



# **STATE OF MICHIGAN**

## **TRAFFIC RECORDS ASSESSMENT**

**OCTOBER 11 – 15, 2004**

National Highway Traffic  
Safety Administration  
Technical Assessment Team

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In mid-2004 the Office of Highway Safety Planning (OHSP) of the Michigan State Police (MSP) requested that NHTSA facilitate a traffic records assessment. NHTSA proceeded to assemble a team of traffic records professionals representing the various disciplines involved in a state traffic records system. Concurrently the OHSP carried out the necessary logistical and administrative steps in preparation for the onsite assessment.

A team of professionals with backgrounds and expertise in the several component areas of traffic records data systems (crash, driver/vehicle, roadway, enforcement and adjudication, and EMS and Trauma data systems) conducted the assessment October 11 to 15, 2004.

The scope of this traffic records assessment included all of the data systems comprising a traffic records system. The purpose of this assessment is to determine whether Michigan's traffic records system is capable of supporting management's needs to identify the state's safety problems, to manage the countermeasures applied to reduce or eliminate those problems and to evaluate those programs for their effectiveness. The following discusses the attributes of various traffic records system components and the support needed for Michigan's management of its highway safety programs.

The official crash file is managed by the Criminal Justice Information Center (CJIC) of the MSP. The file contains records of all traffic crashes involving a fatality, an injury or property damage of at least \$1,000. Although several presenters, especially those representing local jurisdictions, commented about the difficulty and delay in getting crash data from the state system, there was general acknowledgement that much progress has been made. One of the major improvements is the establishment of an Internet access tool that provides retrieval and analysis capabilities for local law enforcement agencies. This capability may soon be extended to non-law enforcement users.

The most significant initiatives being pursued are (1) the Crash Process Redesign (CPR) project which permits acceptance of electronically transmitted crash data by CJIC and (2) the Law Enforcement Agency Management System (LEAMS) which includes field data collection and management of crash data. The LEAMS crash module will soon be tested in 10 sites, including 5 MSP districts and 5 local agencies. The agencies that currently are prospects for sending crash reports electronically (MSP and several large sheriffs' departments and city police agencies) comprise as much as 60% of all crash reports in the state. The state expects the crash module of LEAMS to be operational in the fall of 2005. This will provide more timely, more accurate and more complete crash data for the highway safety stakeholders throughout Michigan and the Office of Highway Safety Planning in particular.

It must be noted that Michigan is one of the few states that provides uniform location data on all of its crash records. Most states are able to identify crash locations accurately for those crashes occurring on state roadways but location coding for local roads is very unreliable and generally not useful to local jurisdictions. All crash records are processed through a software package that converts the location description entered by the investigating officer to a standard location code.

Currently there are no statewide data on traffic citations and their subsequent dispositions to analyze the effectiveness of the state's enforcement of its traffic laws and to ensure the integrity of citation processing from issuance to the capture of conviction information in the driver file. Consequently there is no citation tracking system as called for in the Advisory. Although the State Court Administrative Office (SCAO) has provided a case management system (Justice Information System or JIS) to many of the courts, there are a large number who are operating different independently procured systems. The SCAO is planning to establish a statewide judicial data warehouse to serve as a central database of all citations. SCAO staff recognize that the effort to create the data warehouse will be complicated by the existence of the numerous and diverse systems.

The policies and operations of the driver file are impressive. For example, all crash involvements are recorded regardless of fault. Also, unlike many states, traffic convictions posted to the driver history record contain not only the conviction but also the original charge. It is also noteworthy that 98% of all conviction abstracts from the courts are received electronically. Further, Michigan is one of the few states to incorporate driver histories from previous states of record.

There is no statewide Injury Surveillance System. Neither statewide EMS nor trauma data are being captured. These missing components of a comprehensive traffic records system prevented the state from qualifying to become a CODES state.

Although the state has a functioning Traffic Records Coordinating Committee, it does not presently provide the type of oversight, support and guidance necessary to move the state towards a fully integrated, statewide traffic records system. It further lacks representation from two major partners: the EMS and trauma community and the state's judiciary.

The major recommendations to address the deficiencies noted here and to improve Michigan's traffic records system are as follows:

## **MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Roadway Data**

Update road features data periodically, especially those necessary for traffic engineering and safety analysis.

Reconfigure the Sufficiency file to create a new road segment at major feature changes.

Collect road features data that are currently not inventoried.

### **Crash Data**

Analyze the effect of the increased Property-Damage-Only reporting threshold to \$1000. Develop analytic methods for producing valid comparisons of 2004 crash frequency and severity with that for prior years.

Broaden access to the Traffic Crash Records System web application, sanitized as needed, especially to authorized users in engineering agencies at the state and local level.

Promote development of a complete Traffic Records Data Warehouse where crash and other data sources can be made easily accessible to users.

### **Citation Data**

Pursue in coordination with the Traffic Records Coordinating Committee (TRCC) the rapid development and implementation of a judicial data warehouse to include linkages to other components of the traffic records system.

Design and implement a centralized statewide citation tracking system containing information about a citation from “cradle to grave.” Each record in the system should contain information about all actions pertaining to that citation.

### **Driver Data**

Coordinate plans for upgrading the driver and vehicle files with those of the integrated traffic records system and particularly with the Law Enforcement Agency Management System development.

Accelerate the development of the single client data system.

Work with the State Court Administrative Office to upgrade their court management systems and their inputs to the driver file.

Accelerate plans to participate in the National Motor Vehicle Title Information System as soon as practical.

## **EMS & Trauma Data**

Create and implement a strategic plan for the development of a comprehensive statewide Emergency Medical Service (EMS) and Trauma system.

Establish and implement:

- A functional state EMS system.
- A uniform EMS run report.
- A central repository for EMS run data.
- A functional state trauma system.
- A central repository for trauma data.

Adopt and implement the recommendations of the 2002 Report of the Michigan Statewide Trauma Care Commission.

Seek funding and support through the TRCC to assist in the development of the EMS and trauma systems.

Develop and implement

- A strategic plan to develop and implement the EMS, Trauma and emergency department data systems.
- A statewide EMS and trauma data collection and analysis system.
- A state Emergency Department data collection and analysis system.

Reestablish the position of training officer at Criminal Justice Information Center to act as a law enforcement liaison specifically dedicated to improving crash data timeliness, completeness, accuracy and consistency.

## **TRCC**

Expand the membership of the TRCC's Executive level to include Public Health and the Courts. Insure that these agencies are fully contributing partners.

## **Strategic Planning**

Task the TRCC with oversight of the development of a Traffic Records Strategic Plan. This Strategic Plan should:

- Specify the requirements for and from each component of the traffic records system.
- Identify the goals for improvements for each of the traffic records system components.
- Set priorities for each goal with a timeline for implementation.
- Secure commitment to the goal implementation and the timeline.
- Develop a monitoring process to track progress for each goal and a mechanism to modify, or replace goals as required.

**For more information, or a complete copy of this report, please contact Steve Schreier at (517) 333-5306.**