

RULE on WORK ZONE Safety and Mobility

23 CFR 630 Subpart J



FAQs
FEEDBACK / CONTACT US
WEB SITE AT A GLANCE
CONTRACTORS INFORMATION

WHAT'S NEW FAST FACTS

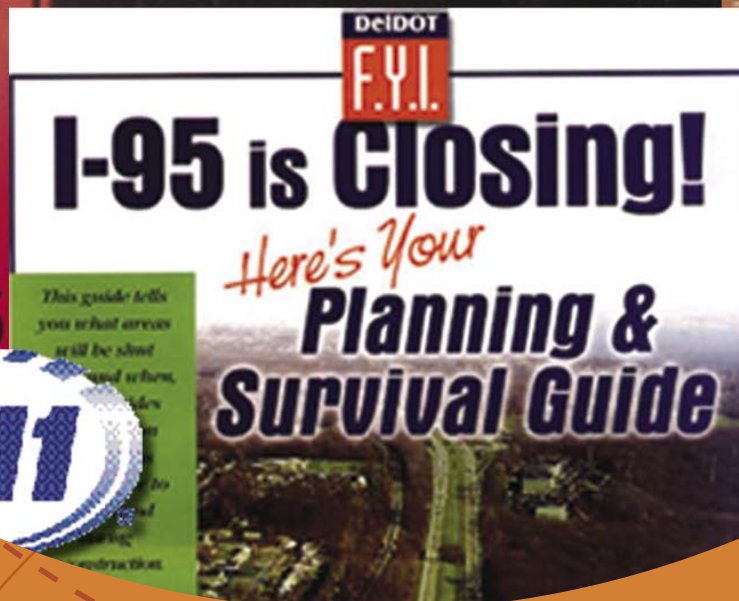


[Click here for construction photos.](#)

[Program Overview](#) | [Program Timeline](#) | [Newsroom](#) | [Contact Us](#)

PROJECT
HOTLINE

866-879-0395



Work Zone Public Information and Outreach Strategies



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

Notice

The Federal Highway Administration provides high-quality information to serve Government, industry, and the public in a manner that promotes public understanding. Standards and policies are used to ensure and maximize the quality, objectivity, utility, and integrity of its information. FHWA periodically reviews quality issues and adjusts its programs and processes to ensure continuous quality improvement.

Notice

The Federal Highway Administration provides high-quality information to serve Government, industry, and the public in a manner that promotes public understanding. Standards and policies are used to ensure and maximize the quality, objectivity, utility, and integrity of its information. FHWA periodically reviews quality issues and adjusts its programs and processes to ensure continuous quality improvement.

Work Zone Public Information and Outreach Strategies

November 2005

**U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration
Office of Operations**

Executive Summary

In September 2004, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) published updates to the work zone regulations at 23 CFR 630 Subpart J. The updated rule is referred to as the Work Zone Safety and Mobility Rule (Rule) and applies to all State and local governments that receive Federal-aid highway funding. Transportation agencies are required to comply with the provisions of the Rule by October 12, 2007. The changes made to the regulations broaden the former rule to better address the work zone issues of today and the future.

Growing congestion on many roads, and an increasing need to perform rehabilitation and reconstruction work on existing roads already carrying traffic, are some of the issues that have lead to additional, more complex challenges to maintaining work zone safety and mobility. To help address these issues, the Rule provides a decision-making framework that facilitates comprehensive consideration of the broader safety and mobility impacts of work zones across project development stages, and the adoption of additional strategies that help manage these impacts during project implementation. At the heart of the Rule is a requirement for agencies to develop an agency-level work zone safety and mobility policy. The policy is intended to support systematic consideration and management of work zone impacts across all stages of project development. Based on the policy, agencies will develop standard processes and procedures to support implementation of the policy. These processes and procedures shall include the use of work zone safety and operational data, work zone training, and work zone process reviews. Agencies are also encouraged to develop procedures for work zone impacts assessment. The third primary element of the Rule calls for the development of project-level procedures to address the work zone impacts of individual projects. These project-level procedures include identifying projects that an agency expects will cause a relatively high level of disruption (referred to in the Rule as significant projects) and developing and implementing transportation management plans (TMPs) for all projects.

To help transportation agencies understand and implement the provisions of the Rule, FHWA has been developing four guidance documents. This Guide is designed to help transportation agencies plan and implement effective public information and outreach campaigns to mitigate the negative effects of road construction work zones. An overall Rule Implementation Guide provides a general overview of the Rule and overarching guidance for implementing the provisions of the Rule. Two additional technical guidance documents, available starting in late 2005, cover other specific aspects of the Rule: work zone impacts assessment and TMPs for work zones. All four of the guides include guidelines and sample approaches, examples from transportation agencies using practices that relate to the Rule, and sources for more information. The examples help illustrate that many transportation agencies already use some policies and practices that the Rule either encourages or requires, and that there is more than one way to achieve compliance with the Rule. While what these agencies are doing may not yet be fully compliant with the Rule, their current practices still serve as good examples of how to work toward Rule implementation. While the guides cover aspects of the Rule, they also contain information that can be useful to agencies in all of their efforts to improve safety and mobility in and around work zones and thereby support effective operations and management of our transportation system.

State and local transportation agencies and FHWA are partners in trying to bring about improved work zone safety and mobility. Consistent with that partnership, the Rule advocates a partnership between agencies and FHWA in Rule implementation and compliance. Staff from the respective FHWA Division Offices, Resource Center, and Headquarters will work with their agency counterparts to support implementation and compliance efforts. This guidance document is one key element of that support.

Contents of this Guide

This Guide begins with a general definition of public information and outreach, the purpose of the Guide, and the intended audience for the Guide. *The intended audience of this Guide is personnel in transportation agencies responsible for planning and operating work zones, as well as those responsible for public relations and public information. However, this Guide will also be of interest to transportation policy makers, work zone contractors, consultants, public relations firms, and emergency responders.* Following this information, the Guide explains how work zone public information and outreach fits into the context of the updated Rule on Work Zone Safety and Mobility.

