidents;
- Promote and improve driver education;
- Promote bicycle safety through education and promotion of helmet use.
- Perform all functions required to be performed by the Governor under the federal Highway Safety Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-564; 80 Stat. 731).

III. Agency Goals, Objectives, Performance Measures & Strategies

The vision of the Washington Traffic Safety Commission is to achieve zero traffic deaths and zero disabling injuries by the year 2030. Washington was the first state to adopt this demanding long-range aim, called **Target Zero**.

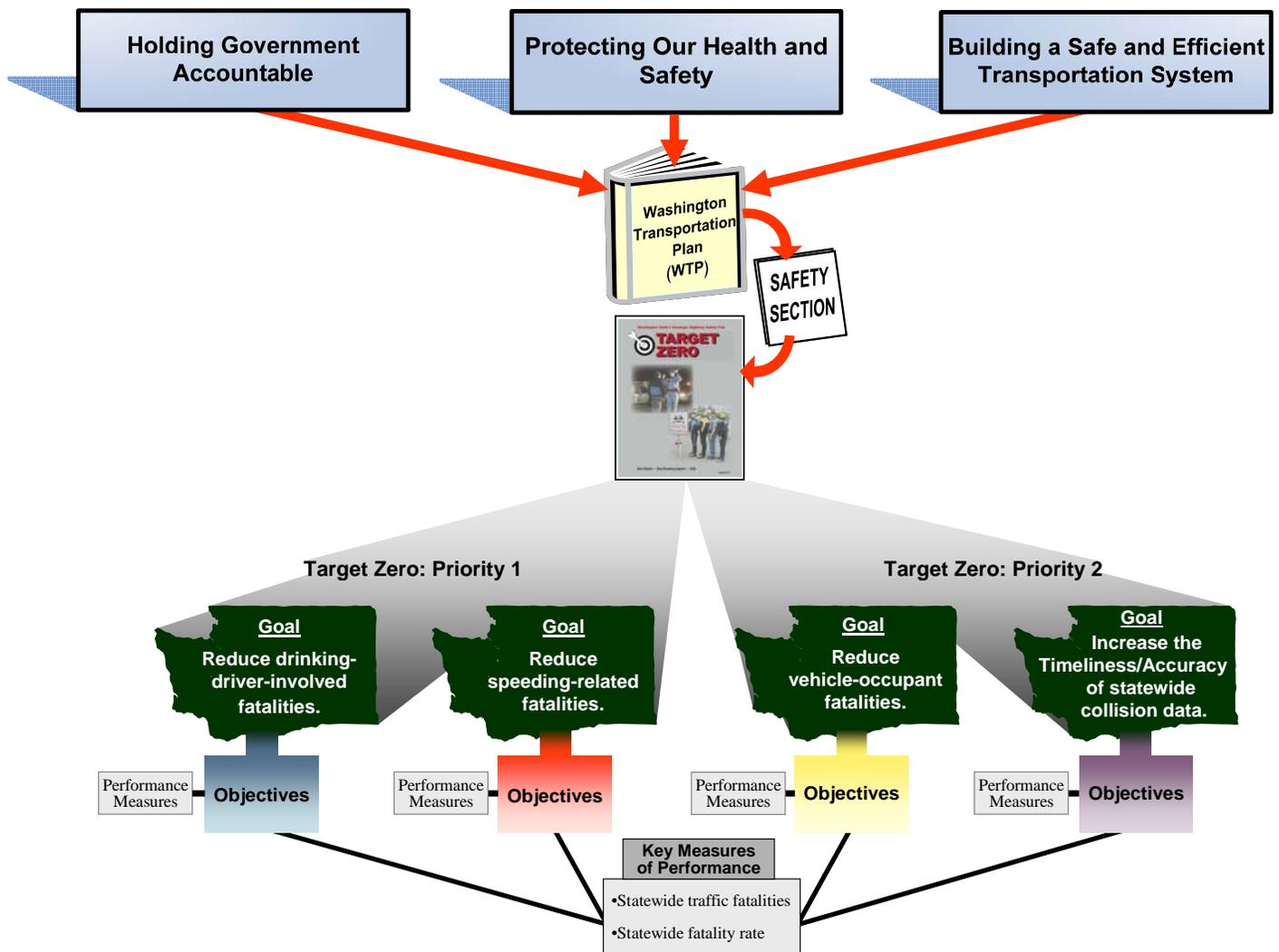
Chart 1, “Achieving the Target Zero Vision,” demonstrates that if Washington State maintains its current rate of progress in reducing traffic deaths, 362 people would still die in crashes in the year 2030. In order to achieve the Target Zero goal by 2030, the number of lives saved each year must increase from nine to approximately twenty four.

Chart 1: Achieving the Target Zero Vision



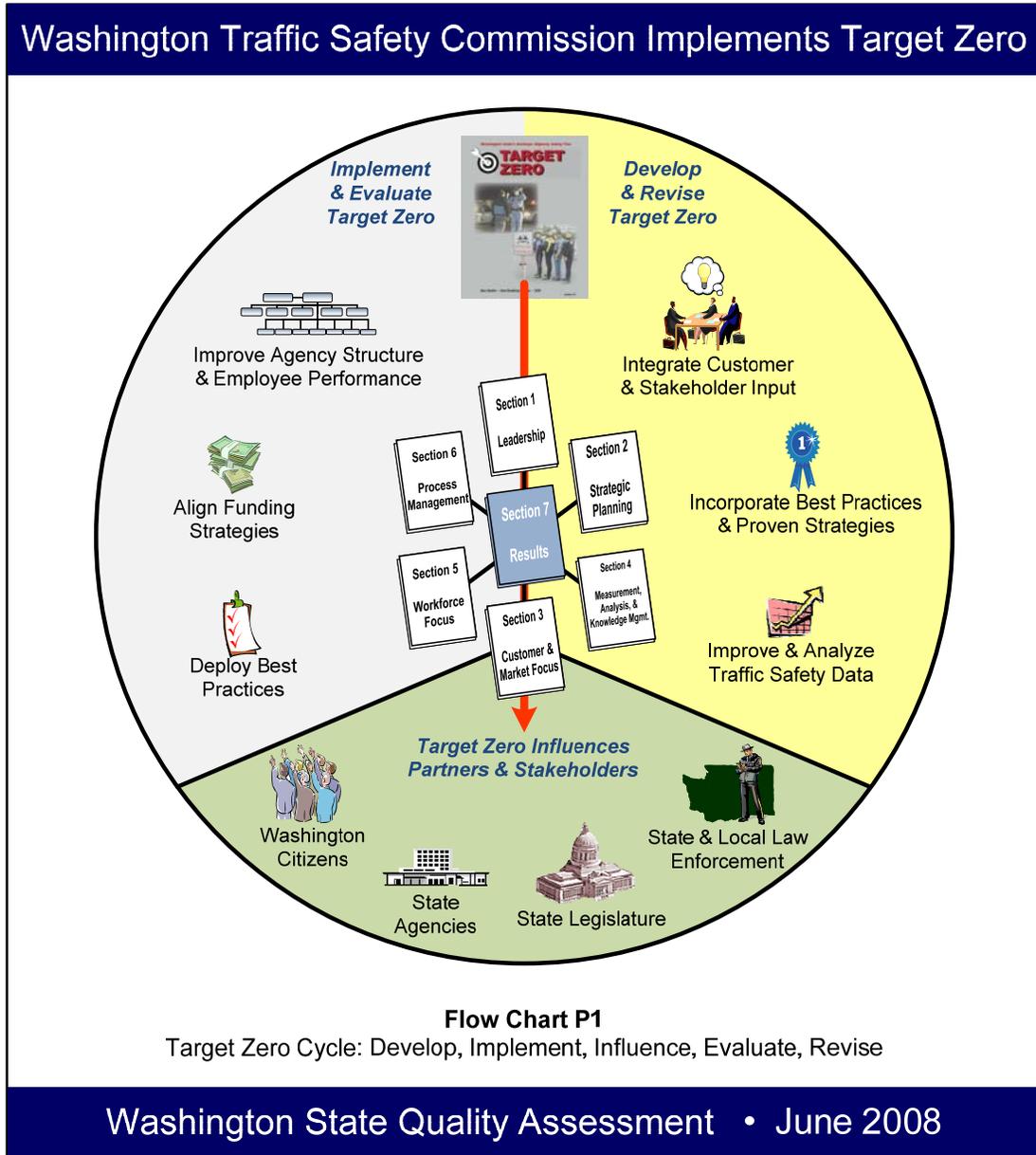
The Governor has established a number of priorities relevant to the Traffic Safety Commission. These include building a safe and efficient transportation system, protecting our health and safety, and holding government accountable. In the field of traffic safety, these priorities are reflected in the Washington Transportation Plan (WTP). The safety section of the WTP reflects the priorities and strategies contained within Washington’s Strategic Highway Safety Plan: Target Zero. (Target Zero, is available at www.wtsc.wa.gov). Target Zero identifies Washington’s traffic safety needs and guides investment decisions to achieve significant reductions in traffic fatalities and disabling injuries. The specific goals, objectives, and performance measures established by the Washington Traffic Safety Commission directly support Target Zero and the Governor’s Priorities for Washington, as illustrated in Chart 2.

