

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

Discretionary Cooperative Agreements To Support Seat Belt Enforcement With State Associations of Chiefs of Police

AGENCY: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Announcement of Cooperative Agreements in conjunction with the *Buckle Up America Campaign* to increase seat belt enforcement with the State Associations of Chiefs of Police.

SUMMARY: The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) announces a cooperative agreement program to solicit support for the Buckle Up America (BUA) campaign. NHTSA solicits applications from the State Associations of Chiefs of Police to participate in the BUA campaign, by mobilizing law enforcement agencies to increase the use of seat belts and child safety seats, the most effective safety devices for reducing injuries and fatalities in traffic crashes. Only applications submitted by the State Association of Chiefs of Police will be considered. The State Associations of Chiefs of Police will take a leadership role in involving their State law enforcement agencies in increasing enforcement of seat belt and child safety seat laws by participating in the mobilization periods, high visibility enforcement, training officers and public information and education.

DATES: Applications must be received no later than September 7, 1999.

ADDRESSES: Applications must be submitted to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Office of Contracts and Procurement (NAD-30), ATTN: Rose Watson, 400 7th Street, SW, Room 5301, Washington, DC 20590. All applications submitted must include a reference to NHTSA Cooperative Agreement Program No. NTS-01-9-05154.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: General administrative questions may be directed to Rose Watson, Office of Contracts and Procurement at (202) 366-9557. Programmatic questions should be directed to Sandy Richardson, Traffic Law Enforcement Division, NTS-13, NHTSA, 400 7th Street, SW, Washington DC 20590 by e-mail srichardson@nhtsa.dot.gov or by phone (202) 366-4294. Interested applicants are advised that no separate application package exists beyond the contents of this announcement.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**Background**

It's a fact: On America's roads, someone is killed every 13 minutes and someone is injured every nine seconds in traffic crashes. It takes only a few seconds to fasten a seat belt. Yet this simple action, repeated every time you get into a motor vehicle, may be the most significant driving-related behavior change you can make to extend your life. Wearing a seat belt dramatically increases your chance of surviving a crash.

Each year, approximately 42,000 Americans die in traffic crashes and another three million are injured. Sadly, many of these deaths and injuries could have been prevented if the victims had been wearing seat belts or were properly restrained in child safety seats.

Seat belts, when properly used, are 45 percent effective in preventing deaths in potentially fatal crashes and 50 percent effective in preventing serious injuries. No other safety device has as much potential for immediately preventing deaths and injuries in motor vehicle crashes. The current level of seat belt use across the nation prevents more than 9,500 deaths and well over 200,000 injuries annually. Through 1997, more than 100,000 deaths and an estimated 2.5 million serious injuries have been prevented by seat belt use.

But, seat belt use rates and the resulting savings could be much higher. As of 1998, the average use rate among States in the U.S. was still well below the goal of 85 percent announced by the President for the year 2000 and at least a dozen States have use rates below 60 percent. On the other hand, use rates of 85-95 percent are a reality in most developed nations with seat belt use laws, and at least six States and the District of Columbia achieved use rates greater than 80 percent in 1998. A national use rate of 90 percent, among front seat occupants of all passenger vehicles, would result in prevention of an additional 5,500 deaths and 13,000 serious injuries annually. This would translate into a \$9 billion reduction in societal costs, including 356 million for Medicare and Medicaid.

In April 1997, the *Buckle Up America* (BUA) campaign established ambitious national goals: (a) To increase seat belt use to 85 percent and reduce child fatalities (0-4 years) by 15 percent by the year 2000; and (b) to increase seat belt use to 90 percent and reduce child fatalities by 25 percent by the year 2005. This campaign advocates a four part strategy: (1) Building public-private partnerships; (2) enacting strong legislation; (3) maintaining high visibility law enforcement; (4) and

conducting effective public education. Central to this Campaign's successes is the implementation of two major enforcement mobilizations each year (Memorial Day and Thanksgiving holidays).