A work zone public information and outreach campaign involves communicating with road users, the general public, area residences and businesses, and appropriate public entities about a road construction project and its implications for safety and mobility. Developing and implementing a public information and outreach campaign should be started well before road construction begins and will need ongoing monitoring throughout the life of the project. Planning and implementing a public information and outreach campaign involves a set of key steps that ideally will be coordinated and outlined in a public information and outreach plan:

- 1. Determine the appropriate size and nature of the public information and outreach campaign.** The size and nature of a public information and outreach effort will be determined by the characteristics of a project, its location, and the anticipated impacts of a road construction project. Aspects to consider include size and duration of the project, the amount of delay anticipated, special traffic and safety conditions such as heavy truck traffic, and disruptions to other modes and key facilities such as airports, stadiums, and hospitals.
- 2. Identify resources.** In most cases, public information and outreach spending will need to be part of a road construction project budget. In addition, campaign managers will also need to tap existing resources, an operating 511 system for example, and leverage external resources such as free media coverage.
- 3. Identify partners.** Working with a range of partners to design and implement an information and outreach campaign will strengthen the strategies employed and may reduce the costs to the agency. Partners include, among others, State and local agencies, major employers, and business and neighborhood associations.
- 4. Identify target audiences.** A key to any communication strategy is to identify the target audience(s). This will help to determine the types of messages that need to be conveyed and the best ways of communicating those messages.
- 5. Develop the message(s).** In general, the messages communicated by the campaign should provide project information to maintain safety and minimize delay, and should indicate that the agency cares about the driving public. More specific messages might include details of the work zone, travel times through the work zone, and alternate routes and modes of transportation.
- 6. Determine communication strategies.** How information is communicated will depend on the audiences, the messages to be conveyed, and the campaign budget. This Guide discusses a wide range of strategies for communicating information about a project work zone.
- 7. Determine communication timing.** Public information and outreach should not be limited to when a work zone is up and running. Before work commences is the best time to begin developing partnerships and informing the public about the project, its anticipated impacts, and how to find out more information. Post-construction it is a good idea to publicize completion and to thank project partners.

- 8. Evaluate campaign effectiveness.** Evaluating the effectiveness of a public information and outreach campaign should be part of a long-term effort to improve safety and mobility in and around work zones. During a long road construction project it is advisable to periodically evaluate the effectiveness of the public information and outreach campaign with the aim of redirecting resources if necessary.

Section 2 describes and provides examples for each of these steps and Section 3 includes a checklist of the typical actions that are part of developing a campaign and a public information and outreach plan. Section 4 describes a number of strategies that can be used to communicate information about projects and provides examples of how these strategies have been used. The Guide concludes with appendices providing sample templates for developing public information and outreach strategies and plans.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	i
1.0 Introduction.....	1-1
1.1 What is a Work Zone Public Information and Outreach Campaign?	1-1
1.2 Why Develop and Implement a Public Information and Outreach Campaign?	1-1
1.3 Purpose of this Document.....	1-2
1.4 Target Audience	1-3
1.5 Public Information and Outreach and the Work Zone Rule.....	1-3
1.6 Overview of Guidance Material for the Rule	1-4
1.7 Key Terminology.....	1-5
2.0 Designing a Public Information and Outreach Campaign for Work Zones.....	2-1
2.1 Determine the Appropriate Size and Nature of the Campaign	2-1
2.2 Identify Resources	2-3
2.3 Identify Partners.....	2-4
2.4 Identify Your Target Audiences	2-6
2.5 Develop the Campaign Message(s).....	2-11
2.6 Determine Communication Strategies.....	2-15
2.7 Determine When to Communicate.....	2-17
2.8 Evaluate Effectiveness.....	2-19
3.0 Planning the Public Information and Outreach Campaign	3-1
4.0 Communication Strategies.....	4-1
4.1 Branding	4-1
4.2 Using the Mass Media.....	4-2
4.3 Web Sites.....	4-5
4.4 Email Alerts	4-7
4.5 Printed Materials.....	4-7
4.6 Project Information Phone Line and 511	4-9
4.7 Dynamic Message Signs (DMS) and Highway Advisory Radio (HAR)	4-10
4.8 Public Meetings, Workshops, and Community Events.....	4-12
4.9 Project Information Center.....	4-12
4.10 Videos	4-13
4.11 Major Characteristics of Selected Communication Strategies	4-13

Appendix A – Project References.....	Appendix A-1
Appendix B – Public Information and Outreach Campaign Framework Templates	Appendix B-1
Appendix C – Sample Templates	Appendix C-1

List of Tables

Table 2.1	Ways to Communicate Work Zone Information.....	2-6
Table 2.2	Public Information and Outreach Campaign Audiences	2-15
Table 3.1	Public Information and Outreach Campaign Checklist.....	3-2
Table 4.1	Major Characteristics of Selected Communication Strategies.....	4-14

List of Figures

Figure 2.1	Informational Brochure Produced by I-95 Corridor Coalition.....	2-7
Figure 2.2	Work Zone Traffic Camera Image on Utah DOT’s Web Site	2-13
Figure 2.3	Map Showing Alternate Routes During the Upgrade I-74 Project in Peoria, Illinois	2-14
Figure 2.4	Alternate Route Information on Flyer Specifically Targeted to Truckers Affected by the Weekend Full Closure of I-65 in Louisville, Kentucky	2-14
Figure 2.5	Graphic from Upgrade74 Project Web Site Used to Show Progress on the Project.....	2-15
Figure 2.6	California DOT’s Central Freeway Replacement Project: What Did the Public Notice?	2-16
Figure 4.1	The “Traffic Creep” Character Used During Major Construction Projects in Delaware.....	4-1
Figure 4.2	“Free Media”: A Newspaper Article on Weekend Closure of I-64 in Kentucky Published in the Louisville Courier – Journal.....	4-3
Figure 4.3	Connecticut DOT’s Fold-out Brochure for the I-95 New Haven Corridor Improvement Program.....	4-8
Figure 4.4	511 Logo	4-9

1.0 Introduction

1.1 What is a Work Zone Public Information and Outreach Campaign?

A work zone public information and outreach campaign typically involves several strategies to communicate with road users, the general public, area residences and businesses, and appropriate public entities about a road construction project and the safety and mobility effects of the work zone for the project.

