

# Birmingham Regional Coalition

Cambridge Systematics hosted Webinar  
2:00 PM CST

## MEETING SUMMARY

### Attendees

Name	Organization/Agency
Alex Maistros	Cambridge Systematics
Clay Ingram	AAA
Danena Gaines	Cambridge Systematics
Despina Stavrinou	UAB Psychology
Folashade Ayanwale	ADPH
Jay Lindly	University of Alabama
Jim Meads	SAIN
Linda Guin	FHWA
Luana Ozelim	University of Alabama
Lynne Wilman	ADECA
Rachael Leonard	Safe Routes To School Coordinator
Sonya Baker	ALDOT, Office of Safety Operations
Stephanie Vereen	University of Alabama
Stephen Jones	University of Alabama
Willy Giron	University of Alabama

### Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions
- Regional Safety Plan
- Impaired driver emphasis area
  - » Data review
  - » Effective countermeasures

- » Speed planning
- Speeding emphasis area
  - » Data review
  - » Effective countermeasures
  - » Speed planning
- Next steps

## **Welcome & Introductions**

Danena Gaines, Ph.D. (Cambridge Systematics) welcomed meeting attendees and had participants to introduce themselves.

## **Regional Safety Plan**

Danena Gaines reviewed the Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) update process and provided a summary of the activities completed to date. A bottom up approach will be used to update Alabama's SHSP based on the regional safety plans developed as a part of the pilot project. In the first meeting, the group reviewed high-level crash data and discussed potential programs and countermeasures. In the second meeting, the group selected emphasis areas and discussed potential countermeasures specific to the selected emphasis areas. The purpose of this meeting is to identify potential action steps to be included in the Birmingham Regional Safety Action Plan.

## **Impaired Driver Emphasis Area- Data Review**

Danena Gaines gave a brief overview of the impaired driving related fatalities and serious injuries by county as depicted in Figure 1. The data review for this meeting is only intended to depict the differences between counties, and is not intended to be extensive. Additional data is available through the project team. It was noted that while the impaired driving fatalities and serious injuries in each county reflect the overall fatality and serious injury crash trends in each county, the number of serious injury crashes in Jefferson County are unusually high.

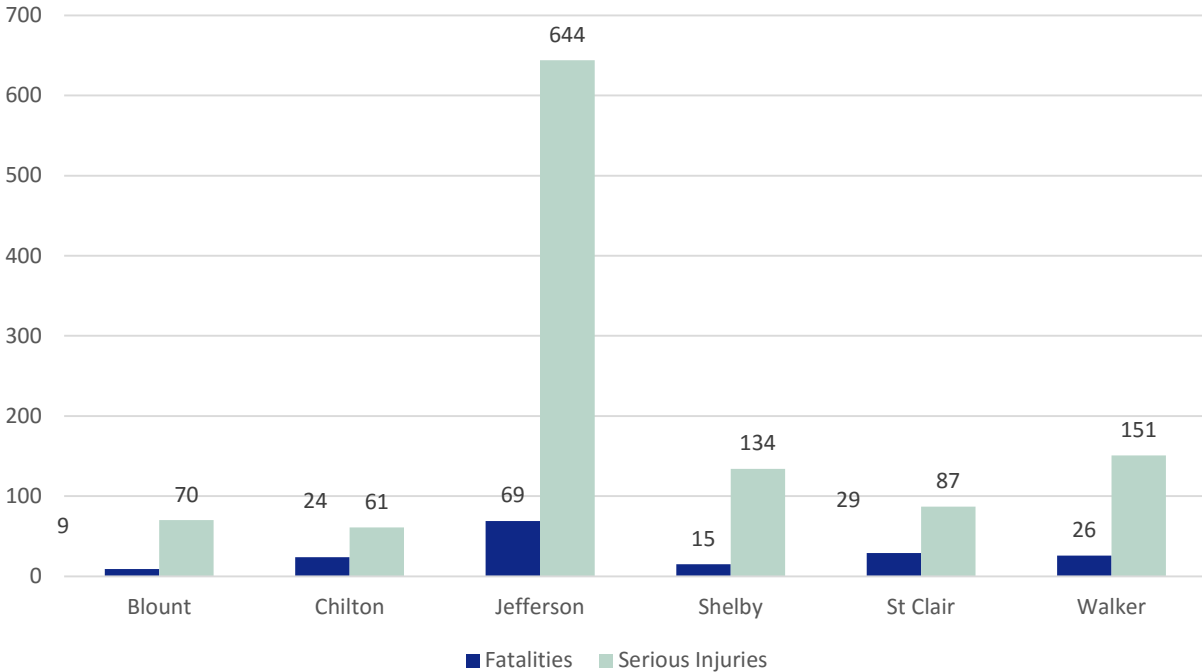


Figure 1- Impaired driving fatalities and serious injuries.

