



# Road Safety in the United States

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# U.S. Approach to Road Safety

- In the U.S., traffic injury prevention represents the intersect among public health, public safety, and roadway design and engineering.



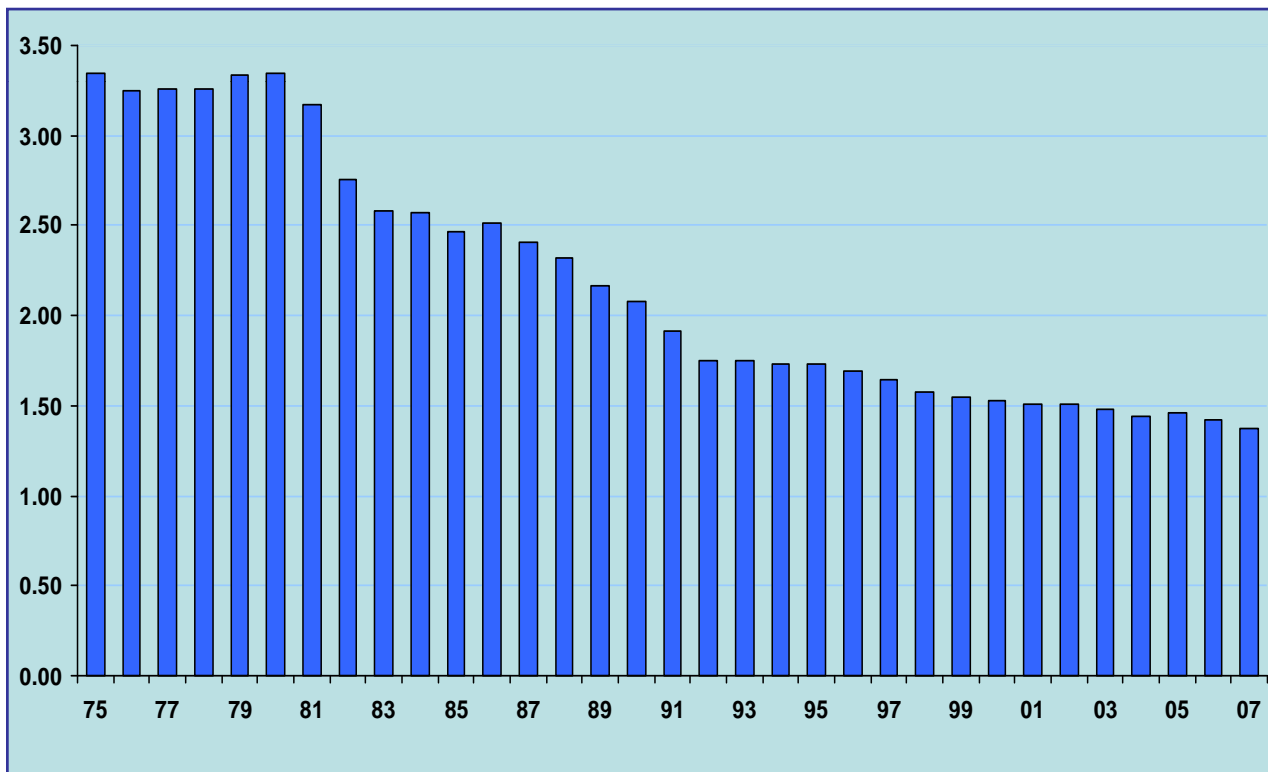


# Road Safety in the U.S. 2007

- ~ 41,000 fatalities per year
  - On average, 1 fatality every 12 minutes
  - Leading cause of death for every age between the ages of 3 - 6 and 8 - 34
- ~ 2.5 million injuries per year
- \$230 billion a year in economic costs