Effective public information and outreach campaigns generally include the following key steps:

1. Determine the **appropriate size and nature** of the public information and outreach campaign.
2. Identify **resources** necessary to support the campaign.
3. Identify **partners** to assist in developing and implementing the campaign.
4. Identify **target audiences** for the campaign.
5. Develop the **message(s)** for the campaign.
6. Determine **communication strategies** for disseminating the messages to the target audiences.
7. Determine **communication timing** for the campaign.
8. **Evaluate the effectiveness** of the campaign.

These steps are discussed in Section 2 and will ideally be presented in a public information and outreach plan that may be coordinated with project stakeholders. Developing the plan is covered in Section 3 and a variety of communication strategies are described in Section 4.

1.2 Why Develop and Implement a Public Information and Outreach Campaign?

Improved work zone practices, including public information and outreach, are important because of the effects that work zones, particularly large ones, can have on regional traffic safety, mobility, and traveler dissatisfaction. In 2003, 1,028 people were killed and 41,000 people were injured as a result of motor vehicle crashes in work zones. About 90 percent of those killed are vehicle occupants and 10 percent are non-occupants, mostly work zone workers.¹ It is estimated that over 3,000 work zones are in effect on the National Highway System (NHS) during the summer, about 13 percent of NHS roadway. This results in a loss of over 60 million vehicles of capacity per hour per day.² According

¹ American Traffic Safety Services Association, Traffic Crashes in Construction/Maintenance Zones, available at <http://www.atssa.com/public/downloads/CMZONE03.PDF> as of January 26, 2005.

² A Snapshot of Summer 2001 Work Zone Activity: Based on Information Reported on State Road Closure and Construction Web Sites, U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, February 2003, http://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/wz/docs/2001wz_snapshot.pdf (Accessed 06/10/05).



to the latest estimates, work zones account for 10 percent of all roadway congestion.³ Work zones are second only to poor traffic flow in causing dissatisfaction among drivers.⁴

A well planned and implemented public information and outreach campaign can help mitigate many of these issues by warning drivers of upcoming work zones and providing information to drivers both pre-trip and en route. This information allows drivers to make informed decisions about the route to take and when to travel.

1.3 Purpose of this Document

This document is meant to help transportation agencies plan and implement effective public information and outreach campaigns for work zones. The focus of this document is not on project selection and design, but on the travel impacts of a work zone – such as lane and shoulder closings, new traffic patterns, and traffic delay – and available travel alternatives such as different routes and travel modes. Furthermore, this document provides information and strategies for developing public information and outreach campaigns for specific work zones, rather than general work zone education and safety campaigns.

This document also provides support to agencies in their efforts to implement the recently updated work zone regulations in 23 CFR 630 Subpart J. The updated regulations address the use of public information and outreach as a work zone management tool. This document contains guidance, as well as many examples of work zone public information and outreach campaigns used by transportation agencies.

Much of the information in this document was gathered through a review of materials and a series of interviews of personnel from about 30 work zone public information and outreach campaigns located across the country. These projects, which are listed in Appendix A, ranged in terms of size and scope and were located in both urban and rural areas. In addition, this information was supplemented by a scan of web sites and literature for public information and outreach efforts for other road projects.

³ Chin, S.M. et al., Temporary Losses of Highway Capacity and Impacts on Performance, Oak Ridge National Laboratory, May 2002.

⁴ Moving Ahead: The American Public Speaks on Roadways and Transportation in Communities, U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, FHWA-OP-01-017, February 2001, <http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/reports/movingahead.htm> (Accessed 11/28/05).

1.4 Target Audience

This Guide is primarily designed for personnel in transportation agencies responsible for planning and operating highway work zones and those responsible for public relations and public information. However, it will also be of interest to transportation policy makers, work zone contractors, consultants, public relations firms, and emergency responders.

1.5 Public Information and Outreach and the Work Zone Rule

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) published the Work Zone Safety and Mobility Rule (the Rule) on September 9, 2004 in the Federal Register (69 FR 54562).⁵ This Rule updates and renames the former regulation on “Traffic Safety in Highway and Street Work Zones” in 23 CFR 630 Subpart J. All State and local governments⁶ that receive Federal-aid highway funding are affected by this updated Rule, and are required to comply with its provisions no later than October 12, 2007. While the Rule applies specifically to Federal-aid highway projects, agencies are encouraged to apply the good practices that it fosters to other road projects as well.

The Rule updates and broadens the existing regulation to address more of the current issues affecting work zone safety and mobility by:

- Fostering systematic assessment of the work zone impacts of road projects and development and implementation of transportation management strategies that help manage these impacts.
- Expanding thinking beyond the project work zone itself to address corridor, network, and regional issues while planning and designing road projects.
- Expanding work zone management beyond traffic safety and control to address mobility in addition to safety, and to address the broader concept of transportation operations and public information.
- Advocating innovative thinking in work zone planning, design, and management, so as to consider alternative/innovative design, construction, contracting, and transportation management strategies.

Within the Rule are three primary components:

- Implementation of an overall, agency-level work zone safety and mobility **policy**.
- Development of agency-level **processes and procedures** to support policy implementation, including procedures for work zone impacts assessment, analyzing work zone data, training, and process reviews.
- Development and implementation of procedures to assess and manage work zone impacts on individual **projects**. This includes requirements for identifying *significant projects*⁷ and developing and implementing transportation management plans (TMPs).

⁵ The full text of the Rule is available at http://www.ops.fhwa.dot.gov/wz/resources/final_rule.htm.

⁶ Hereinafter referred to as agencies.

⁷ The Rule defines a significant project as one that, alone or in combination with other concurrent projects nearby is anticipated to cause sustained work zone impacts that are greater than what is considered tolerable based on the respective agency's policy and/or engineering judgment. Per the Rule, this automatically includes Interstate System projects in a Transportation Management Area that occupy a location for more than three days and have either intermittent or continuous lane closures.