Chart 2: Linking WTSC Goals to the Governor’s Priorities



The following diagram, created for the WTSC Quality Assessment (WSQA), further illustrates how the agency continues to implement Target Zero.

Chart 3: Target Zero Cycle – Develop, Implement, Influence, Evaluate, and Revise



As reflected in Charts 4 and 5 below, the WTSC’s key measures of performance include the number of statewide traffic fatalities and the traffic fatality rate.

Chart 4: Washington Traffic Fatalities, Trendline and Goals

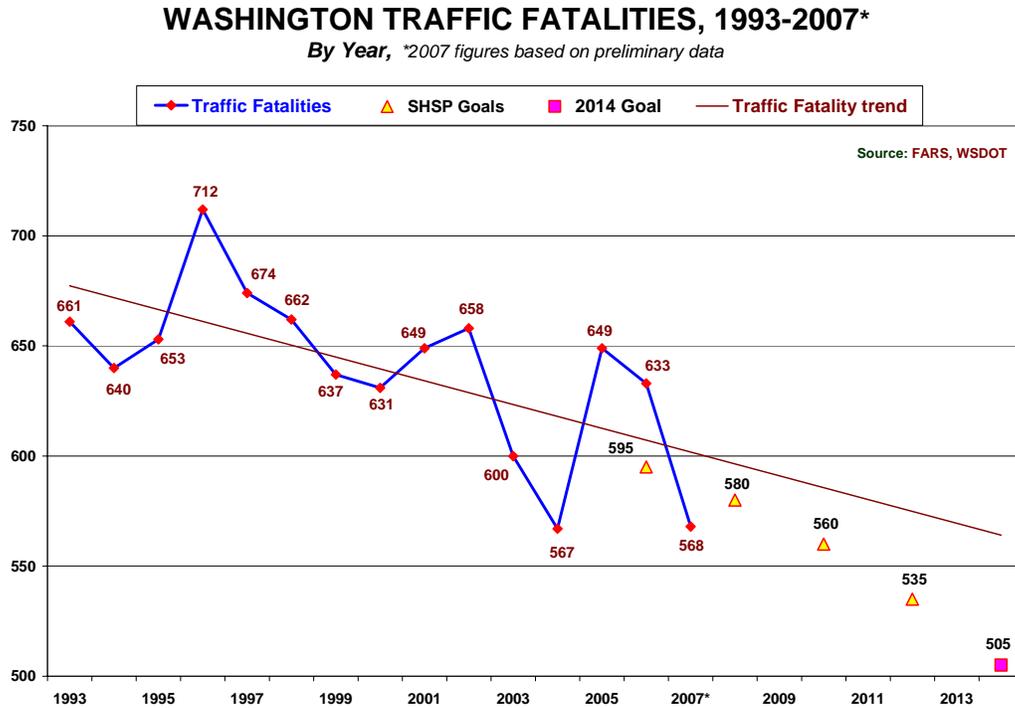
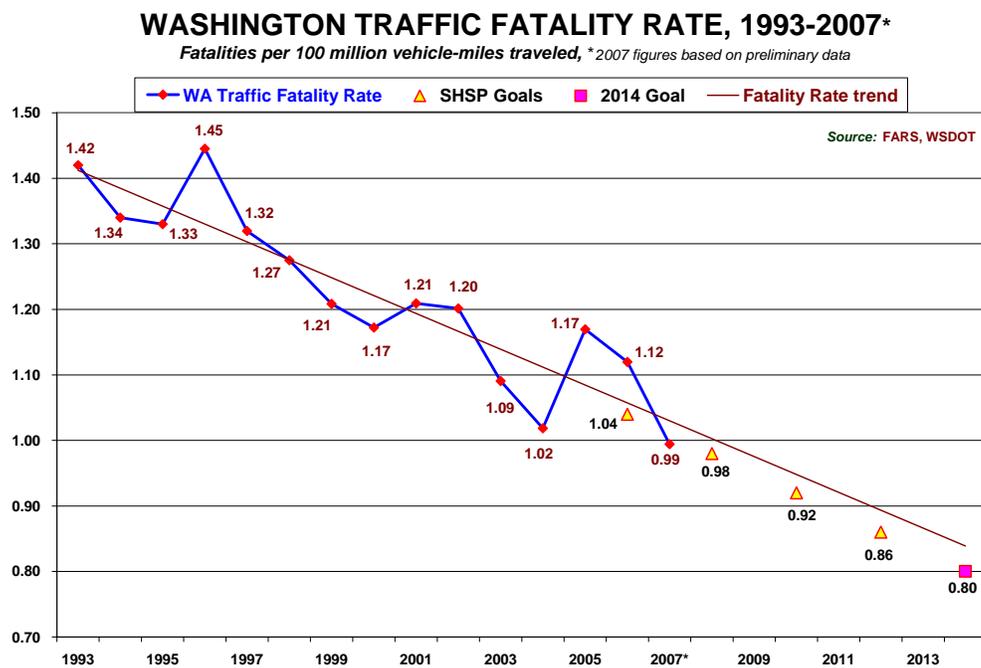


Chart 5: Washington Traffic Fatality Rate, Trendline and Goals



In order to achieve the vision of Target Zero, the agency established key goals, objectives and performance measures. Sub-sections A through D. outline the agency's strategic direction in impaired driving, speeding, occupant protection and traffic records.

