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Honorable Ron DeSantis
Governor of Florida
PL5, The Capitol
400 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Honorable Bill Galvano
Senate President
409 The Capitol
404 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Honorable Jose Oliva
Speaker of the House
420 The Capitol
402 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Dear Governor, President and Speaker:

Pursuant to the provisions of [section 381.989\(3\)](#), Florida Statutes, the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles respectfully submits the enclosed summary report on the number of drug and alcohol related crashes and fatalities by year, age group and drug type.

Should you need additional assistance or have further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at (850) 617-3100.

Respectfully,

Terry L. Rhodes
Executive Director



Impaired Driving Report

January 31, 2020

INTRODUCTION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2017, the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (department) was directed to implement a statewide impaired driving education campaign and establish baseline data on the number of marijuana-related citations, crashes and arrests¹. That directive also requires the department to submit an annual report on January 31 of each year to the Governor, the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

Also in 2017, the department was allocated \$5 million in non-recurring funds to implement the statewide impaired driving campaign². To fulfill the requirements of the law, the department contracted with the University of Florida to conduct surveys to evaluate awareness of impaired driving laws. In 2018, the department released the “DRIVE BAKED, GET BUSTED” campaign to educate Floridians on the dangers of impaired driving and promote awareness of impaired driving laws. A follow-up survey was completed by the University of Florida evaluating the impact of the “DRIVE BAKED, GET BUSTED” campaign. The department continues to improve awareness of the dangers of impaired driving through regular traffic safety campaigns, partnerships with Federal, State and Local law enforcement and traffic safety organizations.

In late 2017, the department implemented a supplement to Florida’s Traffic Crash report to begin capturing baseline data on marijuana-related and other drug impairment crashes. The supplement captures seven (7) drug types based on the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration’s (NHTSA) recommendations for drug impairment. The department requires this supplement be provided with all crash reports indicating a driver was impaired by drugs at the time of the crash. Each year, the department conducts workshops across the state with Florida law enforcement agencies to improve the accuracy and completeness of crash data. A portion of each of these workshops is dedicated to the new requirement for reporting positive drug test results to the department.

The department was also allocated \$100,000 in recurring funds to train additional Florida Highway Patrol Troopers as Drug Recognition Experts (DRE)³. A DRE is a highly trained law enforcement officer who is a subject matter expert in an extensive range of driver impairments and their associated signs and symptoms. DREs are dispatched to assist investigations and obtain convictions in cases involving impaired driving.

¹ [Section 381.989](#), Florida Statutes

² [Chapter 2017-232](#), Section 19 (3), Laws of Florida

³ [Chapter 2017-232](#), Section 19 (4), Laws of Florida

IMPAIRED DRIVING EDUCATION CAMPAIGN

PUBLIC AWARENESS SURVEY: INITIAL AWARENESS

In November 2017, the department contracted with the Florida Survey Research Center at the University of Florida to conduct two surveys to evaluate public awareness and opinions on impaired driving. The first survey collected information about Florida residents' general awareness of issues related to impaired driving, their knowledge and understanding of laws related to impaired driving and their personal behaviors related to impaired driving, particularly those related to medical marijuana.

The survey targeted residents of Florida who are 18 years of age or older. The survey collected information by regions of the state (Panhandle, Northeast, East-Central, West-Central and South Florida).

The results of the survey were then analyzed and used to inform the subsequent educational campaign, "DRIVE BAKED, GET BUSTED". A second survey was conducted at the end of the campaign to evaluate its effectiveness.

Details of these surveys are available in the [Impaired Driving Campaign Report January 31, 2019](#).

DRIVE BAKED, GET BUSTED CAMPAIGN

The objective of the "DRIVE BAKED, GET BUSTED" campaign was to educate Floridians about the dangers and consequences of impaired driving and promote awareness of impaired driving laws. This was a multi-media campaign focused on the department's marijuana-related and cannabis-related safety messaging targeting young adults age 18-34 and adults age 55-74.



The four-month campaign ran from March 12, 2018, through July 31, 2018, and garnered over 2.5 billion impressions from print, outdoor, TV, radio, streaming radio, cinema, social media and digital media.

ONGOING IMPAIRED DRIVING CAMPAIGNS

The department continues to promote traffic safety and educate Floridians on the dangers of impaired driving.

In March 2019, the department used "NEVER DRIVE IMPAIRED" as part of the Spring Break campaign. This campaign garnered over 58 million impressions through paid, earned and social media, as well as web views and statewide community outreach.

In August 2019, the department released a public service announcement, using a video produced during the "DRIVE BAKED, GET BUSTED" campaign. The video was sent to over 3,000 partners statewide. This video was also used during the 2019 Safe Holiday travel campaign.