A TMP lays out a set of coordinated strategies and describes how these strategies will be used to manage the work zone impacts of a project. The scope, content, and level of detail of a TMP may vary based on the agency's work zone policy and the anticipated work zone impacts of the project. The type of TMP needed for a project is based on whether the project is determined to be a significant project. For significant projects, the TMP must include public information and outreach strategies to inform those affected by the project of expected work zone impacts and changing conditions. This Guide is designed to assist agencies with these strategies.

More information on TMPs and significant projects is available in **Developing and Implementing Transportation Management Plans for Work Zones**. Guidance on these topics can also be found in **Implementing the Rule on Work Zone Safety and Mobility**.⁸

1.6 Overview of Guidance Material for the Rule

To help agencies implement the provisions of the Rule, FHWA has developed a suite of guidance documents that address the following topics:

- **Overall Rule Implementation.** Provides an overview of the Rule and general guidance for implementing the Rule, lays out fundamental principles, and presents agencies with ideas for implementing the Rule's provisions.
- **Work Zone Impacts Assessment.** Provides guidance on developing procedures to assess work zone impacts of projects.
- **Work Zone Transportation Management Plans (TMPs).** Provides guidance on developing TMPs for managing work zone impacts of projects.
- **Work Zone Public Information and Outreach Strategies.** Addressed in this document.

All Rule resources will be available on the FHWA work zone web site at the following URL: http://www.ops.fhwa.dot.gov/resources/final_rule.htm

1.7 Key Terminology

In this Guide, the term “public outreach” is used to describe the process of communicating with groups and individuals with the intent of both providing and obtaining information about the impacts of a proposed or in-progress work zone. An example of an outreach activity is meeting with a business to determine their concerns and obtain their ideas, as well as provide them with information regarding the impacts of the work zone.

The term “public information” is used to describe the process of making groups and individuals aware of work zones, their impacts, and possible mitigation strategies. A dynamic message sign warning travelers about delays through a work zone is a form of public information. Establishing partnerships is central to the idea of public outreach, whereas public information is the more impersonal communication of ideas and facts.

The term “campaign” is used to describe an entire, though project specific, public information and outreach effort. A campaign will have one or more “goals” that the agency is trying to achieve. The term “strategy” is used to describe a plan of action intended to accomplish a specific goal. There might be several strategies to employ multiple ways of accomplishing a goal, and several methods of public information and outreach. Typically, a campaign will employ multiple strategies. For example, if the goal is to reduce peak period delay in and around a work zone, one strategy to do so may be to promote alternate routes and transportation modes (including telecommuting). There then may be various communication strategies that can be used to promote these alternate routes and transportation modes, including a project web site, newspaper advertisements, and/or highway billboards.

2.0 Designing a Public Information and Outreach Campaign for Work Zones

For work zones, particularly those deemed to have a sustained impact on safety and mobility, a transportation agency will often need to design and implement a public information and outreach campaign. The campaign should include appropriate goal statements, strategies, and methods/approaches for reaching those goals. The sections that follow discuss, in general, the steps needed to develop a campaign. Each section also provides examples from work zone projects around the country. This discussion may not cover all of the circumstances of every work zone, but provides helpful information on the main public information and outreach elements that those responsible for planning and operating work zones will need to consider.

The updated Rule defines a category of projects expected to cause a relatively high level of disruption. These projects are called “significant projects.”¹ The Rule requires the use of public information and outreach strategies for significant projects (see Section 1.5 for more information).

2.1 Determine the Appropriate Size and Nature of the Campaign

The size and nature of a public information and outreach effort should ideally be determined by the anticipated impacts of the road construction project. For a short-lived, small project causing minor traffic disruption, public information and outreach may be limited to routine publication of details in an agency newsletter, web site, and/or other traveler information outlet. For a longer, more disruptive work zone, a more elaborate public information and outreach campaign may be warranted. However, most planned and unplanned (emergency) work zones should incorporate some form of public information and outreach.

A range of elements should be considered when determining the size and nature of a public information and outreach campaign. These include the effects of the project on:

- Traffic delay and safety at both the corridor and network levels, including the effects on parallel corridors and alternate routes.
- Traffic delay and safety at nearby intersections, interchanges, and railroad crossings.
- Special traffic and safety conditions such as heavy truck traffic, steep grades, and poor weather.
- Disruptions of other modes of transportation including public transportation, airports, rail terminals, and ports.
- Evacuation routes.
- Hazardous material transportation routes.
- Emergency responders (hospitals, fire stations, military installations).
- Other public and private entities (such as schools and universities).
- Planned special events (sporting events, holiday parades, concerts, etc.).
- Businesses and residences.

¹ The Rule defines a significant project as one that, alone or in combination with other concurrent projects nearby, is anticipated to cause sustained work zone impacts that are greater than what is considered tolerable based on the respective agency's policy and/or engineering judgment. Per the Rule, this automatically includes Interstate System projects in a Transportation Management Area that occupy a location for more than three days and have either intermittent or continuous lane closures.

If a work zone is relatively small and of short duration, determining its effects may require nothing more than an informal consideration of these factors. In other cases, determining the effects of a work zone and the needs of a public information and outreach campaign may require some significant data gathering and analysis. More information about assessing work zone impacts and developing transportation management plans (TMPs) to mitigate those impacts can be found in **Work Zone Impacts Assessment: An Approach to Assess and Manage Work Zone Safety and Mobility Impacts of Road Projects**, and **Developing and Implementing Transportation Management Plans for Work Zones**.²

Much of the information necessary to determine the need for a work zone public information and outreach campaign, including traffic levels, vehicle types, and congestion, is likely available from agency sources. However, determining the effect of a work zone on traffic may require the use of analytical tools. QuickZone is one traffic impact analysis tool that can be used to estimate work zone delays.³ It allows road owners and contractors to compare the effects of various alternatives for doing road work, such as performing work at night instead of during the day, or of diverting the traffic to different roads at various stages of construction.

In some cases, information will be available from research conducted in the planning stages of the project.



In evaluating options to add capacity to I-15 from 10600 South to the Alpine interchange in Utah County (S.R. 92), the Utah Department of Transportation (UDOT) conducted a telephone survey and an online survey of travelers on this stretch of highway. Among other things, the surveys collected information on the types of travelers (commuters/non-commuters and demographics, etc.), the levels of and reasons for dissatisfaction with traveling on the road, and the prevalence of Internet use and knowledge of the UDOT web site.