A. Reduce Drinking-Driver-Involved Fatalities

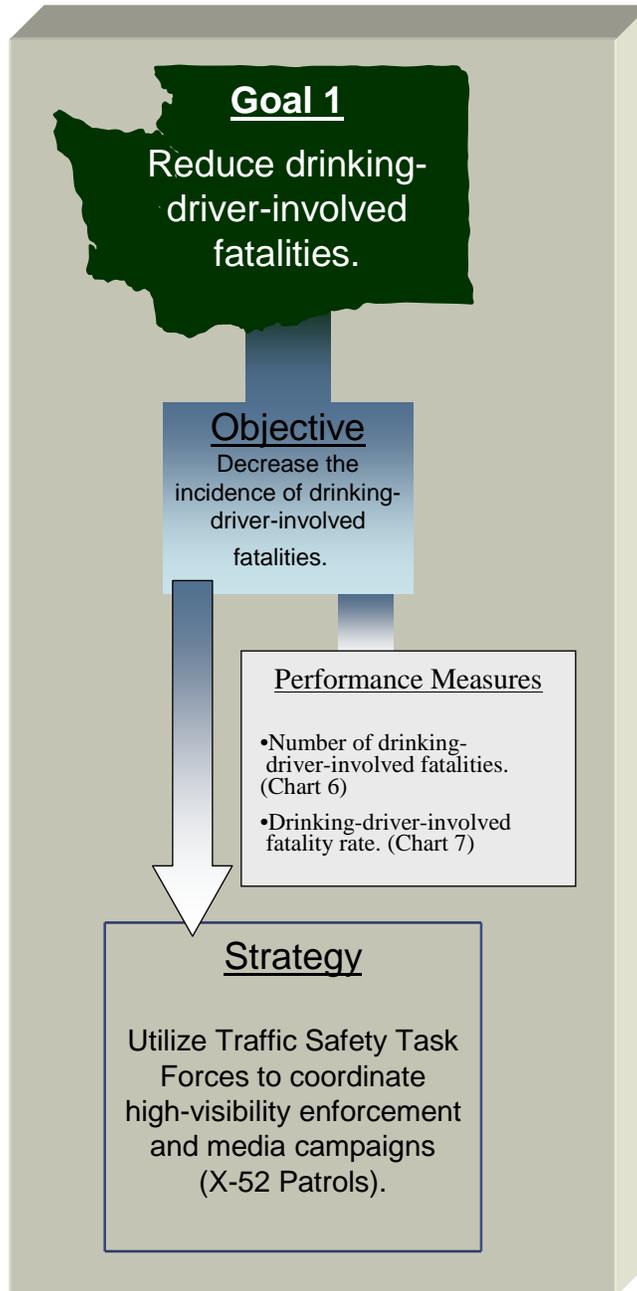


Chart 6: Drinking-Driver-Involved Fatalities, Trendline and Goals

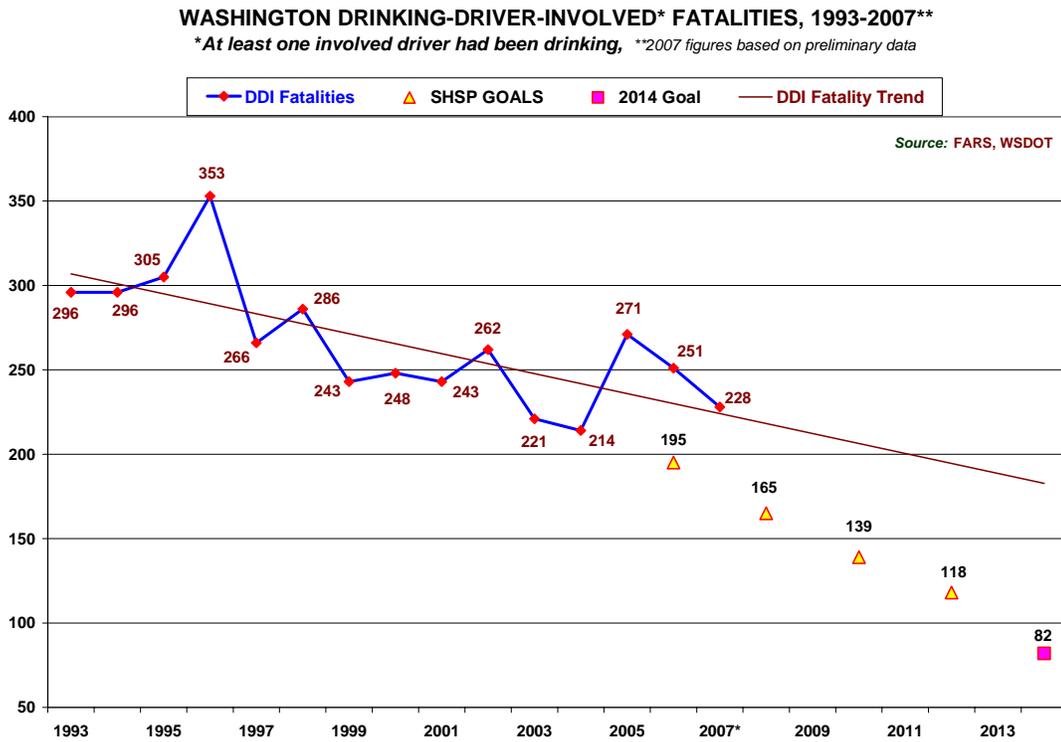
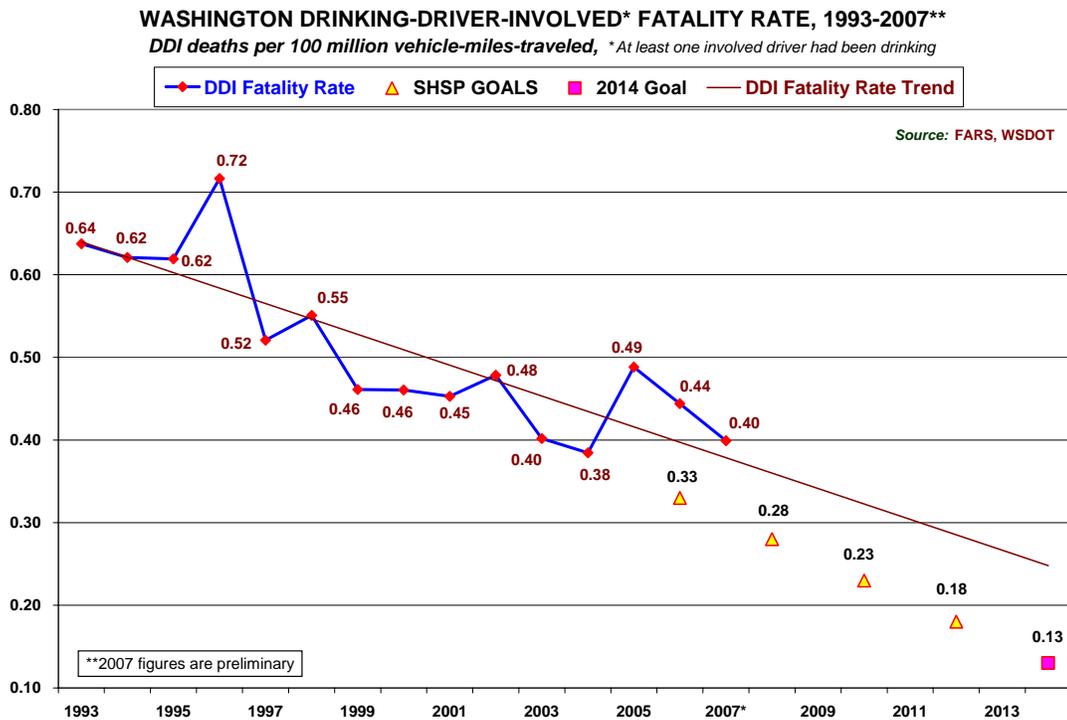


Chart 7: Drinking-Driver-Involved Fatality Rate, Trendline and Goals



Strategy - Reduce Impaired Driving

Utilize Traffic Safety Task Forces to coordinate high-visibility enforcement and media campaigns (X-52 DUI Patrols).

The use of high visibility educational and enforcement campaigns is a recognized, proven approach in changing driver behaviors. The reduction of fatalities caused by impaired driving is not just a WTSC goal, but also one of only two Priority One objectives outlined in Target Zero. Approximately 39% of traffic fatalities in Washington from 2001 – 2006 involved a drinking driver (1,462 deaths). Therefore, it is critical that we continue to utilize proven strategies in combating this issue.

The analysis of our strategy contained in the recently conducted, Activity Inventory Performance Measure Assessment, by the Office of Financial Management (OFM) indicates that the “trends in the overall death rate and drinking driver related death rates...are stable and predictable. Future results should follow the trend line.”

The primary mechanism for deploying effective traffic safety strategies is through local community traffic safety task forces. WTSC partners with communities throughout the state to host a resident traffic safety coordinator. There are currently 24 task force coordinators throughout the state covering 90 percent of the state’s population and geography. These individuals work to deploy statewide initiatives at the local level by coordinating local law enforcement participation in emphasis patrols, working with local media and alternative sources to publicize enforcement efforts, and conducting traffic safety education in the community. By localizing these efforts, statewide programs are able to respond to local politics, attitudes, and conditions quickly and effectively.

