

FW 2.18:
Or 3/949
prelim.



PRELIMINARY REVISED
REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON
**ORGANIZED
PUBLIC SUPPORT**

The President's HIGHWAY
SAFETY CONFERENCE

Held in ~~LOUISVILLE FREE~~
WASHINGTON, D. C.
JUNE 1, 2, and 3, 1949 JUN 6 1949

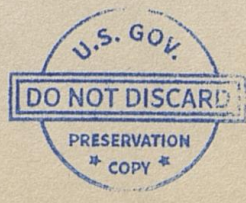
DEPOSITORY

~~PUBLIC LIBRARY~~

UK LIBRARIES

OTHER CONFERENCE COMMITTEE REPORTS
ACCIDENT RECORDS • EDUCATION • ENFORCEMENT
PUBLIC INFORMATION • • • LAWS AND ORDINANCES
ENGINEERING • • MOTOR VEHICLE ADMINISTRATION
and the ACTION PROGRAM

Presented by the COMMITTEE ON CONFERENCE REPORTS



Conference Organization

General Chairman:

MAJ. GEN. PHILIP B. FLEMING
Administrator, Federal Works Agency
Washington, D. C.

Vice Chairmen:

WILLIAM PRESTON LANE, JR.
Governor of Maryland
Chairman, The Governors' Conference

GEORGE W. WELSH
Mayor, Grand Rapids, Mich.
President, United States Conference of Mayors

Executive Director:

RUDOLPH F. KING
Massachusetts Registrar of Motor Vehicles
Boston, Mass.

COORDINATING COMMITTEE

Chairman:

THOMAS H. MACDONALD

Commissioner, Public Roads Administration
Washington, D. C.

MAJ. GEN. EDWARD H. BROOKS, Director, Personnel and Administration,
General Staff, U. S. Army.

C. W. BROWN, President, American Association of State Highway Officials.

J. A. A. BURNQUIST, President, National Association of Attorneys General.

JUSTUS F. CRAEMER, President, National Association of Railroad and Utilities
Commissioners.

M. C. CONNORS, President, American Association of Motor Vehicle Admin-
istrators.

NED H. DEARBORN, President, National Safety Council.

CLYDE A. ERWIN, President, National Council of Chief State School Officers.

WALLACE J. FALVEY, Chairman, Advisory Group, Accident Prevention Depart-
ment, Association of Casualty and Surety Companies.

COL. HOMER GARRISON, JR., President, International Association of Chiefs of
Police.

JOSEPH F. HAMMOND, President, National Association of County Officials.

DR. R. H. HUTCHESON, President, Association of State and Territorial Health
Officers.

HAROLD P. JACKSON, Chairman, National Committee for Traffic Safety.

PYKE JOHNSON, President, Automotive Safety Foundation.

DELESSEPS S. MORRISON, President, American Municipal Association (Mayor
of New Orleans).

CHARLES A. PETERS, Chairman, Federal Interdepartmental Safety Council.

ROBERT J. SCHMUNK, President, American Automobile Association.

EARL O. SHREVE, President, Chamber of Commerce of the United States.

COMMITTEE ON CONFERENCE REPORTS

Consists of members of Coordinating Committee, Chairmen of Conference
Committees, Regional Officers, and Representatives of each State.

CONTENTS

	Page
Discussion.....	1
The current situation.....	1
Responsibility.....	1
New inspirations—new assignments.....	3
Recommendations.....	3

Report of Committee on **Organized Public Support**

DISCUSSION

The Current Situation

The need for traffic-accident reduction continues unabated. An annual toll of 32,000 deaths, 1,100,000 injuries, and \$2,650,000,000 in accident costs is still a fantastic and unnecessary price to pay for modern highway transportation.

In 1946 experts and laymen met at the call of the President of the United States to formulate an action program for highway safety. That program produced a unified effort to achieve safe streets and highways which is greater than any other in our history. The results are not fanciful guesswork—despite an increasing volume of highway traffic, we have experienced the most pronounced drop in the traffic-fatality rate since records have been maintained. The rate for 1948 is the lowest ever recorded.