Objectives

To help achieve the new national seat belt goals, NHTSA seeks to establish cooperative efforts between NHTSA and State Associations of Chiefs of Police to increase the use of seat belts and child safety seats. Specific objectives for this cooperative agreement program will be to support the Buckle Up America campaign by increasing periodic waves of high visibility enforcement and by promoting participation in Operation ABC's national mobilizations (May and November).

1. Periodic "Waves" of High Visibility Enforcement

The history of efforts to increase seat belt use in the U.S. and Canada suggests that highly visible enforcement of seat belt laws must be the core of any successful program to increase seat belt use. No State has ever achieved a high seat belt use rate without such a component.

Canada currently has a national seat belt use rate well above 90 percent. Nearly every province first attempted to increase seat belt use through voluntary approaches involving public information and education. These efforts were effective in achieving only very modest usage rates (no higher than 30 percent). By 1985, it became obvious to Canadian and provincial officials that additional efforts would be needed to achieve levels of 80 percent or greater. These efforts, mounted from 1985 to 1995, centered around highly publicized "waves" of enforcement, a technique that had already been shown to increase seat belt use in Elmira, New York. When these procedures were implemented in the Canadian provinces, seat belt use generally increased from about 60 percent to well over 80 percent, within a period of 3-5 years.

The Canadian successes using periodic, highly visible "waves" of enforcement, as well as successes of such efforts implemented in local jurisdictions in the U.S., prompted NHTSA to implement Operation Buckle Down (also called the "70 by '92" Program) in 1991. This two-year program focused on Special Traffic Enforcement Programs (sTEPs) to increase seat belt use. It was followed by a national usage rate increase from about 53 percent in 1990 to 62 percent by the end of 1992 (as measured by a weighted aggregate of State surveys).

Neither the level of enforcement nor its public visibility was uniform in every State. Had these "waves" of enforcement been implemented in a more uniform fashion in every state, the impact would likely have been much greater.

In order to demonstrate the potential of periodic, highly visible enforcement in a more controlled environment, the State of North Carolina implemented its Click-It or Ticket program in 1993. In this program, waves of coordinated and highly publicized enforcement efforts (i.e., checkpoints) were implemented in every county. As a result, seat belt use increased statewide, from 65 percent to over 80 percent, in just a few months. This program provided the clearest possible evidence to demonstrate the potential of highly visible enforcement to increase seat belt use in a large jurisdiction.

2. National Mobilizations

National law enforcement mobilizations have also proven effective in increasing seat belt use. The BUA campaign supports two national mobilizations each year (Memorial Day and Thanksgiving holidays). During the 1998 mobilizations conducted throughout the week surrounding Memorial Day and the week surrounding Thanksgiving, between 4,000 and 5,000 law enforcement agencies participated in Operation ABC. Their efforts were covered by several hundred national and local television organizations in all major media markets. More than 1,500 print articles were written in response to each mobilization. As a result of the May mobilization, seat belt use increased significantly nationwide as more than 6,000,000 motorists were convinced to buckle up. Since that time, seat belt use has continued to increase significantly.

Period of Support

Cooperative agreements may be awarded for a period of support for (1) year. The application for the funding period (12 months) should address what is proposed and can be accomplished during that period. Subject to the availability of funds, the agency anticipates awarding up to 5 cooperative agreements in the amount of \$50,000 each, totaling \$250,000. Federal funds should be viewed as seed money to assist the Associations in working with local law enforcement agencies in the development of traffic safety initiatives. NHTSA may choose to extend the period of performance under this agreement for an additional 12 months, subject to the availability of funds. If NHTSA elects to do so, it will notify the

recipients within 60 days prior to the expiration of this agreement and the recipients will submit a proposal for an additional 12 months of performance.