B. Reduce Speeding-Related Fatalities

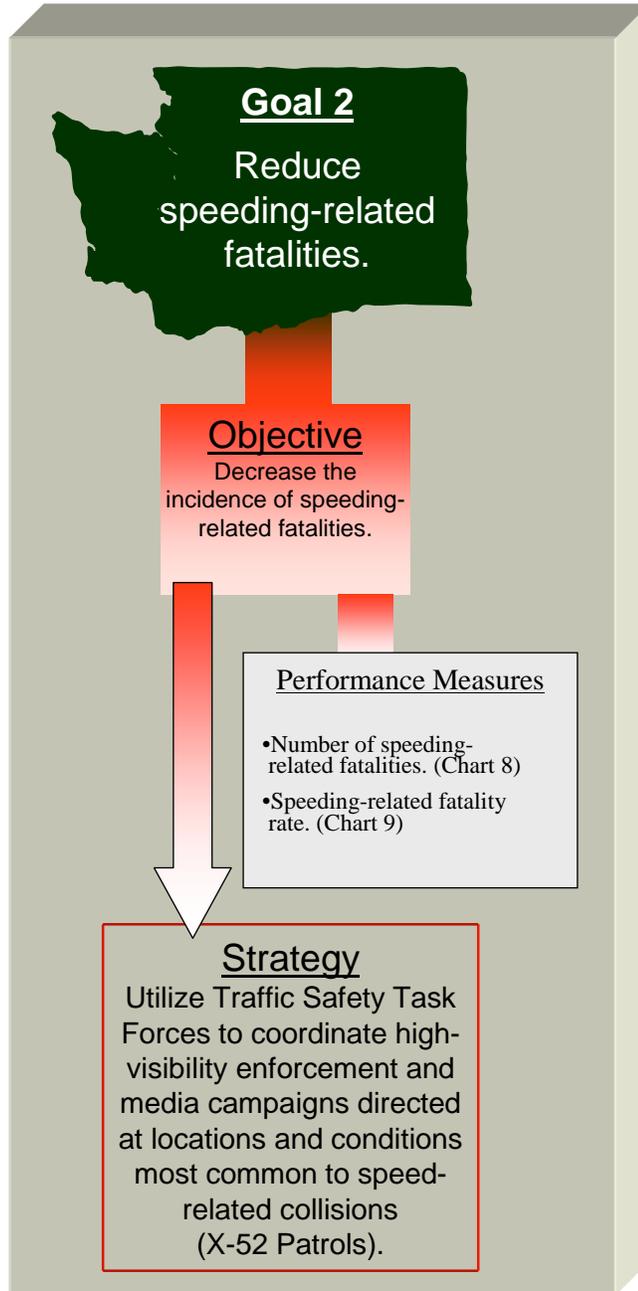


Chart 8: Speeding-Related Fatalities, Trendline and Goals

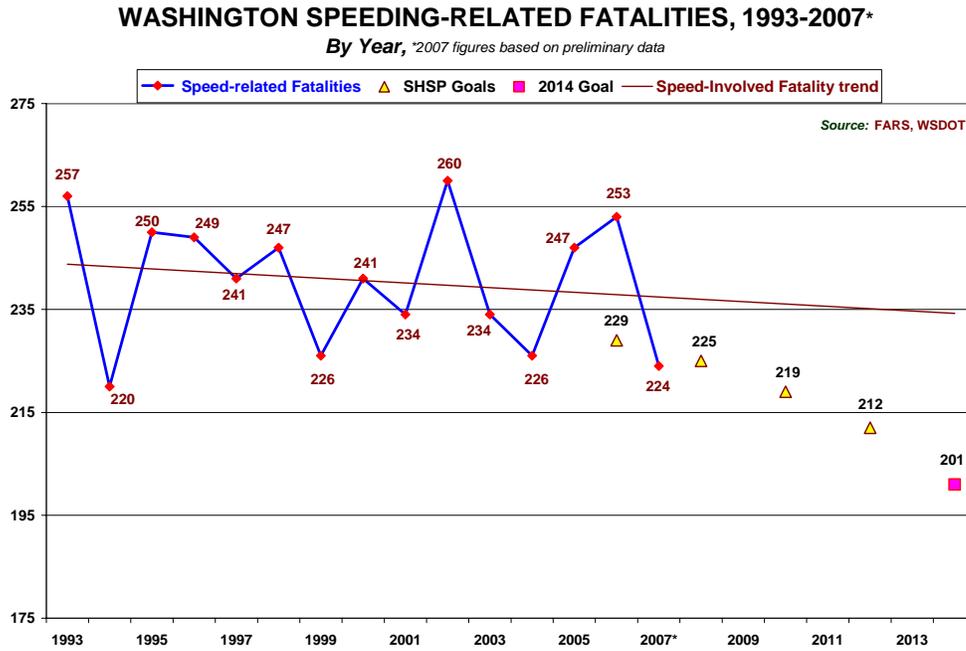
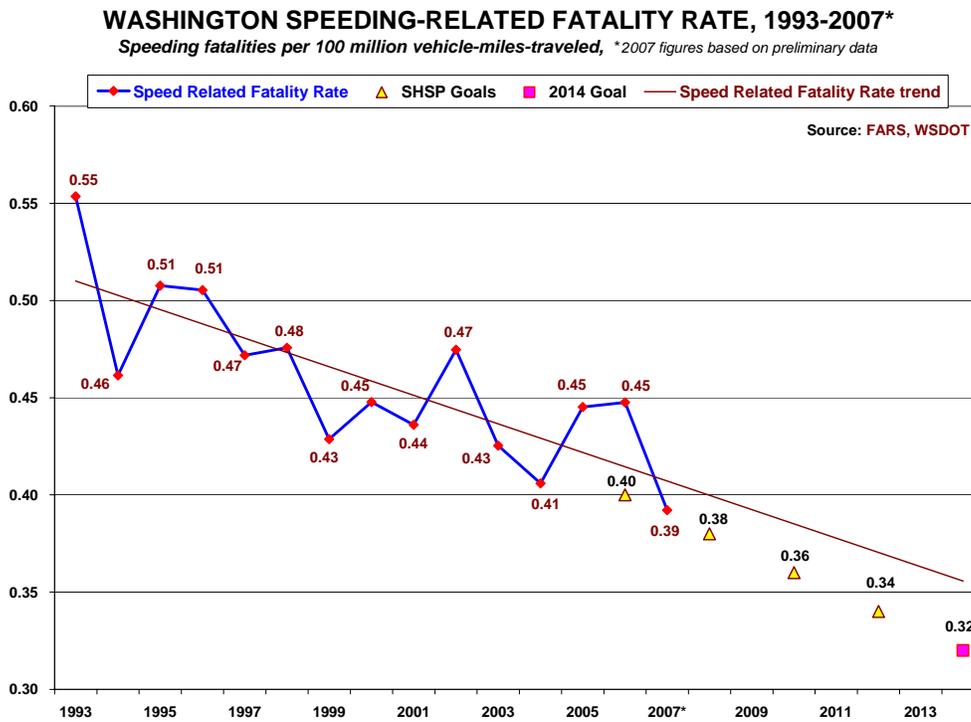


Chart 9: Speeding-Related Fatality Rate, Trendline and Goals



Strategy – Reduce Speeding-Related Fatalities

Utilize Traffic Safety Task Forces to coordinate high visibility enforcement and media campaigns directed at locations and conditions most common to speed-related collisions. (X-52 Patrols).

The use of high visibility educational and enforcement campaigns is a recognized, proven approach in changing driver's behaviors. The reduction of fatalities caused by speeding is not just a WTSC goal, but is also one of only two Priority One objectives outlined in Target Zero. The percentage of traffic fatalities involving a speeding driver was approximately 39% from 2001 – 2006 (1,454 deaths). Therefore, it is critical that we utilize proven strategies in combating this issue.

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C. Reduce Vehicle-Occupant Fatalities