Today the enthusiasm born of the 1946 conference has begun to wane. In many States and communities the traffic-safety program is still notoriously weak. Do-nothing safety programs cannot sustain the interest and backing of the public. Result? The number of traffic deaths is climbing again!

There can be no doubt as to our course in the months ahead. We must profit from the experience of the past 3 years. The weak spots need to be strengthened. Now is the time to make the most of solid gains, without regret for the short-lived enthusiasms that had no positive results, and to advance more vigorously than ever before.

Responsibility

Organized public support has very specific responsibilities if it is to provide the active backing essential to every highway-safety program. Aggressive promotion of the recommendations of the 1949 President's Highway Safety Conference is the first assignment. The technical proposals contained in the action program are not vague expressions of hope. They are tested methods of attaining safe streets and highways. Public support must translate them into dramatic realization in every State and community.

In enlisting the cooperation of the public, organizations are generating a body of public opinion which goes beyond mere acceptance of the need for highway safety. Public opinion must demand that every official step be taken to assure adequate traffic control. Of even greater importance is the demand that pedestrian, driver, and all other highway users comply with the spirit as well as the letter of traffic laws. If all plans, programs, and promotions failed, the individual could still assure safe highways. His is the basic responsibility for his own safety and that of others.

Until 1946 we had achieved relatively little coordination in traffic-safety activity at national or State levels. This condition has been improved—national coordination is a growing reality. In half the States, however, we have yet to reach that full and complete interchange of ideas, plans, and programs among officials and between officials and public which is the basic step toward safe highways. As compared with the need for coordination in the community, these problems are relatively small. In the community—the “grass roots” where traffic safety succeeds or fails—is the core of responsibility for organized public support.

Those individuals who have been the “shock troops” of traffic safety for many years are firm in the opinion that the best community results can be obtained if the State program is strong. Yet it must be admitted that many State rules do not fit the needs in local situations. The traffic-safety problems of the rural areas are not those of the city. Unfortunately, many municipalities are quick to grasp the technical requirements of highway safety, and entirely overlook the absolute necessity for public understanding and public support.

If we could cure the safety ills of traffic by the concerted action of professional and official leaders our task would be easy. As long as the economic and social impact of our highway transportation system touches every citizen of the United States, then just so long must every citizen or organized group of citizens have a share in the responsibility for safety in that transportation system. Many organizations and many individuals are doing many things for highway safety, but these are not enough.

A second duty for organized public support is to interest new leadership in traffic-safety promotion. That such leadership be competent is essential to progress. We know from experience that no program for the public welfare can succeed without those human “spark plugs” who give it life and vitality. Leadership must have specific tools with which to work. As individuals we expect suitable equipment with which to perform our daily work. Officials and support organizations can offer nothing less than adequacy if we hope to win the power of public opinion.

New Inspirations—New Assignments

Organized public support is selling traffic safety as a commodity to the American people. As in any sound promotional campaign, our sales force needs the best, most attractively wrapped package. Industry and business compete for the dollars of the potential purchaser. We compete for his time! Every public service makes a demand on that same time. Unless our product is sufficiently compelling it will not receive the direct attention and the direct action which it requires and deserves. The concept of traffic safety is neither dogmatic nor dictatorial—it is a better way of life. He who observes the rules of safe walking and safe driving displays to his fellow men the admirable traits of moral courage, good judgment, and personal determination.

This fact we must face squarely: The salesmen must be “sold” first. The individual members of a public-support organization have an obligation to proclaim, promote, and live by the traffic-safety program of that organization. Failing this, their potency as salesmen is lost.

We must also acknowledge that there are more than 3,500 communities of over 2,500 population in the United States, and that only a small percentage are organized for safety. The big assignment for organized public support therefore, is to organize the unorganized. We do not propose this move for the sake of creating more organizations or more confusion. We believe that no community has a right to say it has done all within its power to promote highway safety until it has an organization geared for a bold, frontal attack. This is the path of efficiency and effectiveness.

