

# INTRODUCTION

## Mission of the Office of Transportation Safety-Highway Safety Office

The mission of the Highway Safety Office [HSO within the Office of Transportation Safety (OTS)] at the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) is to partner and collaborate with traffic safety stakeholders to reduce the number and severity of traffic crashes in Colorado, and the economic and human loss associated with crashes. To achieve this mission, the HSO administers state and federal funds to a broad range of partners, including law enforcement, local traffic safety coalitions, nonprofit organizations, health and prevention professionals, and others. These partners develop and implement education and enforcement programs targeted at reducing high-risk driving behaviors (e.g., impaired driving) or delivering impactful messaging to high-risk drivers (e.g., teens). In order for the HSO to direct its limited resources in the most effective manner, the HSO conducts an annual analysis of Colorado crashes and traffic safety data and presents the information in the Problem Identification Report.

## Overview of the 2014 Problem Identification Report

The FY2014 Problem Identification Report provides an annual description of motor vehicle crash characteristics for crashes within the state. This document is used by CDOT along with law enforcement, local agencies, nonprofit organizations, and public health and prevention professionals to identify traffic safety problems and target areas for the development of prevention programs. The reader is cautioned against utilizing one year of data to make conclusions and is advised to consider five years of data.

The first section of the report contains aggregate state data organized by emphasis areas and core performance measures in CDOT's 2014 Integrated Safety Plan. The second section displays county comparison maps highlighting differences in performance measures by county. Finally, each county has a section to highlight their performance over time and current problems. The location of the crash is based upon the county in which the crash happened. The crash data (fatal, serious injury and property damage) occurred in 2012. Final data on 2013 events will be available in mid-2014, after the federal deadline for this Problem Identification report.

### What is new in the 2014 Problem Identification Report?

- Delineated the performance measure data by age and sex in the Statewide Perspective
- Utilized more serious injury data
- Added information reflecting the law enforcement officer's opinion as to whether or not drivers were suspected of being impaired by alcohol or drugs when the drivers were involved in a serious injury crash
- Added age specific data for each county
- Added a County comparison map for pedestrian fatalities
- Added a glossary of acronyms

### Data Sources

The FY2014 Problem Identification Report contains data or information from:

- **Colorado Performance Measures** and statewide goals for 2014 were obtained from the 2014 Colorado Integrated Safety Plan by the Colorado Department of Transportation;

- **Countermeasures** were summarized from *Countermeasures That Work: A Highway Safety Countermeasure Guide for State Highway Safety Offices*, Seventh Edition, published in 2013 and available on the website of the Governors Highway Safety Association;
- **Crash data** in the Electronic Accident Reporting System (EARS) from the Department of Revenue where there was at least one motor vehicle in motion on a traffic way (public road) that resulted in an injury or unintentional property damage;
- **Distractions driver data** from the 2013 observational survey conducted by the Institute of Transportation Management at Colorado State University and posted on the Colorado Department of Transportation website;
- **Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS)** data of persons who died within 30 days of the crash, including pedestrians, motorcyclists, drivers and passengers in motor vehicles, and bicyclists hit by a motor vehicle. FARS SAS data files obtained from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) website. Fatalities occurred in 2012. Final data on fatalities in 2013 will be available in mid-2014, after the federal deadline for this Problem Identification report;
- **Hospital discharge** data where injury was mentioned as a discharge diagnosis and the mechanism of injury was motor vehicle, traffic for Colorado residents treated in non-federal, acute care hospitals (years 2002 through 2012) as reported to the Colorado Hospital Association (CHA) and referenced as “CHA Discharge Data” in figures in this report;
- **Population estimates** for Colorado and its counties from the Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) via their website or via the CoHID website and referenced as DOLA data in figures in this report; population estimates for the United States were obtained from the U.S. Census website;
- **Seat belt use**, car seat use, and booster seat use in 2013 from the observational surveys conducted by the Institute of Transportation Management at Colorado State University and posted on the Colorado Department of Transportation website; and
- **Vehicle Miles Traveled** data from the Office of Highway Policy Information, Highway Statistics Series at the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) Federal Highway Administration and referenced as “USDOT FHA” in figures in this report.

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