

Road Safety Audits Peer-to-Peer Program

SUCCESS STORY

The first Road Safety Audit (RSA) conducted through the FHWA Peer to Peer (P2P) Program was held in Albany, Georgia from November 30 – December 1, 2006. The RSA P2P Coordinator received an email message from Ms. Michele DeMott in August 2006 requesting assistance for the city's first Road Safety Audit. The study area was comprised of five major roadways, and five intersections and the decision to audit was based on four (4) factors.

1. Existing intersection operations and safety concerns
2. Redevelopment and expansion of a service station and truck stop
3. New commercial development
4. Road widening project proposed by Georgia DOT

After obtaining detailed information about the audit area and the basis for conducting the audit, the P2P Coordinator canvassed the RSA P2P database to find a Peer whose area of expertise best matched the requirements for the Albany RSA.

After identifying a Peer with pre-construction RSA experience, the Peer was contacted by the P2P Coordinator and asked to assist. The Peer was then put in direct contact with the agency requesting assistance. Through an exchange of information about the planned RSA, it was agreed that the Peer should travel to Albany to provide onsite assistance during the audit.

The P2P Coordinator made travel arrangements for the Peer and all eligible travel expenses were paid for by the RSA P2P Program. The City of Albany was at no time required to pay for either the services or travel of the assisting Peer.

The Peer participated in a pre-audit teleconference and email exchanges, as well as the audit itself. Multiple recommendations were developed from the RSA, some of which were implemented during the audit. Other recommendations were implemented within weeks of the audit creating safer intersections and roadways for the City of Albany. Some of the RSA's recommended improvements included:

- Refurbishing markings
- Extending a raised median island to preclude left turns
- Constructing formal left turn lanes
- Removing a yield control
- Improving pedestrian facilities

Ms. DeMott credits the "All Star" Road Safety Audit Team for the successful completion of her agency's first RSA. After the release of the Final Audit Report, Ms. DeMott reported that "having different perspectives - from safety engineers to FHWA to the state highway patrol - is key to auditing. I encourage agencies to utilize the Peer to Peer Program." In a post audit interview, Ms. DeMott expressed her appreciation for having a Peer consultant from outside the area on her team. "Having a consultant free of charge - that would have normally cost \$1,000s that's not in the budget - is priceless."