FY2012 RECOMMENDATION/FY12-D03 STANDARDIZED FATALITY DATA COLLECTION AND SHARING

Status: Implementation Complete

Actions/Updates

2013 UPDATE/INFORMATION
In 1972, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) with the cooperation of all States (through multiyear cooperative agreement) began developing and implementing the Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) Program. Therefore, a FARS national data collection system was developed to capture information on all auto-related fatal crashes for all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. To qualify as a "FARS" Case, a crash must involve a motor vehicle and result in the death of one or more persons within thirty days of the crash.

The information is collected primarily from police accident reports, by Colorado State Patrol, local jurisdictions, with the cooperation and/or involvement of state vehicle and driver license files, state transportation mapping tools, death certificates, hospital medical records and emergency medical services reports, Colorado coroners, and/or other departments of transportations.

Fatal information for all FARS cases are managed, analyzed, and disseminated to NHTSA's National Center for Statistics and Analysis (NCSA), all major stakeholders, internal and/or external users of data in various reporting form. The Colorado FARS, under federal mandate reports any "bona fide" auto-related fatalities to NHTSA's national database within twenty-four hours as well as periodic reports of all holiday and monthly fatalities.

The following websites should be referred to for more inforamtion on the data currently available:
http://www-fars.nhtsa.dot.gov/Main/index.aspx
http://www.coloradodot.info/library/traffic/traffic-manuals-guidelines/safety-crash-data

Description

Government entities should expand and improve efforts to collect and share data related to drugged driving and traffic fatalities with the purpose of producing a single annual report on the characteristics of all drivers (living and dead) involved in fatality crashes.

Agencies Responsible

Discussion

Strategies to decrease traffic fatalities and incidents are dependent on our understanding of these events. Current data collection efforts involve multiple parties and multiple reporting efforts, and face regulatory limits and HIPPA protections, resulting in a fragmented approach with problems of data quality and missing data. The Colorado Department of Transportation should be given the authority to convene relevant parties to facilitate the production of an annual motor vehicle incident and fatality report.