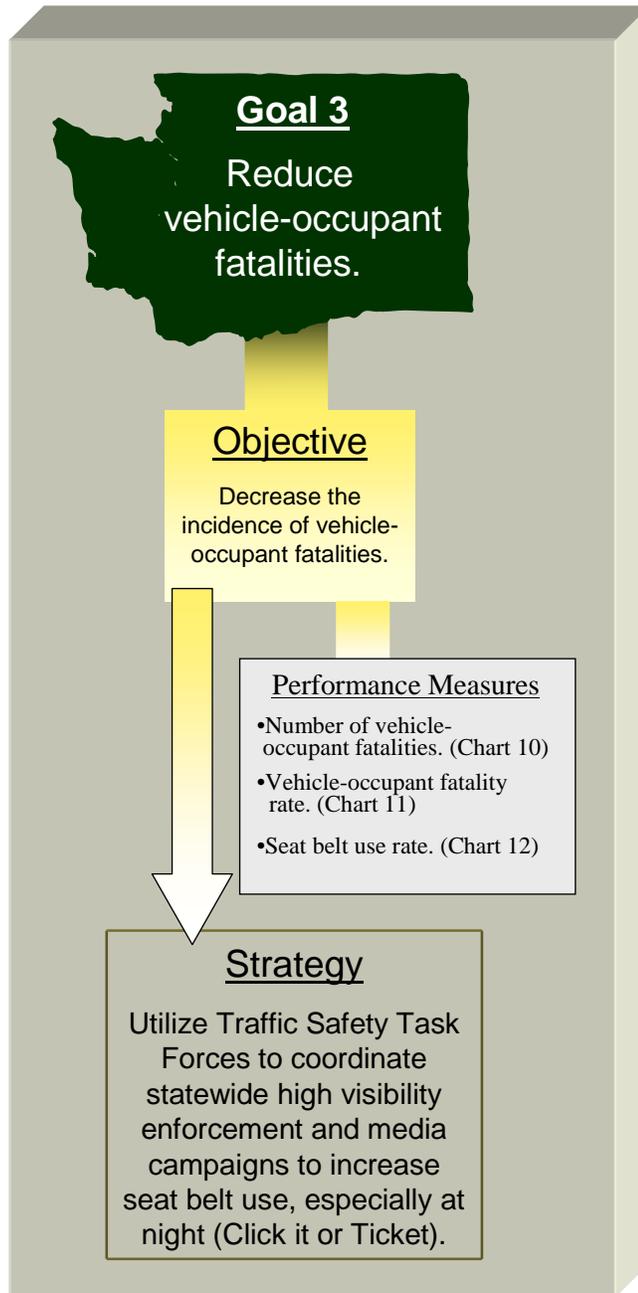


Chart 10: Vehicle Occupant Fatalities, Trendline and Goals

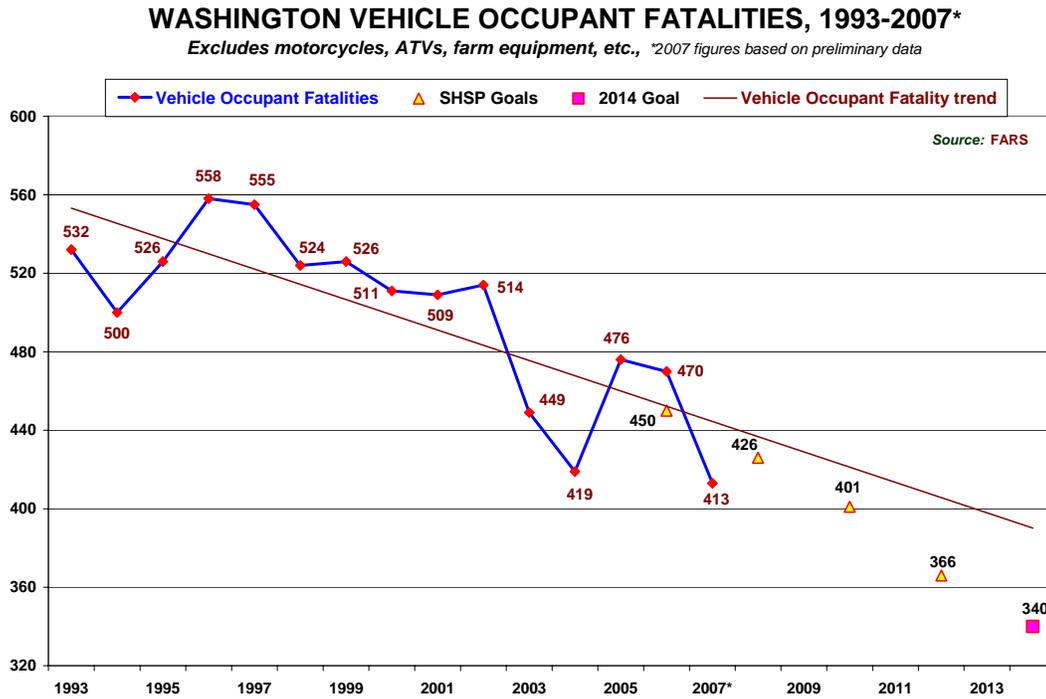


Chart 11: Vehicle Occupant Fatality Rate, Trendline and Goals

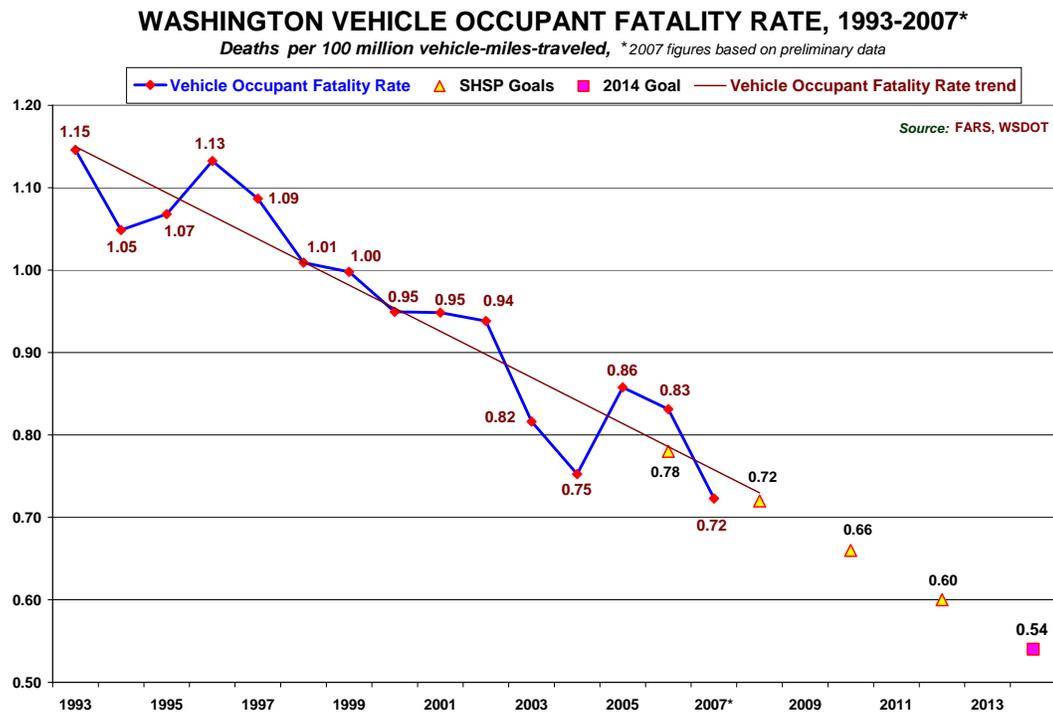
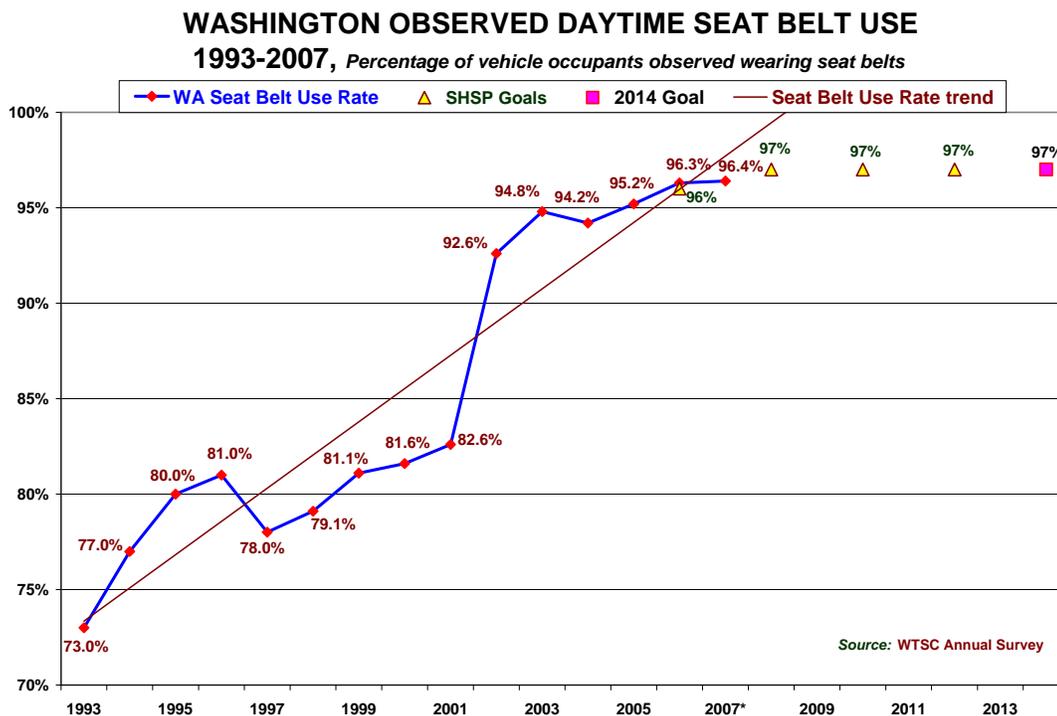


Chart 12: Observed Daytime Seat Belt Use Rate, Trendline and Goals



Strategy – Reduce Vehicle-Occupant Fatalities

Utilize Traffic Safety Task Forces to coordinate statewide high visibility enforcement and media campaigns to increase seat belt use, especially at night (Click it or Ticket).

The use of high visibility educational and enforcement campaigns is a recognized, proven approach in changing driver’s behaviors. The increase in the usage of occupant restraints is not just a WTSC goal, but is also a Priority Two objective as outlined in Target Zero. As the ability to survive a collision is highly correlated to the proper use of occupant restraints, it is critical that we utilize proven approaches in combating this issue. The use of occupant restraints becomes even more critical at night, when only 15% of traffic occurs, yet nearly half of all vehicle occupant fatalities happen.

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Important note about Traffic Safety Task Forces:

The following applies to each of the four strategies in this section.