### Impaired Driving- Effective Countermeasures

Danena Gaines presented a list of effective countermeasures to reduce impaired driving crashes. These countermeasures included:

- Sobriety checkpoints
- Saturation patrols for alcohol-impaired driving
- Preliminary Breath Test (PBT) devices
- Passive alcohol sensors
- DWI courts
- Limits on diversion and plea agreement
- Court monitoring
- Alcohol screening and brief interventions
- Mass media campaigns
- Prime for Life

- Community trials intervention to reduce high-risk drinking

## **Impaired Driving Speed Planning**

Danena Gaines facilitated a speed planning session to develop countermeasures and action items for the Birmingham Regional Plan. When possible countermeasures should cover the Four E's; engineering, education, enforcement and emergency services. The following agencies/organizations offered potential countermeasures and exiting programs that may be expanded:

### Clay Ingram-AAA

- Sobriety Checkpoints may not be fun or easy to conduct for law enforcement, but having them in existence seems to be beneficial and effective. Particularly when they are advertised well ahead of time.
- AAA does not have any Alabama specific impaired driving campaigns, but they do conduct nationwide campaigns.
- AAA has a Dare to Prepare Program- class about dangers of driving and impaired driving.
- It would be a great idea to target college aged drivers. Social media is typically the best way to reach them.
- Perhaps we could get college students directly involved in spreading the message. We could get students to participate which would offer them experience, and we would get their input and help. Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) has chapters in a number of universities.
- 'Tow for life' is a program offered by AAA on New Year's and July 4. They offer free rides home. Driver and car are picked up and taken locally within 10 miles, slight surcharge for trips over 10 miles. Works both to remove drivers, and as an opportunity to promote the dangers of drinking and driving.
- Several taxis services offer free rides certain nights of the year (i.e. New Years Eve), could possibly be expanded.

### Lynne Wilman- ADECA

- Currently there are year round paid media campaigns and for impaired driving.
- Checkpoints run well but get public pushback, some areas in the state don't run checkpoints.
- Impaired driving funds are made available to jurisdictions where hot spots are present. Agencies within 5 miles of identified nodes, mile markers etc. can participate in funded impaired driving patrols. All programs are data driven.
- Not all agencies can run checkpoints due to lack of personnel or available time and/or funds.
- Anecdotally, sheriffs are reluctant to run traffic enforcement stops some time, due to nature of elected position.
- We could make an action item to reach out to agencies and see if they will begin to run checkpoints.

- Perhaps we could find regional checkpoint champion to promote conducting checkpoints.
- TSRP reaching out to Birmingham region increasing ARDIE, DRE training etc. Training is becoming more widely available in the state.
- Troy University works ID messages into their orientation; perhaps we can do that at UAB or other regional colleges?

Folashade Ayanwale- ADPH

- There are under age, under arrest programs (ABC initiative), and MADD, which all work together in the Your Keys to drive program.
- The program went to a couple of high schools and a college, will expand as they find more connections.
- At some point, connecting local restaurants/ bars with Uber in an effort to get a safe ride would be a good idea.

Linda Guin- FHWA

- Some universities have ride programs, may be another opportunity to expand, and to learn.
- There is a speaker, Mike Lutzenkirchen, whose son Phillip was a football player involved in a crash where all passenger were intoxicated. After Philip died, his father travels and talks about the danger of drinking and driving. Mike is a well received and well respected speaker who tends to generate good publicity and spreads the message of safe driving. Waymen Benefield has worked with him in the past. (<http://lutzie43.org/about-us>)

Danena Gaines- Cambridge Systematics

- One of the first action steps would be to find out what University programs exist and how they operate. University programs also may have data and recommendations on data collection.
- ADECA does impaired driving campaigns to go along with enforcement.

### **Speeding Emphasis Area- Data Review**

Danena Gaines gave a brief overview of the speed-related fatalities and serious injuries by county as depicted in Figure 2. The data review for this meeting is only intended to depict the differences between counties, and is not intended to be extensive. Additional data is available through the project team. It was noted that the young driver related fatalities and serious injuries in each county reflect the overall fatality and serious injury crash trends in each county.