Eligibility Requirements

In order to be eligible to participate in this cooperative agreement program, an applicant must be a State Association of Chiefs of Police, and must meet the following requirements:

- Have ability to provide funding to law enforcement agencies in the state.
- Have written support and approval from the applicant's chief executive officer to conduct seat belt enforcement programs to participate in and encourage local law enforcement participation in the Operation ABC Campaign and in other seat belt enforcement programs. (Include copy with proposal.)
- Obtain written support from the Governor's Representative or his/her designee in the State Highway Safety Office (SHSO) demonstrating that the applicant's proposal is consistent with the State's overall plan. (Include copy with proposal.)

Application Procedure

Each applicant must submit one original and two copies of their application package to: NHTSA, Office of Contracts and Procurement (NAD-30), ATTN: Rose Watson, 400 7th Street, S.W., Room 5301, Washington, D.C. 20590. Applications are due no later than September 7, 1999. Only complete application packages received by the due date will be considered. Submission of four additional copies will expedite processing, but is not required. Applications must be typed on one side of the page only. Applications must include a reference to NHTSA Cooperative Agreement Program No. NTS-01-9-05154. The applicant shall specifically identify any information in the application for which confidential treatment is requested, in accordance with the procedures of 49 CFR part 512, Confidential Business Information.

Application Contents

The application package must be submitted with OMB Standard Form 424 (Rev. 4-88, including 424A and 424B), Application for Federal Assistance, with the required information filled in and the certified assurances included. While the Form 424-A deals with budget information, and section B identifies Budget Categories, the available space does not permit a level of detail which is sufficient to provide for a meaningful evaluation of the proposed costs. A supplemental sheet should be provided

which presents a detailed breakdown of the proposed costs, as well as any costs which the applicant proposes to contribute in support of this effort. The budget should be a 1-year plan. Also included shall be a program narrative statement which addresses the following:

1. A description of the project to be pursued which provides:
 - a. A detailed explanation of the proposed strategy to support the enforcement efforts, including methods for gaining support (both within the community and law enforcement leadership) for "waves" of highly publicized seat belt enforcement and for mobilization efforts. In addition, an explanation of the strategies to fund local law enforcement agencies to participate in the national mobilizations, and to conduct "waves" of highly publicized seat belt enforcement. A description of efforts to address training needs (e.g., differential enforcement or diversity sensitivity) of law enforcement jurisdictions and how training will be marketed to these jurisdictions.
 - b. The goals, objectives, and the anticipated results and benefits of the project (supporting documentation from concerned interests other than the applicant can be used.)
 - c. Written evidence of approval by the applicant's Chief Executive Officer.
 - d. An explanation demonstrating the need for assistance.
 - e. Description of any extraordinary social/community involvement.
 - f. A discussion of the criteria to be used to evaluate the results (e.g. number of citations, number of officers trained, seat belt use surveys, level of earned media coverage, etc.).
2. A list of the proposed activities in chronological order to show the schedule or accomplishments and their target dates.
3. Identification of the proposed program coordinator for participation in the proposed project effort.
4. A description of the applicant's previous experience related to this proposed program effort (i.e. past participation in highly publicized enforcement or participation in the Operation ABC national seat belt mobilizations).
5. A statement of any technical assistance which the applicant may require of NHTSA in order to successfully complete the proposed project.

Application Review Process and Evaluation Factors

Initially, each application will be reviewed to confirm that the applicant

meets the eligibility requirements and that the application contains all of the information required by the Applications Contents section of this notice. Each complete application from an eligible recipient will then be evaluated by a Technical Evaluation Committee. The applications will be evaluated using the following criteria:

1. The potential of the proposed project effort to increase seat belt use. (40%)

The likeliness and feasibility of the applicant's projects to increase enforcement efforts by law enforcement jurisdictions of proper seat belt and child safety seat use. The degree to which the applicant has identified jurisdictions that might benefit from training opportunities concerning proper seat belt and child safety seat use, and effectiveness of the applicant's plan for providing that training. The overall soundness and feasibility of the applicant's approach to participating and successfully seeking law enforcement participation in mobilization efforts, public information campaigns concerning seat belt and child safety seat use, and child safety seat clinics.

