

Enforcement and Justice Services Products and Technical Assistance

Spring 2009

Traffic Occupant
Protection Strategies



About the Revised TOPS:

- ◆ *Emphasis on the importance of seat belt use in a usable format*
- ◆ *Training can be conducted during briefings, or in a four-hour block*
- ◆ *Demonstrates the importance of seat belt use by law enforcement officers*
- ◆ *Provides an overview of occupant protection systems*
- ◆ *TOPS will provide an excellent base of knowledge for officers participating in seat belt crackdowns as well as for sustained enforcement efforts*

Traffic Occupant Protection Strategies (TOPS)

An effective tool for enhancing Occupant Protection understanding

Seat Belt use continues to be an issue that dramatically impacts the number of injuries and deaths that occur on our roadways. Non-use and improper use not only affects the general public, but law enforcement officers around the country as well. Unfortunately, about half of the line of duty deaths occurring in the United States every year involve a crash or traffic related incident.

To meet the emerging needs of law enforcement, a revised Traffic Occupant Protection Strategies (TOPS) course was developed, which can be taught in as little as four hours. This makes the new TOPS course an attractive training option for agencies hard pressed to release staff for extended training. The new class can also support law enforcement's participation in the *Click it or Ticket* mobilization efforts as well as placing a heavy emphasis on seat belt usage by law enforcement officers.

The revised curriculum focuses on issues that law enforcement officers in the field can put to immediate use; crash dynamics; the basics of seat belts and child restraints; and working effectively with networks at the State and Local level.

The Enforcement and Justice Services Division is currently offering an eight-hour Train-the-Trainer session to develop new TOPS instructors. CPS experience or instruction isn't necessary, however participants in the sessions must be certified law enforcement instructors. Those with prior CPS or other occupant protection training would be welcome additions to the cadre of instructors.

If you're interested in participating in or hosting a TOPS Train the Trainer session, contact your NHTSA Regional Office for more information.



How Can I Get the Revised TOPS Curriculum?

The TOPS Curriculum is an effective tool as agencies prepare for seat belt and *Click It Or Ticket* mobilizations.

The curriculum is available in DVD format and includes all of the instructor and student mate-

rials, handouts, and video clips in a single package.

TOPS is available through our partners at the Transportation Safety Institute in Oklahoma City (405) 954-3112.

For additional information on TOPS, please contact Will Price at 202-366-0546, or Earl Hardy at 202-366-4292