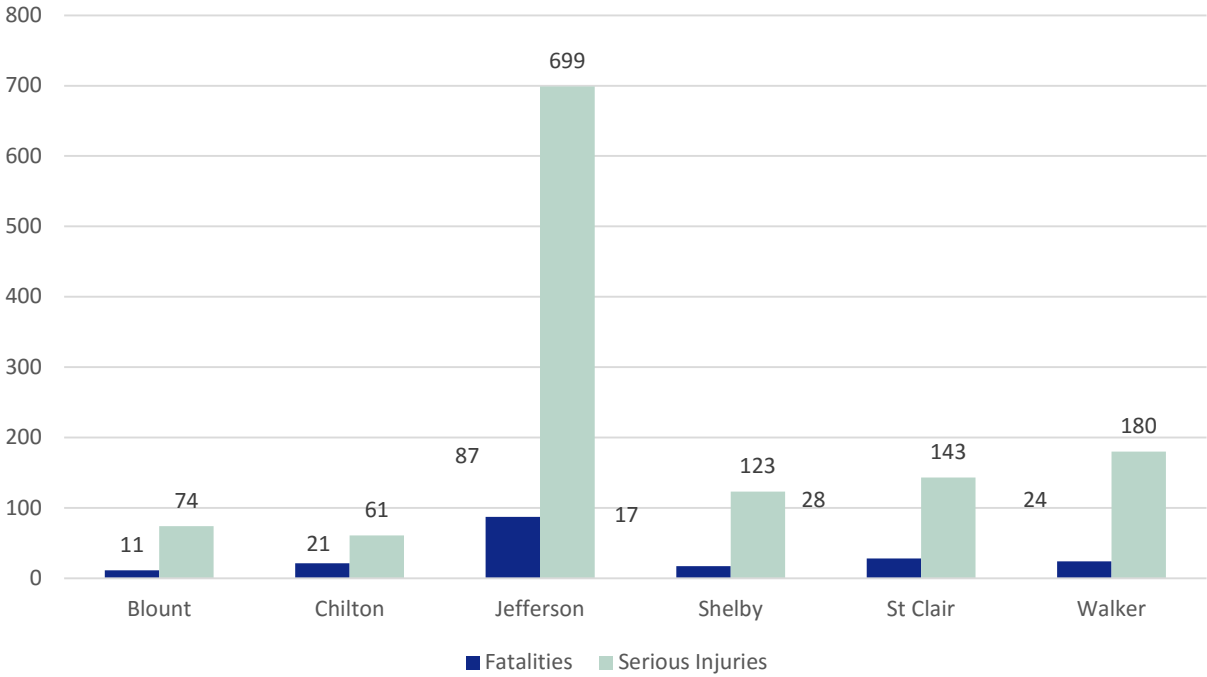


Figure 2- Speed-related fatalities and serious injuries by county.

### Speeding- Effective Countermeasures

Danena Gaines presented a list of effective countermeasures to reduce speed-related crashes. These countermeasures included:

- Lower local speed limit laws
- Automated enforcement
- Penalty types and levels
- Communications and outreach supporting enforcement
- Limitations on plea bargains

### Speeding- Speed Planning

Danena Gaines facilitated a speed planning session to develop countermeasures and action items for the Birmingham Regional Plan concerning speed-related crash concerns. When possible countermeasures should cover the Four E's: engineering, education, enforcement and emergency services. The following agencies/organizations offered potential countermeasures and exiting programs that may be expanded:

Clay Ingram- AAA

- It is the opinion of Clay and AAA, that enforcement is the biggest deterrent of speeding, though it's a lot to put on their back.
- The cost of a speeding ticket is different based on the issuing agency, it does vary somewhat, though an increase in the fine amount probably would not be effective or would get pushback.
- Most drivers out there don't know the costs of a speeding fine.

Lynne Wilman- ADECA

- Speed related crashes are captured in the crash data, and speeding citations are collected in Ecite. The information is available and can be pulled for a specific region.
- Law enforcement has access to the information, but may not have the labor to enforce speeding.
- There is a shortage of troopers.

Linda Guin- FHWA

- Based on recent meetings, officers seem to have a grasp on how to get the data and they seem to be using it.
- Need more enforcement in surrounding areas. Not enough troopers and sheriffs conducting traffic enforcement.
- Fifteen years ago AL needed 1000 troopers only had 350, now there are 300. There is information out there about the benefits of what additional troopers and law enforcement would mean as far as reductions in crashes and fatalities. That information could be leveraged for safety information.

Danena Gaines- Cambridge Systematics

- We should work communications into other emphasis areas and use those outlets to talk about speeding.

## **Next Steps**

- The project team will distribute a meeting summary and the presentation for the meeting.
- The project team will take the action steps recommended in this meeting and develop them into a formal action step plan that will be presented at the next meeting for inclusion into the regional plan.
- The next coalition meeting will be held in March 2016 (date TBD) to finalize action plans.