Source: Utah Department of Transportation, I-15 South – Utah County Line to 10600 South Project, URL: <http://www.dot.utah.gov/i15utahcounty/index.php> (Accessed 11/15/05)

For long-term projects, determining needs may be an ongoing process. Information collected formally (traffic delay data, public opinion surveys, etc.) and informally (community meetings, letters of complaint, etc.) can be helpful in identifying when the plan for the campaign may need to be adjusted to address changing conditions or varying degrees of effectiveness.

² Available at http://www.ops.fhwa.dot.gov/wz/resources/final_rule.htm

³ QuickZone is a work zone delay estimation model developed by the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA's) Research, Development and Technology (RD&T) program. QuickZone helps project planners and engineers obtain an estimate of delay, queuing and user costs associated with alternate work zone design and mitigation strategies. More information is available at <http://www.tfrc.gov/its/quickzon.htm>



For its Rebuilding I-235 project in Des Moines (stretching from 2002 through 2007), the Iowa Department of Transportation conducts an annual survey to measure: (1) current travel behavior on I-235; (2) employer-offered commuting option incentives and use of those options; (3) motivators to use travel modes other than single occupancy vehicles; (4) frequency of construction-related problems and responses to those problems; and (5) methods of delivering and usefulness of I-235 construction information.

Source: Iowa Department of Transportation, "I-235 Reconstruction Project, 2004 Communications Plan, Approved January 8, 2004."

2.2 Identify Resources

To be successful, a public information and outreach campaign must be supported with sufficient resources. Public information and outreach, therefore, is an important consideration when developing road construction project budgets. Such expenditures are not frivolous. Experience has shown that the benefits of a public information and outreach campaign are likely to outweigh the costs.



The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) has found that during construction projects "public information is the ... mitigation strategy that gives us the 'biggest bang for the buck' – its effectiveness is greater in urban areas, but still holds true in rural areas."

Source: Quote from Robert Copp, California Department of Transportation, used in Transportation Management Plans for Work Zones fact sheet (FHWA-HOP-05-022), URL: http://www.ops.fhwa.dot.gov/wz/resources/tmp_factsheet.pdf (Accessed 11/18/05)

Both internal agency resources and external resources can play a role in developing and implementing a public information and outreach campaign for a road project. Internal resources include agency personnel and agency owned facilities and equipment. Personnel may include a project manager, public relations expert (to communicate with the mass media and public), graphic designer, and webmaster. In some cases, a transportation agency may need to create a new temporary or permanent position to deal with work zone-related public information and outreach. Other internal resources include many of the agency's community and traveler information systems including web sites, highway advisory radio (HAR), 511, dynamic message signs, and dedicated radio and TV stations.



TIP: Take advantage of free media, such as news broadcasts and traffic radio, to provide project information. This will require establishing relationships with the media to ensure they report the correct information.



Resources external to a transportation agency will also be helpful to conducting a public information and outreach campaign. This may include paying for public relations expertise (possibly including graphic design, web design, and writing); radio, TV, and newspaper advertising; printing; or a public information center or kiosk. Such costs can vary widely. Agencies can leverage and stretch their resources by incorporating the use of available resources that are low cost or free of charge. External resources that may be essentially free of charge include radio and TV traffic broadcasts, newspaper articles, and help from project partners.

The budget for a work zone public information and outreach campaign will depend on several factors, including the size and nature of the campaign (discussed in Section 2.1); the communication strategies selected (discussed in Section 2.6); whether the selected strategies are already established in the agency and can readily be used; and the role of partners (discussed in Section 2.3). For the campaigns researched for this Guide, in some cases agency staff were not able to provide specific estimates of campaign expenditures because some or all of the work was done in-house with staff time and internal resources, or budgets associated with the work zone public information and outreach campaign were folded into budgets for general agency or project outreach. Some of the campaigns reviewed for this Guide had expenditures of less than \$50,000, while other campaign budgets were as much as several million dollars. In general, agency staff that were able to provide estimates cited campaign expenditures such as 0.3 percent or 1 percent of the overall project budget.

2.3 Identify Partners

In both the planning and implementation stages of a public information and outreach campaign the lead agency should consider working with a range of partners. Partners in the public information and outreach process may include: (1) State and local agencies (including neighboring jurisdictions, transit providers, port authorities, and emergency responders); (2) elected and appointed public officials; (3) work zone personnel (e.g., construction contractors, traffic control providers, law enforcement); (4) major employers and service providers (e.g. hospitals) in the affected area; (5) other groups such as transportation management associations, neighborhoods associations, business associations, etc; (6) traveler information providers, including radio, TV, and newspapers; and (7) planned special event coordinators. The major reasons for including these partners are:

- **To establish lines of communication.** Such connections will be particularly important during major periods of disruption and when changes occur. In its plan for building the Tacoma Narrows Bridge, for example, the Washington DOT made it a goal to connect with the staff of elected officials in order to provide them with information to respond to constituent inquiries.
- **To distribute information.** Involving outside groups in the planning of an outreach campaign is in itself a way to distribute information. Holding a meeting with the aim of soliciting community input, for example, is also a way to inform the public of disruptions and plans to deal with them.

- **To improve the product.** Partners in developing outreach strategies will bring unique perspectives about successful types of message and methods of communication. This may be particularly important in areas with diverse population groups (e.g. non-English speaking communities, truck drivers, the elderly).
- **To share the costs.** Partners may be willing to share the costs of producing materials or to provide free forms of advertising. For example, major employers are often willing to incorporate messages in company communications including newsletters, web sites, or even by including flyers with pay slips.

One way to obtain input from affected parties is through a community task force, made up of stakeholders from the community likely to be impacted by the work zone. Ideally developed during the planning stage of the project, the objective of creating such a task force is to obtain input and review/comment on the development and implementation of construction and transportation management strategies to minimize the impacts of the project on the community. Both the contractor and transportation agency may meet with the task force(s) to obtain input and recommendations at various stages of the project delivery process starting during planning and extending through design, construction, and project assessment. An agency may be able to identify campaign partners from a community task force, which is composed of members already highly interested in the project.

