

Birmingham Regional Safety Coalition

Example Strategies & Countermeasures for Reducing Impaired Driving Related Crashes

Law Enforcement

- **Administrative License Revocation or Suspension (ALR or ALS)**- Administrative license revocation or suspension laws allow law enforcement and driver licensing authorities to revoke or suspend a driver's license if the driver fails or refuses to take a BAC test. Countermeasure may be beyond the scope of the regional Coalition.
- **Sobriety checkpoints**- At a sobriety checkpoint, law enforcement officers stop vehicles at some regular interval at a set location to check whether the driver is impaired. Checkpoints should be highly visible, publicized extensively, and conducted regularly to help convince the public that impaired drivers are likely to be arrested and punished (1). Sobriety checkpoints are a proven technique, but to work they have to be sustained over time (1, 2, and 3).
- **Saturation patrols for alcohol-impaired driving**- A saturation patrol is a dedicated DWI patrol made up of large number of law enforcement officers patrolling a specific area for a set time to identify and arrest impaired drivers. Saturation patrols deter driving after drinking by increasing the perceived risk of arrest. Saturation patrols should be publicized extensively and conducted regularly (1 & 2)
- **Preliminary Breath Test devices (PBTs)**- A preliminary breath test device is a small hand-held alcohol sensor used to estimate or measure a driver's BAC. Law enforcement officers use PBTs in the field to help establish evidence for a DWI arrest. The driver blows into a mouthpiece and the PBT displays either a numerical BAC level, such as .12, or a BAC range, such as a red light for BACs at or above .08. (1 & 2)
- **Passive alcohol sensors**- A passive alcohol sensor is a device to detect alcohol presence in the air. The sensor usually is integrated into a flashlight or clipboard. Officers hold the flashlight or clipboard near the driver's mouth, where it measures alcohol presence in the air where the driver is breathing. The PAS can be used without the driver's knowledge and without any probable cause because the PAS is considered "an extension of the officer's nose" and records information that is "in plain view" (Preusser, 2000). (1 & 2) Countermeasure may be beyond the scope of the regional Coalition.

Penalties and Adjudication

- **DWI courts**- A dedicated DWI court provides a systematic and coordinated approach to prosecuting, sentencing, monitoring, and treating DWI offenders. Prosecutors and judges in DWI courts specialize in DWI cases. Probation officers monitor offenders closely and report any probation infraction to the judge immediately for prompt action. (1)
- **Limits on diversion and plea agreements**- Diversion programs defer sentencing while a DWI offender participates in some form of alcohol education or treatment. Negotiated plea agreements are a necessary part of efficient and effective DWI prosecution and adjudication. However, plea agreements in some States allow

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offenders to eliminate any record of a DWI offense and to have their penalties reduced or eliminated. (1 & 2)

- **Court monitoring-** In court monitoring programs, citizens observe, track, and report on DWI court or administrative hearing activities. Court monitoring provides data on how many cases are dismissed or pled down to lesser offenses, how many result in convictions, what sanctions are imposed, and how these results compare across different judges and different courts. Court monitoring programs usually are operated and funded by citizen organizations such as MADD, although Mississippi has funded a statewide court monitor (Century Council, 2008). (1 & 2)
- **Out of scope adjudication countermeasures-** These countermeasures would be extremely difficult to successfully accomplish without state resources, cooperation, and participation and include; Alcohol interlocks, Vehicle and license plate sanctions, Lower BAC limit for repeat offenders.
- **Alcohol screening and brief interventions-** Alcohol screening is a quick assessment that estimates the level and severity of alcohol use and also identifies the appropriate level of treatment (SAMHSA, 2007). Brief interventions are short, one-time encounters with people who may be at risk of alcohol-related injuries or other health problems. (1)

Communication and Outreach

- **Mass media campaigns-** A mass media campaign consists of intensive communications and outreach activities regarding alcohol-impaired driving that use radio, television, print, and other mass media, both paid and/or earned. (2)
- **Prime for Life-** PRIME For Life (PFL) is a motivational intervention used in group settings to prevent alcohol and drug problems or provide early intervention. PFL emphasizes changing participants' perceptions of the risks of drug and alcohol use and related attitudes and beliefs. Risk perception is altered through the carefully timed presentation of both logical reasoning and emotional experience. Participants are guided in self-assessing their level of progression toward or into dependence or addiction. (4)
- **Community Trials Intervention to Reduce High-Risk Drinking-** Community Trials Intervention to Reduce High-Risk Drinking is a multicomponent, community-based program developed to alter the alcohol use patterns and related problems of people of all ages. The program incorporates a set of environmental interventions that assist communities in (1) restricting alcohol access through alcohol outlet density control; (2) enhancing responsible beverage service; (3) increasing law enforcement and sobriety checkpoints; (4) reducing youth access to alcohol; and (5) forming the coalitions needed to implement and support the interventions that address each of these prevention components. (4)

Sources

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1. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. *Countermeasures That Work: A Highway Safety Countermeasure Guide for State Highway Safety Offices, Eight Edition, 2015*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Transportation. 2015.
2. National Cooperative Highway Research Program. *NCHRP Report 622: Effectiveness of Behavioral Highway Safety Countermeasures*. NCHRP, Washington, D.C. 2008
3. National Cooperative Highway Research Program. *NCHRP Report 500: Guidance for Implementation of the AASHTO Strategic Highway Safety Plan. Volume 16: A Guide for Reducing Alcohol-Related Collisions*. NCHRP, Washington, D.C. 2005.
4. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration's National Registry of Evidence-Based Programs, <http://www.nrepp.samhsa.gov>, 2015.