Organized public support will accept these assignments willingly, working for the day when State, county, city, and small community go forward together in a broad traffic-safety activity—each autonomous, but with the program of each a coordinated, cooperative venture.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee on Organized Public Support recommends:

I. That the three committees of independent and equal status which were formed or expanded at the recommendation of the President's Highway Safety Conference of 1946 should continue to coordinate the traffic-safety program on a Nation-wide basis.

A. The Federal Committee on Highway Safety to—

1. Coordinate the highway-safety activities of all Federal departments and agencies.

2. Encourage cooperation in highway-safety activities of the Federal Government with the agencies of the several State and local governments through the State and Local Officials' National Highway Safety Committee.

3. Encourage cooperation in the highway-safety activities of the Federal Government with national nonofficial organizations through the National Committee for Traffic Safety.

B. The State and Local Officials' National Highway Safety Committee to—

1. Appraise existing conditions within the States, utilizing the technical recommendations of the President's Highway Safety Conference as a measuring stick to determine exactly what is needed to develop effective, official highway-safety programs.

2. Fully coordinate their highway-safety activities and jurisdictions.

3. Acquaint the public with the results of their analysis and comparison, and the outcome of their coordination, to the end that organizations and individual citizens shall know exactly what items constitute the official highway-safety programs.

4. Work closely with the Federal Committee on Highway Safety in a supporting, advisory, and consulting capacity.

C. The National Committee for Traffic Safety to—

1. Represent national civic, service, business, fraternal, professional, labor, farm, and similar men's, women's, and youth organizations interested in traffic safety.

2. Serve as a clearing house and coordinating agency for all such national organizations.

3. Advise, stimulate, and otherwise assist in the development of the traffic-safety programs of its participating organizations, rather than to function as an operating organization conducting a separate activity program. This assistance should not imply direction of the traffic-safety program of individual organizations.

4. Work closely with both the Federal Committee on Highway Safety and the State and Local Officials' National Highway Safety Committee in a supporting, advisory, and consulting capacity.

5. Stimulate State and local affiliates of organizations represented in the committee to provide leadership for the creation and operation of State-wide and community-wide public-support groups.

II. That the Chief Executive or administrative officer of each State, county, and municipality should establish a Coordinating Committee of Officials for the direction of the official highway-safety program. This committee should include the heads of all departments charged with or related to highway safety. Such a Coordinating Committee should:

a. Appraise existing conditions within a State, county, or municipality, utilizing the technical recommendations of the President's Highway Safety Conference and other pertinent information and

facts as a measuring stick to determine exactly what is needed to develop an effective official highway-safety program.

b. Fully coordinate their highway-safety activities and jurisdictions.

c. Acquaint the public with the results of their analysis and comparison, and the outcome of their coordination, to the end that organizations and individual citizens shall know exactly what items constitute the official highway-safety program. Public officials who want public acceptance and understanding have no more important responsibility than to state, clearly and concisely, the points at which additional public-support emphasis is needed in the traffic-safety program.

III. That the Chief Executive or administrative officer of each State, county, and municipality should establish a Highway Safety Conference as a continuing pattern of organization, to meet annually. Such a conference should be the means of presenting to the public the findings and actions of the Coordinating Committee of Officials. The personnel of this conference should include government officials and also the public as represented by organizations and individuals. Each Highway Safety Conference should, among other things, discuss and take action on the following items:

a. Adaptation of the technical action program approved by the President's Highway Safety Conference to the needs of the particular State, county, or municipality, but with the clear understanding that adaptation does not mean lowering any minimum standard set by the program.

b. A working relationship to be established between the Coordinating Committee of Officials and the supporting safety organization as defined in section 4 of these recommendations.

c. Periodic review of the official highway-safety program by the Coordinating Committee and the supporting safety organization to determine where the program stands and what still needs to be done. Progress can best be accomplished by holding one or more small action-project meetings where officials, public-support and public-information organizations can develop concrete, practical, cooperative programs.

d. A method of financing the support organization, whether by private funds, public funds, or both.