The use of traffic safety task forces as a delivery mechanism is a critical component of these strategies. Not only do the task forces support and coordinate these educational and enforcement campaigns at the local level, they also build partnerships with other public safety agencies. Research supports that the development and maintenance of these partnerships are also a proven strategy in support of these goals.

The WTSC recognizes the importance of the task force coordinator role, and as a result, assigned a program manager whose primary responsibility is the oversight and coordination of these 24 task forces. This coordinated effort ensures a consistent, statewide approach and implementation of this strategy. Washington State is the only state in the nation that employs the task force concept and the results we have seen to date are reflective of the important role of these coordinators in our traffic safety efforts.

D. Increase the Timeliness & Accuracy of Statewide Collision Data

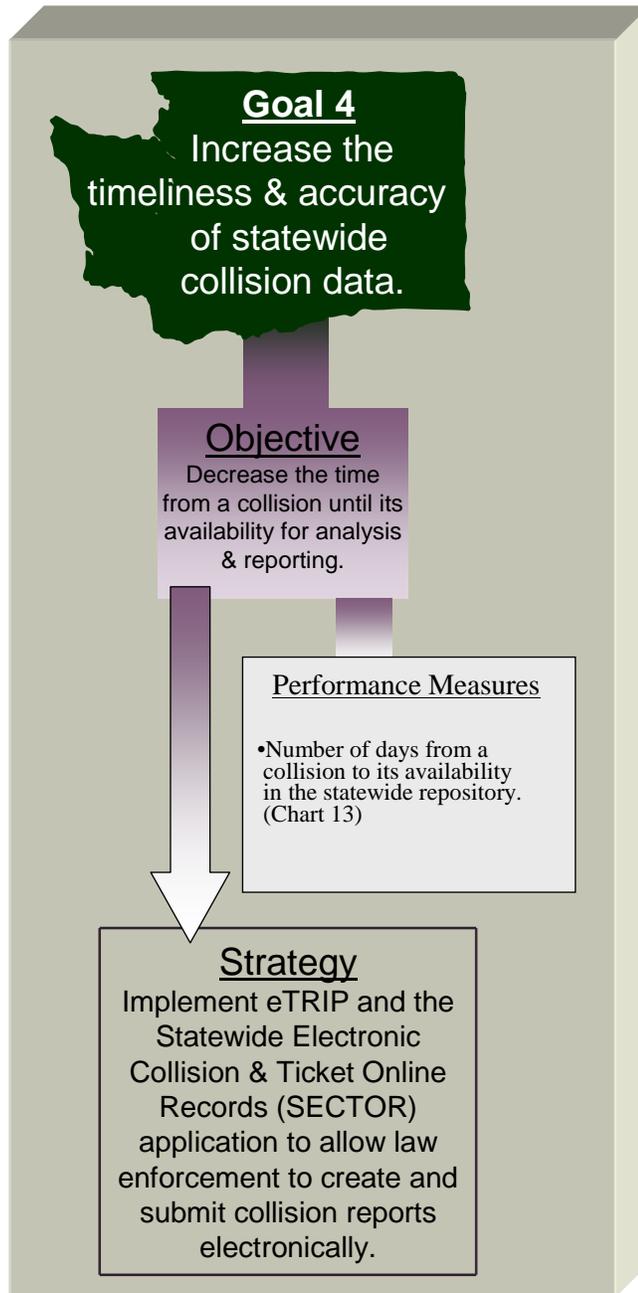
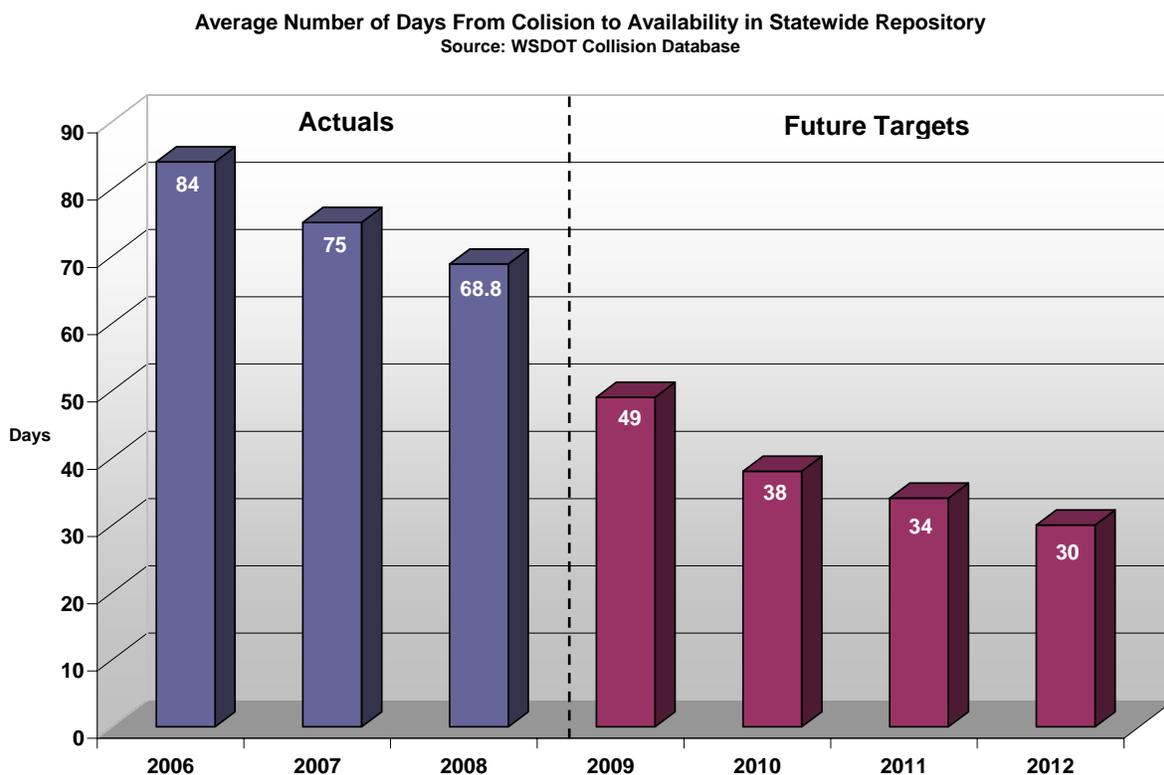


Chart 13: Number of Days from Collision to Availability in Statewide Repository



Strategy

Implement eTRIP and the Statewide Electronic Collision & Ticket Online Records (SECTOR) application to allow law enforcement to create and submit collision reports electronically.

Since the creation of the state’s current collision database in 2001, the sole method of entry of reports has been manual. This manual entry requires a great deal of man-power and causes significant delays in processing reports. Washington State is engaged in an orchestrated effort to replace manual, hand-entry methods with automated processing and filing services. This effort, known as the Electronic Traffic Information Processing (eTRIP) Initiative will improve the timeliness, accuracy, accessibility, and completeness of Washington State collision data (Additional information is available in the Washington Traffic Records Strategic Plan and www.trafficrecords.wa.gov).

The eTRIP Initiative is a series of projects aimed at establishing a system for law enforcement agencies to electronically create and submit electronic collision reports to the statewide repository at the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT). This effort has established an electronic collision reporting system that dramatically reduces the delay between the time a collision occurs and its availability in the statewide collision database for analysis and reporting. eTRIP consists of three primary components:

1. The Statewide Electronic Collision & Ticket Online Records (SECTOR) application. SECTOR reduces the inefficiencies and inaccuracies of the state's current paper-based method of creating collision reports, incorporating numerous business edits at the officer level.
2. The SECTOR Exchange application residing on the Justice Information Network Data Exchange (JINDEX) platform. The JINDEX and SECTOR Exchange application reduce redundant data entry by serving as the state's message broker to route electronic collision reports to the appropriate agencies.
3. The services and back-end applications maintained by WSDOT. These services and applications interact with the JINDEX message broker to automatically receive, process, and file electronic collision reports.

The continued deployment of SECTOR to law enforcement agencies throughout the state is critical to realize the efficiencies of electronic collision reporting. Success in deployment will hinge on sustained commitment from the participating state agencies responsible for the maintenance, enhancement, and implementation of SECTOR and the broader eTRIP initiative. To ensure continued commitment, the state's Traffic Records Committee has created the eTRIP Operations Governance Team, a permanent governance body to manage implementation, support, and enhancement. In addition, the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs (WASPC) has acquired services to facilitate outreach, education, and training for local law enforcement agencies. Together, these steps provide the much-needed foundation for increasing the number of agencies using SECTOR and the resulting volume of electronic collision reports.