CRASH REPORTING

BACKGROUND

The department approves the crash report form and which data elements must be submitted on the form by law enforcement to report a traffic crash within the state⁴. The department follows standards on crash data elements provided by NHTSA. This guidance is provided regularly through the Model Minimum Uniform Crash Criteria (MMUCC) standard. Currently on its 5th edition, the purpose of the MMUCC standard is to encourage greater data uniformity by identifying a minimum set of motor vehicle crash data elements and their attributes the states should consider collecting and including in their state data system.

The department collects crash data both electronically and via paper submissions and is the official repository for all crash reports statewide⁵. Official crash data is shared with our public safety partners throughout the state, including the Florida Department of Transportation and the Florida Department of Health.

In accordance with state law, the department is required to analyze all traffic crash data and publish a Traffic Crash Facts Annual Report⁶. The department also analyzes and provides regular crash analysis to the Legislature, Federal, State and Local Law Enforcement and various traffic safety partners. The department also focuses on the timeliness, completeness and accuracy of the crash reports submitted to assure quality crash data is available for analysis and reporting. The department monitors all reports submitted and conducts regular reviews of the crash data submitted with local law enforcement agencies. The department shares strategies to improve crash data quality through regular crash and citation improvement workshops across the state.

The department is positioned as the state's largest traffic safety data repository, which includes crash report, traffic citation, driver and motor vehicle data.

UPDATING FLORIDA'S CRASH REPORT FORM

The department has been collecting and reporting on general information related to drug confirmed, alcohol confirmed, and drug and alcohol confirmed crashes for over 20 years. However, there was no mechanism to capture the specific drug type(s) of a positive drug test identifying whether the impairment was marijuana-related or some other drug type.

In order to collect information on the number of marijuana-related traffic crashes in the state, the department released a crash report supplement in late 2017. This supplement requires law enforcement agencies, upon completion of their crash investigation, to submit positive drug test results to the department. The supplement provides seven (7) drug types based on NHTSA

⁴ [Section 316.068](#), Florida Statutes

⁵ [Section 316.066](#) (1) (a), Florida Statutes

⁶ [Section 316.069](#), Florida Statutes

recommendations. For each crash, the supplement is provided on drivers and non-motorists tested for drugs and provides space for up to four different drug results.

Since implementation of the crash report supplement, the department worked directly with more than 300 law enforcement agencies across the state to update the crash report form and submission process to track marijuana-related traffic crash information.

In 2019, the department conducted eight (8) workshops with law enforcement partners throughout the state to improve the accuracy and completeness of crash data. A component of these workshops was the process for reporting positive drug test results.

All law enforcement agencies in the state have implemented the crash report supplement.

DATA AND BASELINE INFORMATION

The department has been directed to establish baseline data and to report annually on the number of marijuana-related traffic crashes occurring in the state⁷.

As discussed earlier, the department has been collecting general information on drug confirmed, alcohol confirmed, and drug and alcohol confirmed crashes. The table below depicts general impaired driving crash information previously reported by the department⁸.

Year	Drug confirmed crashes	Drug confirmed fatalities	Alcohol confirmed crashes	Alcohol confirmed fatalities	Drug and alcohol confirmed crashes	Drug and alcohol confirmed fatalities
2015	557	281	5,522	508	361	269
2016	617	322	5,223	461	349	299
2017	668	338	5,125	374	355	274
2018	673	348	5,106	372	386	300
TOTAL	2,515	1,289	20,976	1,715	1,451	1,142

The crash report supplement to collect specific drug confirmed crash information was released in late 2017. Throughout 2018, the department worked closely with all law enforcement agencies to incorporate the crash report supplement into their crash reporting process. The following information depicts the data submitted to the department as of January 16, 2020 from the crash report supplements. Information on drug confirmed crashes is still being submitted to the department and is considered preliminary.

⁷ [Section 381.989](#) (3) (b), Florida Statutes

⁸ [Traffic Crash Facts](#), Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles, 2015-2018

From January 1, 2018, through December 31, 2019, there have been 1,822 drug impaired crashes, resulting in 1,118 fatalities and 1,571 injuries. Of the 1,822 crashes, 1,568 crashes identified at least one of the seven (7) drug types.

As there can be multiple people involved in a crash, a single crash may be counted in more than one age group.

Drug confirmed crashes by age group occurring in 2018-2019								
Age group	<15	16-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-64	65+
Drug confirmed crashes	2	79	456	404	252	229	73	107

Of the drug types reported, Other Controlled Substance was the most prevalent category, followed by Marijuana, Cocaine, Amphetamine and Opiate. Individuals age 20-29 were the most reported age group in crashes with 456 drug-related crashes, and 772 positive drug test results reported to the department. The most prevalent drug in this age group was Marijuana followed by Other Controlled Substance.