While meeting with all stakeholders is important, meeting specifically with local businesses and business organizations is often a very important element of a public information and outreach effort. Businesses are a conduit for providing project information because they have a vested interest in communicating what they know with customers and suppliers. In addition, these meetings provide businesses the opportunity to suggest ways a project can be managed to minimize any negative effects.



In order to perform construction work on I-29 in Fargo, North Dakota the main entrance to a nearby mall needed to be closed for three months. The project staff worked with the mall's management to change the timing of the closure to minimize its effects and to coincide with a \$19 million reconstruction of the mall.

Source: Presentation given by Kevin Gorder, Project Manager for I-29 Project, North Dakota DOT, at the FHWA Work Zone Focus State Workshop, April 19, 2005, URL: <http://www.ops.fhwa.dot.gov/wz/publicinfostrategies.htm> (Accessed 10/19/05)

2.4 Identify Your Target Audiences

A key to any public information and outreach campaign is to identify the target audience(s). This will help to determine the types of messages that need to be conveyed and the best methods of communicating those messages. Ultimately, the target audiences are travelers or potential travelers. However, travelers can be thought of in different ways and they can be reached through different methods (either directly or through some type of organization, such as a community group). Audiences, therefore, can be conceived of in three overlapping categories: types of travelers, types of trip generators, and types of people (see Table 2.1).

Public Information and Outreach Campaign Audiences
Types of Travelers ■ Pre-trip ■ En route ■ Personal – local, commute ■ Personal – local, non-commute ■ Personal – non-local (e.g., tourists) ■ Commercial – local ■ Commercial – non-local (long distance)
Types of Trip Generators ■ Major employers ■ Shopping districts/malls ■ Recreation and tourist facilities (e.g., parks, museums) ■ Organizers of planned special events ■ Emergency responders/hospitals ■ Business associations ■ Transportation management associations ■ Intermodal passenger terminals (e.g., airport) ■ Intermodal freight terminals (e.g., port)
Types of People ■ Residents (and neighborhood associations) ■ Minorities (particularly groups with limited English-speaking capability) ■ Special demographics (particularly elderly, children) ■ Disabled ■ Small business owners

Table 2.1 Public Information and Outreach Campaign Audiences

Clearly, the major audience for a work zone public information and outreach campaign is travelers. But travelers are not all alike. A traveler may be reached pre-trip or en route, and may have different means of receiving information. Pre-trip travelers, accessing information through a project web site or TV report, for example, may be more likely to change trip timing, mode, route, and destination than travelers already on their way. Travelers en route, with good timely information via radio, dynamic message signs, or 511, may also alter some characteristics of a trip (particularly their route) to lessen delay.

Personal travelers also differ in terms of the purpose of a trip. A major distinction is between commuters and non-commuters. Commuters tend to be very aware of travel conditions (and thus relatively easy to inform) but less flexible about aspects of their trip, particularly the origin and destination. Non-commuters by contrast are typically harder to reach but may be more likely to respond to messages about changing the timing of a trip and their destination.

Another distinction is between local and non-local travelers. Non-local travelers are generally harder to identify and inform about a road construction project. Moreover, the information needs of non-locals may differ because of the nature of their trips and their unfamiliarity with the area. Such factors are particularly important in tourist areas and near passenger terminals (airports, ports, Amtrak stations, etc. It may be necessary to publicize information in different ways and in a wider area for non-local travelers.

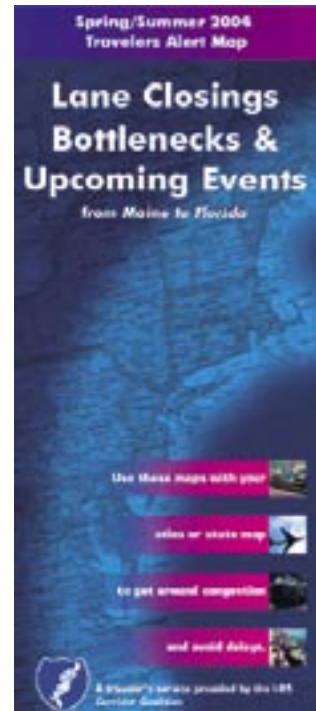


Figure 2.1 Informational Brochure Produced by I-95 Corridor Coalition
(Source: <http://www.i95coalition.org>)



The I-95 Corridor Coalition produces a brochure twice a year on work zones (and other potential problem areas) for distribution to travelers up and down the east coast. The brochure, shown in Figure 2.1, is distributed to welcome centers, rest areas, transportation agencies, private companies, and individuals and may also be downloaded from the Coalition's web site (<http://www.i95coalition.org>). The Coalition prints approximately 275,000 copies of each brochure.

Source: I-95 Corridor Coalition, URL: <http://www.i95coalition.org> (Accessed 11/22/05)

Commercial drivers are another group who may have different needs for work zone information because of tight schedules, oversize or dangerous loads, and overnight travel. When planning a work zone public information and outreach campaign, therefore, it is important to consider if the work zone affects a route with heavy truck traffic and/or if the work zone is close to a freight terminal (port, airport, etc.). Truckers carrying special loads (oversize, hazardous materials) may need to avoid a work zone entirely. Other types of commercial drivers (such as ambulance drivers) may also require special attention.



During the I-65 construction project in Kentucky involving full closure on weekends, the public information and outreach campaign included a component specifically targeted to truckers. This involved publicizing project details and alternate routes in a direct mailing of flyers to trucking companies, use of trucking industry newsletters, and the CB radio network.

Source: Interview with Kentucky Transportation Cabinet personnel, June 2005.

Another way to determine target audiences is to identify major trip generators near the work zone, such as major businesses, stadiums, airports, and the organizations that represent them. A good, early step in developing the public information and outreach campaign is to develop a list of the main trip generators in the affected area. These entities will need help in minimizing the impacts of the work zone on their customers and suppliers and are another avenue to reach travelers.



To help businesses during the I-235 reconstruction in Des Moines, Iowa DOT distributed Business Survival Kits with a booklet “Tips and Tactics for Continued Success During I-235 Reconstruction,” a survival video, and other materials.



