

**BE READY BE BUCKLED
FINAL REPORT
SUBMITTED BY DRIVE SMART VIRGINIA**

This report will provide the conclusions for our 2007 “Be Ready Be Buckled” public information and outreach campaign. As you know, our 2005 campaign on Interstate 95 yielded the positive result of increasing safety belt use among truckers from 58.5% to 70%. This increase far exceeded initial expectations and prompted a continued Virginia focus by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration.

As we began planning for the 2007 campaign, we knew that it would be imperative to continue to develop new partnerships in order to support the Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety Belt Partnership Pledge. This agreement charges both the FMCSA and private sector organizations to encourage commercial motor vehicles drivers to fasten their safety belts.

We also knew that people respond to a law enforcement presence. While our charge was to affect change through communication, we knew that it would be very important for much of that messaging to remind truckers of the law and of the legal ramifications of non-use. The Virginia State Police were a key support agency for our mission, and had a strong presence in our project areas.

We determined that the next mobilization would focus on Interstate 81, a roadway where an estimated 45% of traffic is tractor trailers. Interstate 81 enters Virginia from Tennessee and exits to Maryland. In order to leverage existing law enforcement and public information campaigns, we determined to conduct the campaign during the national Click It or Ticket timeframe. So, with our general location and timeframe in hand, we proceeded with overall campaign planning.

Charlie Stoke was once again engaged as our survey consultant. Charlie and the DRIVE SMART Executive Director got on the road to study potential project area sites. Because survey sites must have very specific qualities, such as a bridge over the road to be surveyed and have safe and easy access, the selection of survey sites drove the final determination of project area. We knew that we would select sites close to both the north and south ends of Interstate 81, and made the following determinations:

NORTH Mile marker 250 to 320

SOUTH Mile marker 1 to 50

Once our sites were located, we began coordinating our education and outreach initiative. Reaching our audience presented an unusual challenge. Our audience was typically “passing through,” as it may. Most often, they did not live in the project area. It became our opportunity to use innovative measures to communicate with them.

We built upon our success in the 2005 campaign by using the following tried and proven measures:

- **CB Wizard.** We purchased four additional wizards, for a total of five. Two were placed in each target area and one midway at the Troutville Weigh Station.
- **Mobile Billboards.** The billboards were once again engaged, one for each project area.
- **Radio advertising.** We worked with a media buyer to make sure that our spots both reached our audience and complimented the existing Click It or Ticket buy. The spot load for the north campaign was every 14 minutes for 21 days. The spot load for the south campaign was every 23 minutes for 21 days.

We also added the following communication tools:

- **Billboards.** We worked with Lamar Advertising to obtain four billboards. This was a challenge as there were few spaces available on Interstate 81.
- **Variable Messaging Signs.** We worked with the Virginia Department of Transportation to obtain messaging on all of their message boards on Interstate 81 during the project timeframe.
- **Travel Advisory Radio.** We worked with the Virginia Department of Transportation to place a message on the travel advisory radio in the project areas during the project timeframe.
- **Signage.** We worked with both the Department of Motor Vehicles and the Department of Transportation to place large banners at rest areas and weigh stations.
- **Outreach.** We partnered with local truck stops to set-up outreach stations, where we distributed literature, tee-shirts

and other branded items and had truckers sign a pledge to buckle up and drive safe on Interstate 81.

Several surveys that were conducted prior to the onset of the campaign gave us insight on how truckers obtain information while on the road as well as how we could best deliver our message.

Confident that we had secured the maximum delivery opportunities for our messaging, we moved forward to let our survey results tell the story.

Pre-Campaign Survey

- Six locations per project area
- Vehicle type defined by vans, tankers, others
- Data collected both north and southbound
- Data collected on weekdays and weekends

Project	Date	# of CMV	Safety Belt Usage Rate
NORTH	May 2, 2007	1,586	49.05%
SOUTH	April 29, 2007	672	57.14%

What we learned from this initial survey is that there was much less truck traffic on Sunday during our survey timeframe (8:00 am to 6:00 pm).

We combined these results to obtain our baseline pre-campaign belt use rate of 51.46%.

Outreach Blitz Begins

On May 14, in conjunction with the Click it or Ticket mobilization, all of our public information and outreach activities began. As mentioned above, we had a radio presence every 14 minutes in the north market and every 23 minutes in the south market for 21 days. We had five outreach stations at truck stops that were manned by two employees throughout the Day.

Mid-Campaign Survey

- Six locations per project area
- Vehicle type defined by vans, tankers, others
- Data collected both north and southbound
- Data collected on weekdays and weekends

Project	Date	# of CMV	Safety Belt Usage Rate
NORTH	May 23, 2007	1,657	60.53%
SOUTH	May 20, 2007	707	55.30%

What we learned from this mid-campaign survey is that the reaction to the campaign was significantly different in the two campaign locations. While the North campaign responded with the expected increase in usage, the South campaign recorded a drop in usage. In order to glean some understanding of this variance, we then took two actions:

- A review of all campaign activities. This resulted in the determination that there was far more CB chatter on the South project and that our CB Wizard messaging was not being played on as consistent a basis. The wizard is set-up to transmit messaging in 30 or 60 second variables, based upon open airspace. We increased the frequency of the messaging to 30 seconds in order to have more opportunity for open airspace.
- We conducted a South survey during the week. This would give us some informal idea of whether truckers traveling on Sunday were responding to the messaging to a lesser degree. Our May 30 survey, conducted just 10 days following the initial Sunday survey included 1,034 drivers and resulted in a usage rate of 69.73%.