2. The applicant's proposed strategy for participating and seeking the participation of local law enforcement agencies in the Buckle Up America national seat belt mobilizations. 40%

The likeliness and feasibility of the Association's proposal, as described in its innovative project plan, to assist smaller law enforcement agencies in participating in the Buckle Up America national seat belt mobilizations. The degree to which the applicant has demonstrated a complete understanding of the requirements for successful participation in the Operation ABC national seat belt mobilizations. The overall soundness and feasibility of the applicant's proposed strategy and demonstrated ability to involve and coordinate this project with smaller law enforcement agencies.

3. The applicant's ability to demonstrate support and coordination with local government and the State Highway Safety Office. 15%

The degree to which the proposal describes efforts and commitment to obtain the support from local government officials throughout the State. The likeliness and feasibility of the applicant's proposal for reaching local and state government executives throughout the state, including suggested methods for generating interest, making initial contacts and reasons for taking this approach as opposed to others.

4. The adequacy of the organizational plan for accomplishing the proposed project effort through the experience and technical expertise of the proposed personnel. 5%

Program management and technical expertise will be estimated by reviewing the qualifications and experience of the proposed personnel, and the relative level of effort of the staff. Consideration will be given to the adequacy of the organizational plan for accomplishing the proposed project effort. Consideration will also be given to the Association's resources and how it will provide the program management capability and personnel expertise to successfully perform the activities in its plan.

NHTSA Involvement

The NHTSA will be involved in all activities undertaken as part of the cooperative agreement program and will:

1. Provide a Contracting Officer's Technical Representative (COTR) to participate in the planning and management of the cooperative agreement and to coordinate activities between the selected State Associations of Chiefs of Police and NHTSA;

2. Provide information and technical assistance from government sources, within available resources and as determined appropriate by the COTR;

3. Provide liaison between the selected State Associations of Chiefs of Police and other government and private agencies as appropriate; and

4. Stimulate the exchange of ideas and information among cooperative agreement recipients through periodic meetings.

Terms and Conditions of Award

1. Prior to award, the recipient must comply with the certification requirements of 49 CFR part 29—Department of Transportation Government-wide Debarment and Suspension (Non-procurement) and Government-wide Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Grants)

2. During the effective period of the cooperative agreement(s) awarded as a result of this notice, the agreement(s) shall be subject to NHTSA's General Provisions for Assistance Agreements (7-95).

Reporting Requirements

1. The recipient shall submit brief quarterly reports documenting project effort to date which will include information on accomplishments, obstacles and problems encountered, noteworthy activities. The report shall be due 15 days after the end of each

quarter, and a final report summarizing the project effort within 30 days after the completion of the project. An original and three copies of each of these reports shall be submitted to the COTR.

2. The recipient may be requested to conduct an oral presentation of project activities for the COTR and other interested NHTSA personnel. For planning purposes, assume that these presentations will be conducted at the NHTSA Office of Traffic and Injury Control Programs, Washington, D.C. An original and three copies of briefing materials shall be submitted to the COTR.

Issued on: July 28, 1999.

Rose A. McMurray,

Associate Administrator for Traffic Safety Programs.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

[Docket No. NHTSA-99-6039]

Notice of Receipt of Petition for Decision That Nonconforming 1998-1999 Audi A6 Passenger Cars Are Eligible for Importation

AGENCY: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of receipt of petition for decision that nonconforming 1998-1999 Audi A6 passenger cars are eligible for importation.

SUMMARY: This document announces receipt by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) of a petition for a decision that 1998-1999 Audi A6 passenger cars that were not originally manufactured to comply with all applicable Federal motor vehicle safety standards are eligible for importation into the United States because (1) they are substantially similar to vehicles that were originally manufactured for importation into and sale in the United States and that were certified by their manufacturer as complying with the safety standards, and (2) they are capable of being readily altered to conform to the standards.

DATES: The closing date for comments on the petition is September 7, 1999.

ADDRESSES: Comments should refer to the docket number and notice number, and be submitted to: Docket Management, Room PL-401, 400 Seventh St., SW, Washington, DC