

Improved State Traffic Records Systems

Goal of New TRB Study

The primary objective of a year-long study being conducted for the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) by the Transportation Research Board is the development of guidelines and strategies to improve state traffic records systems.

The Highway Safety Act of 1966, which provided for federal support for state highway safety programs, required that each state's program include safety record keeping. Although many states have invested substantially in the development and improvement of statewide traffic records systems, the information currently available to support traffic safety programs is far from adequate.

In 1984 Congress initiated a program of grants to the states for the establishment or improvement of safety record-keeping systems. The following year, TRB's Committee on Traffic Records and Accident Analysis conducted a workshop to develop or improve such systems.

At the present time, some states maintain a variety of special-purpose traffic data files, which are administered by various state agencies. TRB's current study will include an examination of methods to link these special-purpose files in an integrated system, bringing together traffic accident, driver, motor vehicle, and road inventory data for purposes of problem identification and program evaluation.

An early phase of the study will be the identification of the essential elements of an integrated state traffic rec-

ords system. Using integrated state data files, an analysis of selected traffic safety issues will be conducted in order to demonstrate how such data can be used to analyze such particular problem areas as occupant restraint use, alcohol impairment, contributing factors to crashes, and driver performance. The analysis will identify what questions the data can and cannot be used to answer and the reasons why, as well as determine both the strengths and shortcomings of existing data bases.

The TRB Committee for the Study of Methods To Improve the Application of State Traffic Record Systems is chaired by Clarence W. Mosher, Deputy Director, Office of Research Management, New York State Department of Motor Vehicles. Mosher is a member of the TRB committees on Traffic Records and Accident Analysis, and on Planning and Administration of Transportation Safety. He is also a former member of Group 3 Council.

Members of the Study Committee are Thomas R. Boswell, California Highway Patrol; Barbara Hilger DeLucia, Texas Transportation Institute; Thomas Hicks, Maryland State Highway Administration; James O'Day, Consultant; Joyce L. R. Emery, Iowa Department of Transportation; Ernest S. Grush, Ford Motor Company; Larry G. Karsten, Colorado Division of Highway Safety; Richard D. Paddock, Ohio Department of Highway Safety; Allan F. Williams, Insurance Institute for Highway Safety;

and John J. Zogby, Pennsylvania Department of Transportation.

Benjamin V. Chatfield, Chatfield Associates, Inc., has been appointed to serve as technical consultant for the study, and James K. Williams is the responsible TRB staff officer. Frank Ephraim serves as NHTSA's Contracting Officer's Technical Representative. Liaison representatives to the study committee include Joseph L. Delahanty, Charles J. Venturi, and Robert W. Sherrer, NHTSA; Phyllis E. Young, FHWA; Philip Rhodes, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; and Alan E. Pisarski, TRB Committee on Transportation Data and Information Systems.



The TRB Committee for the Study of Methods to Improve the Application of State Traffic Records Systems conducts one of its meetings at the National Academy of Sciences in Washington, D.C. *Seated (left to right):* Alan E. Pisarski, Philip Rhodes, Ernest S. Grush, Clarence W. Mosher, James O'Day, Barbara Hilger DeLucia, and Benjamin V. Chatfield. *Standing (left to right):* Frank Ephraim, James K. Williams, Robert W. Sherrer, Thomas Hicks, Joyce L. R. Emery, Richard D. Paddock, John J. Zogby, Joseph L. Delahanty, Allan F. Williams, Larry G. Karsten, and Thomas R. Boswell.



Clarence W. Mosher (*third from left*), chairman of TRB's Study Committee, reviews meeting agenda with (*left to right*) Allan F. Williams, Insurance Institute for Highway Safety; Phyllis E. Young, FHWA liaison representative; Barbara Hilger DeLucia, Texas Transportation Institute; Thomas R. Boswell, California Highway Patrol; and Joyce L. R. Emery, Iowa Department of Transportation.