While both of these actions indicated that our difference in results may be due to unexpected circumstances, such as busier airwaves or the kind or focus of truckers that travel on Sunday, neither theory can be absolutely substantiated and the official mid-campaign use rate was recorded at 58.97%, an increase of 7.51 percentage points or 14.59%.

This increase was indicative of the projects overall success in delivering its message. To this date in the campaign, the comparison to the I-95 2005 project follows:

Year	Pre-Campaign	Mid-Campaign
2005	58.5%	68.1%
2007	51.46%	58.97%

Further speculation could be made to the kind of truckers frequenting I-95 versus I-81, or to the overall fear or lack of fear for consequences for non-use. One might further speculate on the quality of trucker on the road from 2005 to 2007, with knowledge of a growing driver shortage.

Outreach Continues

Outreach activities continued until June 3. The mobile billboard drivers reported a very positive response to their presence on the roadway. Our outreach workers collected more than 7,000 signatures from truckers

pledging to buckle up and drive safe on Interstate 81. Click It or Ticket also seemed to have gained new momentum, and the law enforcement presence was quite evident.

Post-Campaign Survey

- Six locations per project area
- Vehicle type defined by vans, tankers, others
- Data collected both north and southbound
- Data collected on weekdays and weekends

Project	Date	# of CMV	Safety Belt Usage Rate
NORTH	June 6, 2007	1,623	62.91%
SOUTH	June 10, 2007	626	62.46%

The post-campaign survey serves to establish the projects outcome. With an established use rate of 62.78%, this represents an increase over baseline of 11.32 percentage points, or 22%. Relative to the 2005 campaign, here are the results:

Year	Pre-Campaign	Mid-Campaign	Post-Campaign	% Increase
2005	58.5%	68.1%	70%	19.7%
2007	51.46%	58.97%	62.78%	22%

With two (in essence, three) solid project results in hand, we can determine that education and outreach activities do result in change, and it is recommended that the next project for Virginia include sustained messaging activities.

Additional Observations

We analyzed the data for two additional conclusions:

- Is the type of vehicle an indicator of use rate?
- Is there a difference in use based upon point of entry to Virginia?

Vehicle Type

Trucks classified as vans accounted for over 81% of all trucks surveyed in each of the three observation periods. Tankers represented under 5%. All other vehicles were captured in the Other category.

Type	Baseline Rate	Mid-Campaign Rate	Post-Campaign Rate	Representation
Vans	53.22	60.10	64.69	81.1-83.2%
Tankers	41.18	60.19	63.21	3.8-4.7%
Others	43.20	51.16	51.72	12.7-14.2%

When reviewing the data by truck type, drivers of tankers had the lowest use rate during the baseline, but had the greatest overall increase in the rate of safety belt use over the duration of the project, and a post-campaign rate within 1.5 points of the rate for drivers with vans. The low use rate for tankers in the baseline survey and the similarity in the rates for tankers and vans in post-campaign survey was not anticipated. It had been our understanding, when the project was initiated, that companies assigned their most experienced drivers to tankers, and that both the companies and the drivers had an increased safety consciousness which, therefore, should have resulted in higher belt use rates.

Point of Entry

In order to examine the behavior of drivers entering Virginia we isolated those survey sites that captured behavior shortly after entering our Commonwealth (the southbound sites for the North project, the northbound sites for the South project). In doing so, we found the following results:

State	Baseline	Mid-Campaign	Post-Campaign
Maryland	50.50%	62.07%	63.19%
Tennessee	58.28%	55.03%	63.90%

In the baseline survey, trucks entering Virginia from Tennessee had almost a 15% higher safety belt use rate than trucks entering from Maryland. By the mid-campaign survey, trucks entering from the south had a drop in the use rate while the rate in the north end increased by 23%. As discussed earlier, there were concerns about the lower numbers across the board for the South project. Once changes were made, including increasing the messaging on the CB Wizard, the rates went up, as is reflected with these numbers as well. The results above would suggest that while trucks entering from Tennessee had a higher initial use rate, they were less affected by the project, perhaps suggesting that there is less of a safety presence on the roadways of Tennessee. The project impact on the north end is evident, with a dramatic increase of 25% in the behavior of trucks entering from Maryland. Keep in mind that the South surveys were taken on Sunday, which may very well be a variable to take into consideration.

Incidentally, both Tennessee and Maryland are primary enforcement states, with usage rates of 78.6% and 91%, respectively. While Maryland's safety

belt law has been in place since 1997, Tennessee passed a primary enforcement law in 2004.

Conclusion

The overall conclusion to this project is that we met our goals and once again showed that targeted education and outreach is an effective way to change behavior. Several key components helped us meet our goals:

- Building key partnerships with local truck stops, safety advocates, the Department of Motor Vehicles, Virginia State Police and the Virginia Department of Transportation
- Working within the trucking industry through the attendance at trucking conferences and outreach at truck stops
- Leveraging messaging impact by holding the campaign in conjunction with the annual Click It or Ticket mobilization
- Listening to our audience. We gained valuable insight on what messages would work, and the values that would hit home.

We would strongly recommend sustained messaging in conjunction with the annual Click It or Ticket campaign. While it is very difficult to measure permanent behavioral change, we know, on the short term, that we are effective.