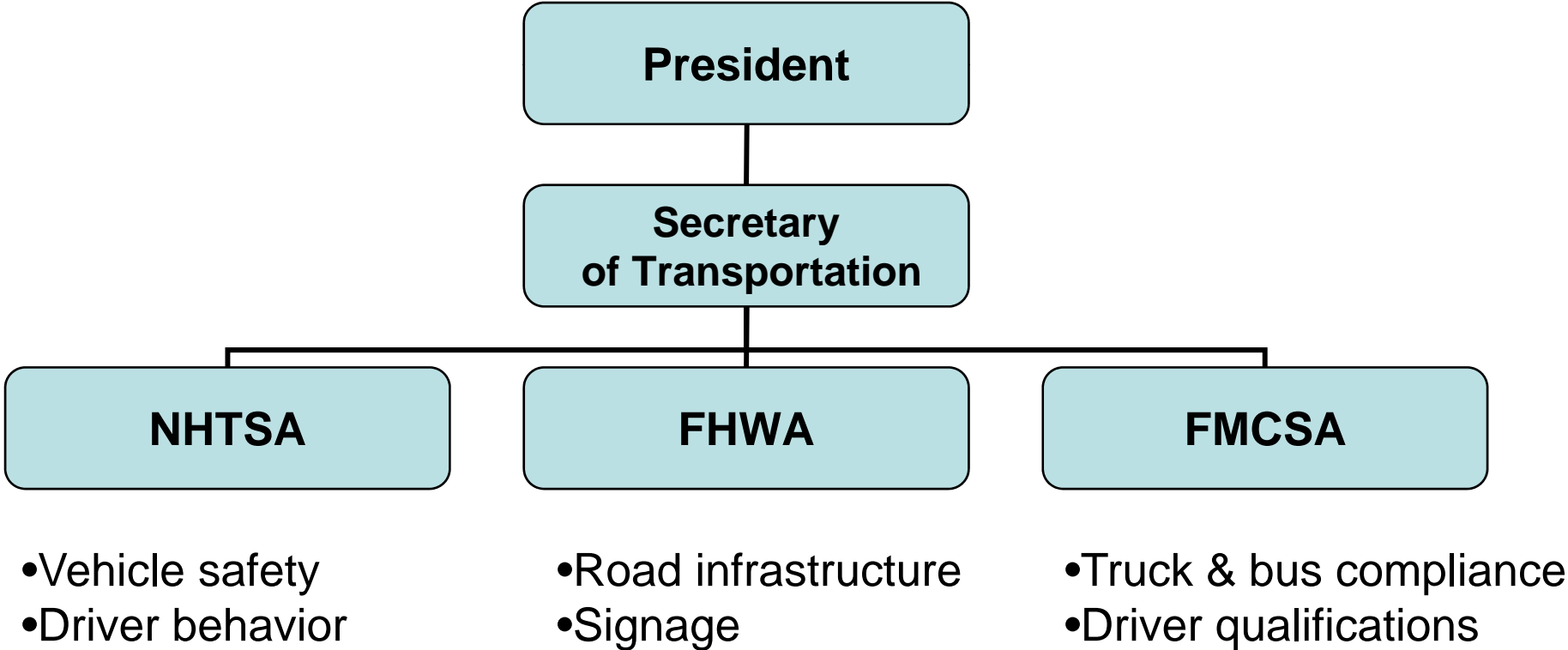
# US Fatality Rate Per 100 Million VMT







# US Department of Transportation Road Safety Organization





# US Road Safety Policies

- Roles and responsibilities are divided between national and state levels
- **Federal Government**
  - establishes national road safety goals
  - develops and enforces vehicle and commercial driver safety regulations;
  - influences State actions through funding and national initiatives.
- **50 States, District of Columbia, Puerto Rico**
  - oversee and implement road safety operational programs;
  - enact conforming State laws on important safety initiatives, such as seat belt use, vehicle inspections, speed limits, and impaired driving.



# Primary Strategies

- Comprehensive problem-solving approach
  - *Vehicle, Human, Environment*
- Science-based, data driven
  - *Pre-crash, Crash, Post-crash*
- Partnerships that advance safety
  - Other Federal organizations
  - State and local governments
  - Private sector (safety advocates, industry)
  - International partners





# Estimated Lives Saved in 2007

- Use of seat belts: 15,147
- By air bags: 2,788
- Use of motorcycle helmets: 1,784
- Minimum drinking age laws: 826
- Use of child restraints: 382

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- If seat belt use rates reached 90%,  
an additional 2,152 lives per year would be saved.
  - If seat belt use rates reached 100%,  
an additional 5,024 lives per year would be saved.





# Problems and Strategies

- Focus is on the areas where the greatest number of lives could be saved:
  - **Rural fatalities** – improve rural roads; target youth, alcohol/belts, EMS
  - **Rollover crashes** – require Electronic Stability Control on new motor vehicles
  - **Roadway departure crashes** – implement infrastructure improvements; increase use of lane departure warning devices



# Problems and Strategies (continued)

- **Motorcycle fatalities** – decrease impaired riding; increase training
- **Safety belt use** – high visibility enforcement campaigns
- **Impaired driving fatalities** – enforcement and deterrence programs coordinated with state and local law enforcement
- **Commercial driver decision-making** – identify high risk behavior and focus on strong enforcement



# Ongoing Challenges

- Need for a stronger road safety culture
- Expectations versus resources





# Would a Safe System Approach Be Successful in the U.S.?

Aspects already adopted in transportation policy

- Life-saving technologies
- Improved infrastructure
- Altering social norms







**Thanks for listening.**

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FHWA: [www.fhwa.dot.gov](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov)

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