Marijuana is the most prevalent drug in teenagers and young adults involved in crashes. Marijuana prevalence begins to decrease at 30 years of age or older.

The Other Controlled Substance drug type includes prescription drugs such as benzodiazepines. The Other Drug type includes non-prescription drugs such as allergy medication or those without a specific category for the test result. Unknown is reported when the test produces an unknown result.

Prevalence of drugs tested by type and age of person involved in a traffic crash in 2018 and 2019									
DRUG TYPE	<15	16-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-64	65+	Grand Total
Other Controlled Substance	0	23	208	211	142	128	43	54	809
Marijuana	1	64	310	192	108	83	20	25	803
Cocaine	0	10	88	96	67	46	9	8	324
Amphetamine	1	5	76	104	63	43	7	16	315
Opiate	0	6	47	76	42	39	16	21	247
Other Drug	0	2	37	44	23	32	13	25	176
Unknown	0	2	6	5	2	2	1	2	20
PCP	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	2
Grand Total	2	112	772	729	448	373	109	151	2,696

The following table depicts the types of drugs involved in traffic crash fatalities or traffic crash injuries. As there can be up to four (4) drug results reported in driver(s) and/or non-motorist(s) involved in a crash, a single fatality may be counted in more than one drug type.

Drug types involved in traffic fatalities or injuries from crashes in 2018-2019		
DRUG TYPE	Traffic Crash Fatalities	Traffic Crash Injuries
Marijuana	567	760
Other Controlled Substance	358	670
Cocaine	176	253
Amphetamine	175	229
Opiate	84	216
Other Drug	119	102
Unknown	6	20
PCP	0	3

FLORIDA HIGHWAY PATROL DRUG RECOGNITION EXPERT PROGRAM

The Florida Highway Patrol (FHP) is the state’s enforcement authority in highway safety. FHP Drug Recognition Experts (DREs) serve as subject matter experts receiving over 100 hours of extensive, specialized training to identify a variety of drug-induced driver impairments. To become a DRE, a law enforcement officer must first complete two prerequisite courses, receive an endorsement from their local Assistant State Attorney, another DRE and their leadership, successfully complete the two-week DRE training program and pass both a written and practical exam.

DREs are typically deployed in scenarios requiring an evaluation of a driver suspected of impairment caused by a narcotic. The DREs’ expert testimony often helps prosecutors secure convictions in cases involving impaired driving; specifically, when impairment results from the use of narcotics, including suspects under the influence of multiple impairing substances.

The FHP DRE program follows all protocols and examinations as directed by the International Association of Chiefs of Police.

The FHP has 57 of the 341 DREs in Florida, representing 17% of all DREs. FHP has also set an aggressive goal to add 20 new DREs to their ranks each year to eventually have 300 Troopers certified as DREs. This would translate to approximately 1 in 5 Troopers (20%) credentialed as DREs on Florida’s roadways at any given time.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

In 2018, the department updated the information included within the official Florida Driver License Handbook to ensure new drivers are educated on the dangers of marijuana-related impaired driving.

In addition to partnering with the Florida Department of Transportation's Impaired Driving Coalition and Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) to increase awareness and education of impaired driving, the department hosts an annual conference of Florida Licensed DUI programs to discuss impaired driving education efforts and curriculum for offenders found guilty of driving under the influence.

CONTINUING ACTIVITIES

In conclusion, the department continues to strengthen the vision of "A Safer Florida" by focusing on a goal of public safety through education and enforcement of traffic laws.

The department's education efforts reach millions of Floridians and visitors, providing them with important information on the dangers of impaired driving, the impacts of marijuana on driving, and Florida's laws related to marijuana.

The department continues to collect and track marijuana-related crash data to strengthen traffic safety analysis capabilities. As the processes of data collection continue to improve and expand, the department's baseline data will more effectively support future traffic safety analysis.

As collection of marijuana and/or other drug-related impairment data is a relatively new process, momentum is building throughout the state as more law enforcement agencies become familiar with the new reporting requirements. The department will continue to collaborate with law enforcement and traffic safety partners to improve the timeliness, completeness and accuracy of crash data submitted to the department. As a result, subsequent years' reporting will better represent the actual numbers of marijuana and/or other drug-related crashes and may help identify trends in certain areas or timeframes, allowing for more focused education and enforcement opportunities.

The department will continue to champion the DRE program to build upon our traffic safety mission as it relates to drug impairments that impact public safety on Florida roadways.