IV. Performance Analysis

The primary goal of Washington's Strategic Highway Safety Plan: Target Zero is to eliminate deaths and serious injuries resulting from traffic crashes by the year 2030 (Chart 1). The plan is being implemented through an integrated systems approach to traffic safety at the city, county, state, and tribal levels. Washington was the first state in the nation to adopt this philosophy, with a number of states now following suit. This approach is also used widely by the international traffic safety community.

The key measures of the WTSC's overall performance are total fatalities and fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles traveled (Charts 4 and 5). The state's performance gap identified in Chart 1 represents the progress that must be realized to reach the goal of zero deaths by 2030. Success will be the result of progress in several traffic safety program areas, to include impaired driving, speeding, occupant protection, and traffic records. Performance measurement within these program areas is outlined in Section III, which documents past performance and targets for the future. Identifying and addressing performance gaps is an on-going process and an integral part of implementing Target Zero. This process also promotes the strategic and targeted investment of the human and financial resources available to the WTSC and its partners in Washington's traffic safety network. It also creates the basis for a more detailed analysis used to identify individual crash causal factors.

According to Target Zero, 77% of traffic fatalities involved impairment, speeding, or non-seatbelt use (1,880 deaths). Analysis of the state's performance in these areas demonstrates that Washington is not closing the performance gap at a rate sufficient to achieve Target Zero. However, through the use of proven strategies and the targeted investment of financial and human resources, the traffic safety community believes the current performance gap can be closed.

In the area of seat belts, Washington continues to lead the country in the daytime observed usage rate and has attained its performance goals. However, analysis of vehicle occupant fatalities indicates a dramatic difference in belt use between day and night. In 2006 over half of those killed in traffic crashes between 6:00 PM and 6:00 AM were unbelted, accounting for 128 fatalities. Therefore, the WTSC moved virtually all of its seat belt resources, public education and awareness campaigns, and enforcement, to the nighttime in an effort to close this gap. The performance in this priority area will continue to be tracked and reported through the GMAP process.

The WTSC's internal GMAP process continues to build a stronger learning environment in which the agency can see and understand how its work directly aligns with the Governor's priorities and the state's comprehensive transportation plan (Chart 2). This alignment process ensures that the work done by the WTSC and its many partners and stakeholders in traffic safety is focused on the priorities where the most gains can be realized. Without the implementation of the GMAP process this alignment would likely not have occurred and the agency would have continued to operate independently as it did in the past, therefore losing the benefits of the current system.

Additionally, GMAP continues to assist the agency in effectively using performance measures to assess progress and identify the need for change. Prior to implementing GMAP, progress towards traffic safety goals was measured annually. The GMAP process provides for monthly analysis of performance data (outputs and outcomes). This management structure provides for higher levels of accountability both at the individual and agency levels. The implementation and refinement of the GMAP process assisted the WTSC in developing a strategic view and understanding of its role in the integrated system of state government. This led to:

- Agency alignment with the Governor’s priorities for Washington as well as the state’s comprehensive transportation plan;
- The implementation of Target Zero as the state’s strategic highway safety plan;
- The use of Target Zero priorities to direct the targeted investment of valuable resources (people, time, and money) on the initiatives where the most gains can be realized;
- The effective use of performance data and measures to close performance gaps and increase agency accountability;
- The consistent use of proven strategies to drive the best outcomes possible when working to achieve the goals and objectives of Target Zero;
- The implementation of an ongoing assessment process to critically evaluate agency performance and identify areas where efficiency and effectiveness can be increased; and
- The development of an agency culture that does not fear accountability, but rather embraces it at the individual and agency levels.

Several key performance measures are used nationally to evaluate the overall effectiveness of traffic safety programs. These measures include:

- Total fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles traveled
- Total fatalities
- Vehicle occupant fatalities
- Seatbelt use rate

The following table outlines Washington’s progress in relation to the national rates and those of Missouri. Missouri is used as a comparison state because of similarities in size, population, licensed drivers and vehicles, and highway miles.

Measure	WA	MO	US
Fatalities/VMT	1.12	1.59	1.41
Fatalities	633	1,096	42,642
Vehicle Occupant Fatalities	550	992	36,136
Seat Belt Use	96.30%	75.20%	81%
<small>Source: 2006 Washington FARS and NHTSA</small>			

Clearly, Washington has a better traffic safety performance record when compared to the state of Missouri or the nation. This appears to be a great success story for Washington, but in reality **633 deaths are unacceptable by any measure.** By continuing to implement Target Zero through an integrated systems approach to traffic safety, and the GMAP process, Washington's traffic safety network believes these performance gaps can be closed.

The WTSC will work to close the state's traffic safety performance gaps by continuing to:

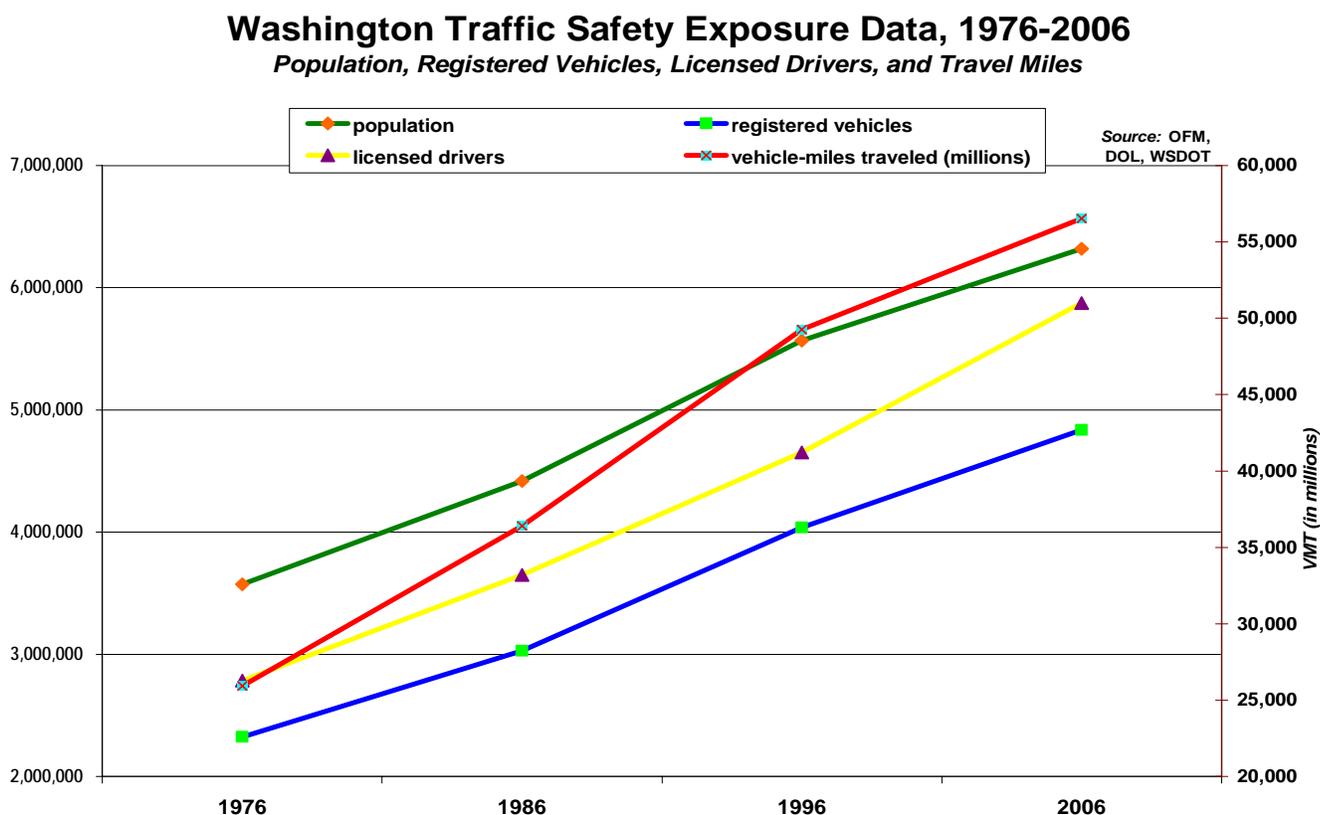
- Align itself with the Governor's priorities for Washington as well as those of the state's comprehensive transportation plan;
- Implement and refine the Strategic Highway Safety Plan: Target Zero;
- Build and strengthen the state's traffic safety network at the city, county, state and tribal levels;
- Identify and use effective traffic safety performance measures;
- Critically evaluate and assess agency performance through the GMAP process;
- Identify ways to leverage financial and human resources to realize increased efficiencies through the GMAP process that would have otherwise been lost; and
- Employ proven strategies including X52, nighttime seat belt campaigns, supporting traffic safety task forces, and deploying eTRIP and SECTOR.