Source: Iowa Department of Transportation, “I-235 Reconstruction Project, 2004 Communications Plan, Approved January 8, 2004” and I-235 project web site, URL: <http://www.i235.com>.



The Indiana DOT developed the following tips for businesses during its Hyperfix 65/70 project. This information comes directly from the Hyperfix 65/70 project web site.

“Hyperfix 65/70 will require ramp closures and detours that may change the way you do business. Here are some things you can do to minimize the effects of construction on your business.

Be a source of information. If a ramp is closed near your business, consider sending a flyer or an e-mail postcard to inform your customers of an alternate route. Maps from the Hyperfix 65/70 Web site can be downloaded and used in these materials. You can place handouts near the cash register or in a convenient location by the door. For regular customers, consider including flyers with billings or other mailings.

Educate your suppliers. When placing orders, make sure your suppliers know about construction and detours. The Hyperfix 65/70 Web site can provide alternative routes and directions to your business from any part of the city affected by the shutdown.

Work with your employees. If possible, consider offering your employees flexible hours that can increase time spent doing good work and decrease commuting time.

Stay informed. As construction proceeds, some closed ramps will reopen and some open ramps will be closed. It’s important to stay up to date on changes so you and your customers know what to expect. INDOT will help with media announcements and updates to the Hyperfix 65/70 Web site. We’d be happy to provide you with e-mail updates and alternative routes.”

Source: Indiana Department of Transportation, Hyperfix Web site,
URL: <http://www.in.gov/dot/div/specialprojects/hyperfix/> (Accessed 1/25/05)

An outreach campaign also needs to take into consideration the different types of people affected by a work zone. Certain groups may need special information or information provided in a different way. Residents who live near an upcoming work zone are often a primary audience since they may be affected by the work zone on a daily basis. One of the most common situations is a large group or groups of limited-English speaking residents.



For the Octavia Central project in San Francisco, California, under construction from 2003 through 2005, some of the project information was provided in Spanish, Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Tagalog, and Russian to accommodate various ethnic groups living in the area.

Source: California Department of Transportation, The Octavia Central project web site,
URL: <http://www.octaviacentral.org/> (Accessed 10/19/05)

Other segments of the population that may warrant special consideration are the elderly, children, and the disabled. Children can be conduits of information to parents (as well as being motorists of the future).



The public information and outreach campaign for the Virginia Department of Transportation's Springfield Interchange project specifically targeted several retirement and nursing homes for the elderly near the project to inform them of the impacts of the project and need for extra caution.

Source: Interview with Virginia DOT personnel, June 2005.



The Illinois DOT visited schools with a costume version of their character "Jack Hammer" before the Upgrade 74 project in Peoria, Illinois to "inform children of the construction and to instruct them to remind adults to drive safely and slowly while in a work zone." The image below shows Jack Hammer with elementary school principal June Tyler.



Source: Illinois Department of Transportation, Upgrade 74 project web site, URL: <http://www.upgrade74.com/cruft/hkchicago.com/safety/safety.htm> (Accessed 1/31/05)



In Santa Cruz, California, blind pedestrians were specifically targeted in the public information and outreach campaign for a work zone affecting downtown sidewalks.

Source: Interview with Santa Cruz City Redevelopment Agency personnel, June 2005.

2.5 Develop the Campaign Message(s)

Successful work zone public information and outreach campaigns generally incorporate three messages:

- Safety first
- Plan ahead to minimize delay
- We care

The specific details of the work zone messages should be tailored to the circumstances of the work zone and audiences identified for the campaign.

2.5.1 Safety First

Encouraging motorists to take safety precautions to protect themselves and highway workers is the most important message to convey to drivers. Drivers should be continuously reminded to adhere to posted speed limits and stay alert (for lane changes, slowing traffic, etc.) to prevent crashes. This can be reinforced with warnings about increased traffic fines and enforcement activity if appropriate. Agencies may also want to provide facts about work zone crashes.



A numbers of transportation agencies have developed work zone driving tips. These driving tips often include:

- Adhere to posted speed limits.
- Pay attention.
- Use proper turn signals for lane changes.
- Do not weave in and out of traffic.
- Keep a safe distance from the car ahead.
- Minimize distractions such as using cellular telephones.
- As always, buckle up.
- For your safety and the safety of others, watch for lane/ramp closures and detour signs.
- Continue to pay attention to work zone signs, even when the work is long-term or widespread.
- Remain calm.

Source: Adapted from Virginia Department of Transportation, Springfield Interchange Project, URL: <http://www.springfieldinterchange.com> (Accessed 11/22/05)



TIP: Safety tips can be included on outreach materials with another primary purpose.

2.5.2 Plan Ahead to Minimize Delay and Frustration

The disruptions caused by a work zone can be reduced if travelers plan ahead. Additionally, if travelers know what to expect they will be less frustrated about delays. Another general message that should be conveyed to the public, therefore, is to think ahead about the timing of travel, the route, the mode, and the destination. The specific messages concerning these thoughts will typically form the centerpiece of a public information and outreach campaign.



In 2000, the Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department (AHTD) set out to rebuild or resurface over 350 aging Interstate miles in a 5-year time frame. Realizing that potential negativity arising from serious crashes and traffic delays could have an impact on the continuation of the program's accelerated time frame, AHTD create a safety and information campaign entitled Pave The Way, along with the sub-theme, Think Ahead. Through the campaign, motorists were encouraged to plan for construction while staying focused on the end result.