IV. The Chief Executive of each State, county, and municipality should actively support the establishment of a public-support, traffic-safety organization where none exists. In some cases leadership for the creation of the organization might well originate with the Chief Executive. In other cases the impetus may come from private-support organizations or even from individuals, for the public-support program cannot and must not wait for stimulation by officials. A public-

support, traffic-safety organization must be entirely free from partisan politics, and should offer full and complete opportunity for public expression and participation through a membership of representatives of all State-wide, county-wide, and local organizations and industries able and willing to contribute to the solution of the traffic-safety problem. Other members should include representatives of local safety committees, and outstanding individuals selected because of their particular interest. In order that it may be an effective instrument of support for the official highway-safety program, this organization should operate:

a. As a supporting, advisory, and consulting group for the official highway-safety program.

b. With a full-time paid Executive Director, and such employed staff as is consistent with the size of the organization and its program.

V. Mechanics of full cooperation and coordination of activities must be established between the official highway-safety program and the program of public support. The public official cannot exercise his responsibilities satisfactorily without public backing. Coordination of administrative planning at the official level is necessary in order that available tax moneys be used in activities most productive of results, and be efficiently expended. Coordination is also necessary in order that requests for additional funds may be supported by facts covering the entire highway-transportation picture. A successful highway-safety program can be achieved only as a part of the whole picture.

While these recommendations call for separate committees of officials and public-support groups, experience has shown that a high degree of official coordination has also been reached by other procedures. In some cities, for example, citizen members are included on the committee responsible for official coordination. This pattern has been particularly successful in communities up to 100,000 population. In such cases an additional public-support group may be found necessary to obtain broad representation which is impractical in a committee concerned only with official coordination.

Nothing in this report is intended, nor should be construed, to suggest a change in organizational plans which are delivering comprehensive effective traffic-safety programs.

VI. That national, State, and local organizations endorse and support, within the limits of the objectives set forth in their charters or constitutions, the recommendations of the President's Highway Safety Conference and the official highway-safety programs of State, county, and local governments.

VII. That national, State, and local organizations utilize every possible means to inform their membership about the technical action program for highway safety approved by the President's Highway Safety Conference, and about the problems of fitting this program

to the needs of the States, counties, and municipalities. In the discharge of this responsibility, it is urged that all State and local units of national organizations allot time on their programs for the presentation of local needs in highway safety, thus to secure a greater degree of understanding and individual acceptance of responsibility.

VIII. That all national organizations immediately seek full and continuing support of their State and local units for—

a. Cooperation and active participation in the State and local highway-safety conferences recommended in this report.

b. Cooperation and active participation in the State and local traffic-safety organizations recommended in this report.

IX. That all national organizations, and through them their State and local units, endorse and secure continuing active support for the programs making up the annual inventory and progress report to the President's Highway Safety Conference, namely: The Annual Inventory of Traffic Safety Activities; The National Pedestrian Protection Contest; the National Driver Education Awards Program, and such other broad and important supplemental highway-safety programs as "Operation Safety".

X. That in addition to support of the foregoing programs, local public-support groups might well foster the American spirit of competition through informal, intercity, traffic-safety contests. Civic pride can seldom decline a challenge from one or more communities of like size.

Yet another logical step is a measure of competition among State and local units of public-support organizations. This means of promotion would be most effective if appropriate annual recognition could be given to outstanding programs.

Committee on Organized Public Support

Chairman

W. EARL HALL

Managing Editor, Globe-Gazette

Mason City, Iowa

Vice Chairman

HAROLD P. JACKSON

Chairman, National Committee for Traffic Safety

Newark, N. J.

Secretary

PAUL H. BLAISDELL

Executive Director, National Committee for Traffic Safety

Chicago, Ill.

The final Conference-approved edition of this report will contain a complete list of the members of the Committee on Organized Public Support.