V. Assessment of External Challenges and Opportunities

Effective traffic safety initiatives are directly linked to the willingness and ability of federal, state and local government to invest in traffic safety. As the majority of the WTSC’s funding comes from the federal transportation budget, the authorization that replaces SAFETEA-LU will also have a substantial and direct impact on the agency’s ability to perform its mission. With no indication of what the new authorization will include, the agency must plan for future traffic safety activities based on current funding levels. The WTSC will continue to be as efficient as possible with the distribution of resources through strategic investments in support of Target Zero.

In addition, changes in exposure variables can dramatically impact the ability of the WTSC to achieve its goals. These variables include population, licensed drivers, registered vehicles, and vehicle miles traveled (which may be influenced by rising fuel prices). The following chart illustrates recent trends of risk exposure of drivers and others who utilize Washington’s roadways.

Chart 13: Washington Traffic Safety Exposure Data



Recent changes in laws also impact traffic safety, especially as they relate to text messaging, use of cell phones, and license restrictions for those convicted of impaired driving.

The restrictions placed on the use of text messaging and use of cell phones (effective January 1, 2008, and July 1, 2008 respectively) may impact the numbers of collisions caused by distracted drivers. Distracted driver collisions account for a significant number of fatality and serious injury collisions; however, text messaging and use of cell phones are only two of many possible driver distractions. While it may be too early to determine the long-term impact of these legislative changes on traffic safety, the agency will continue to monitor collision data for patterns and trends.

Recent legislation enables individuals to obtain an ignition interlock license in lieu of a license suspension for a DUI conviction. The WTSC was assigned the responsibility to research and report to the legislature the impact this change has on recidivism rates of impaired drivers. The agency is working closely with the Department of Licensing (DOL) and the Washington State Patrol (WSP) to determine appropriate methodologies for this study.

Additionally, new technology has the potential to significantly impact the motoring environment. This includes the development and implementation of active and passive alcohol sensors in vehicles which have the potential to prevent drivers from operating a vehicle while impaired.

Other technologies such as automated traffic enforcement cameras have proven to be successful in other states and countries. Use of these technologies is increasing in municipalities throughout the state. The Washington State Department of Transportation (DOT) and the WSP are currently implementing these technologies to enforce speed limits in construction zones on Interstate 5.

The WTSC partners with a significant number of state, local, and federal agencies, tribes, and private organizations to promote Target Zero. The linkages between the activities of our traffic safety partners cannot be over emphasized. The state's 24 traffic safety task force coordinators provide a critical link to this effort in local communities.

These relationships may well be the greatest strength of the WTSC.

VI. Assessment of Internal Capacity and Financial Health

Delivery System:

WTSC relies heavily on community oriented delivery systems to implement effective strategies. The state's 24 community traffic safety task forces are an effective and essential service delivery method. In order to retain the critical support these task force coordinators provide, additional state funding is needed to address the imbalance that has resulted from increased demand for services to support state programs

Effective strategies called for in Target Zero increasingly require implementation at the local level. Examples include the Corridor Safety Program, X52 speed and impaired driving high-visibility emphasis patrols, night time seat belt patrols, Drive Hammered-Get Nailed, and eTRIP deployment. In order to innovate globally and act locally, the WTSC must rely almost entirely on the community traffic safety task forces. Currently the task forces receive nearly 90% of their funding from local jurisdictions, with the remainder coming from the state highway safety account. In the last few years however, state programs have increased to account for nearly one half of total task force efforts. Without additional state support, fewer task forces will be capable of supporting critical WTSC programs, significantly reducing their impact.

Workforce:

The 2008 Legislature considered instituting two new programs to be established in the WTSC in the next biennium. If instituted these programs would require two additional FTE's. These new workforce needs are explained in Part 1 and Part II of the Agency Facility Needs Survey submitted by WTSC in April, 2008.

Facilities/Technology:

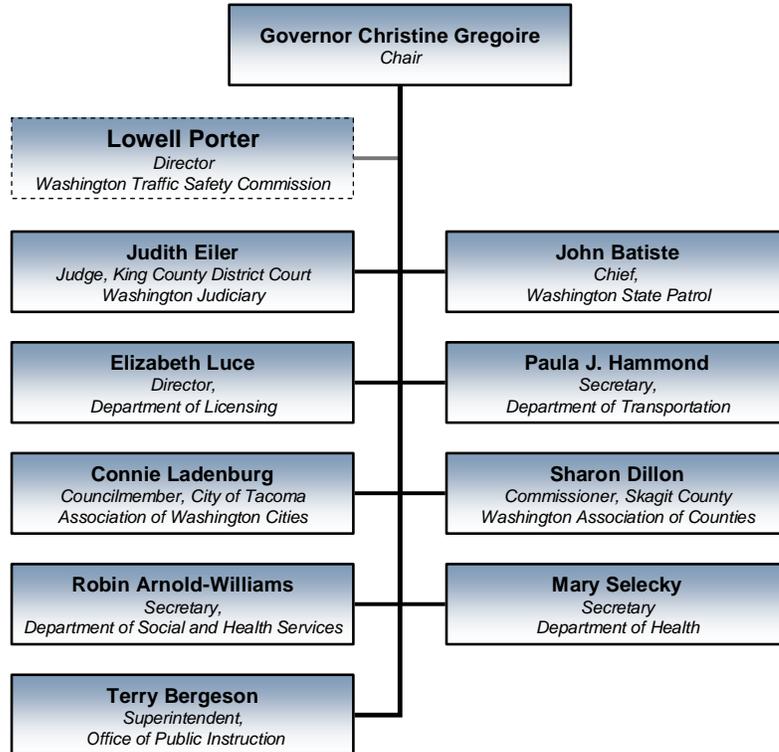
Based on the Agency Facility Needs Survey and agency IT Portfolio, the agency has no technology, facility maintenance or operations needs in the coming biennium.

Budget:

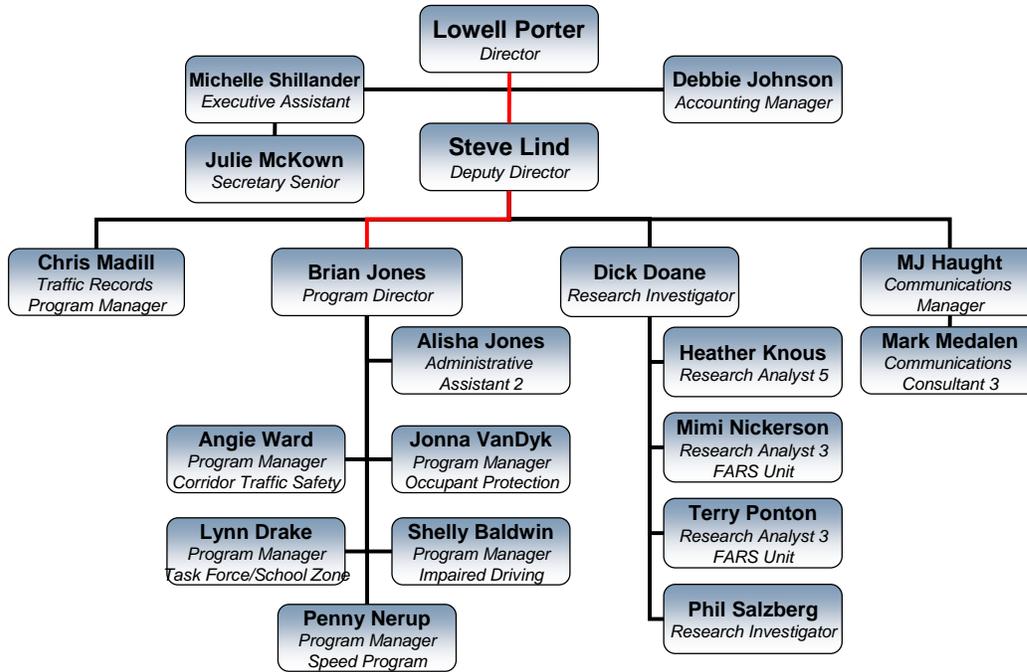
WTSC operations are primarily funded through federal highway safety grants. Federal funding allocations beyond September 30, 2009 are contingent on the next federal transportation reauthorization. The WTSC will continue to work with the Governor's Office, transportation agencies and the USDOT to secure appropriate levels of federal funding.



WASHINGTON
Traffic Safety
COMMISSION



Agency Organizational Chart



— Denotes line of authority