Source: Fact Sheet 9 – Arkansas Uses Public Outreach to Pave The Way During Interstate Rehabilitation, FHWA-OP-04-031, Summer 2004, URL: <http://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/wz/practices/factsheets/factsheet9.htm> (Accessed 11/22/05)

2.5.2.1 Work Zone Details

The current details of a work zone can be provided through a variety of public information and outreach strategies, including the web, project hotline or 511, newspaper articles, dynamic message signs (DMS), and others. At a minimum the details of a work zone should include the dates and times of work zone activity and the routes, lanes, and ramps affected. If these details are changing, it is important to provide the most current information. Incorrect and out-of-date information can compromise the effectiveness of a public information and outreach campaign. One study of work zone information posted on web sites found that although project location, purpose, and overall duration are often posted early in the planning process they are unlikely to be updated. Moreover, traveler information such as the number of lane closures, closure duration, and estimated delay are reported less frequently. The study found the number of lanes closed was reported 37 percent of the time, closure duration 22 percent, and a quantitative estimate of delay only 7 percent.⁴

2.5.2.2 Travel Times and Delays

Public information on travel times and delays can range from very general (e.g., "Expect delays") to very specific (e.g., "Travel time through work zone is 20 minutes"). More specific information is generally more useful to travelers, and preferable when it is available. Travel time and delay information can also be presented as average or typical conditions for the work zone or real-time conditions. In some cases, travel delay can be provided in general terms by indicating that there is an average 10-minute delay, for example, during the morning and afternoon peak periods. Better still is real-time traveler

⁴ A Snapshot of Summer 2001 Work Zone Activity: Based on Information Reported on State Road Closure and Construction Web Sites, U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, February 2003, http://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/wz/docs/2001wz_snapshot.pdf (Accessed 06/10/05).

information provided by traffic cameras and travel time displays. Travel time and delay information may be provided to drivers pre-trip (e.g., via web sites, emails, pages, or telephone) or en route (e.g., via DMS). Some agencies include a date and time stamp with their information to indicate that it is current. Figure 2.2 illustrates a camera image showing traffic conditions on I-215 in Utah. The image includes the route name and the date and time the image was taken.



Figure 2.2 Work Zone Traffic Camera Image on Utah DOT's Web Site. (Source: <http://www.communterlink.utah.gov>)

2.5.2.3 Alternate Methods and Modes of Transportation

Reducing the amount of traffic through a work zone is one way of reducing congestion and travel delay. This may involve providing detailed information on carpooling/ridesharing, transit, park and ride, and telecommuting options. Messages regarding telecommuting may be targeted to major employers as well as commuters.



During the Springfield Interchange Project, the Virginia Department of Transportation developed a wide range of commuting options that it publicized on its project web site and elsewhere. These include:

- Free parking and a shuttle running from the nearby Springfield Mall to the Franconia-Springfield Metro Station.
- New and bigger park and ride lots in the I-95 corridor affected by the project.
- A program known as “telework!va” that is designed to help a company start or expand a telework program with financial support from the State of up to \$35,000.
- Extra commuter trains and buses for residents to avoid the Springfield Interchange.
- A local bus service to travel throughout the Springfield business district.
- Information on starting a buspool, carpool, or vanpool.
- A guaranteed ride home program.
- Information for employers and employees on how to get tax-free transit benefits.
- Bicycling information including taking bikes on transit, good bicycling routes, and lockers.
- How and where to buy transit tickets and to get more information.

Source: Interview with Virginia DOT personnel, June 2005. Information about commuting options is available on <http://www.springfieldinterchange.com/cs.asp> (Accessed 11/22/05)



TIP: Place links to web sites for transit and other commuting options on the work zone project web site.

2.5.2.4 Alternate Routes

In many cases alternate routes will need to be devised and communicated to travelers. These routes may be different depending on the type of driver (local, long distance, commercial drivers) and timing. Alternate route messages are essential when construction involves shutting down an entire route. Alternate route messages may involve DMS located at decision points for drivers. There are a variety of means for communicating alternate routes. Handing out alternate route maps, such as the one in Figure 2.3 or providing alternate route information in flyers, brochures, or other handouts, such as in Figure 2.4, are just two possible options.



Figure 2.3 Map showing alternate routes during the Upgrade I-74 project in Peoria, Illinois. (Source: Illinois DOT, <http://www.upgrade74.com/>)

The reconstruction of I-65 extends from the Watterson Expressway to the Spaghetti Junction in Louisville, Kentucky.

Plans are to complete the project in just two weekends, working around the clock to finish construction. Normally, a project like this would take about 3 months to complete.

In order to complete the project quickly, one direction of I-65 will be closed for two weekends: Northbound lanes will be closed August 11th – 14th, and southbound lanes will be closed September 15th – 18th from 9:00 p.m. Friday until 6:00 a.m. Monday. An alternative weekend of October 6th – 9th has been chosen in case weather conditions prohibit work in August or September.

Alternate routes are available around the construction project via I-264, I-64, and I-265 and I-71.



Figure 2.4 Alternate route information on flyer specifically targeted to truckers affected by the weekend full closure of I-65 in Louisville, Kentucky. (Source: Kentucky Transportation Cabinet)

2.5.3 We Care

Motorists are more willing to cope with disruptions and cooperate with directions when they feel that all necessary steps are being taken to make things easier. Acceptance of inconvenience related to the work being performed is more likely with a genuine message from those involved. Thus, public information and outreach strategies should incorporate details of the project including what is involved, the duration of the work, the benefits, and periodic updates about how the work is proceeding, such as shown in the graphic in Figure 2.5.



Figure 2.5 Graphic from Upgrade74 project web site used to show progress on the project. (Source: <http://www.upgrade74.com/>)

2.6 Determine Communication Strategies

After identifying the appropriate audience and messages for the work zone project the next step is to determine the strategies that will be used to get the messages to the target audiences. There is a wide range of ways to communicate with the public about work zones. The strategies used must be tailored to the project context, the message being conveyed, and funding limitations.

Table 2.2 provides a number of communication strategies for disseminating work zone messages.

Ways to Communicate Work Zone Information	
■ Project web site	■ Video
■ Email alerts	■ CB radio network (for truckers)
■ Web-connected traffic cameras	■ Billboards
■ Direct mail (community contact letter, other materials)	■ Advertising on buses
■ Brochures/flyers/factsheets	■ Information center or kiosk
■ Newsletter	■ Project hotline
■ Legislative briefings	■ 511
■ Public meetings/workshops/events	■ Dynamic message signs (DMS)
■ Project model display with related traffic information	■ Highway advisory radio (HAR)
■ Newspapers advertising and articles	■ Personal contacts
■ TV advertising, articles, traffic spots	■ Press kit
■ Radio advertising, articles, and traffic spots	■ Business survival kit
■ Maps	■ Rest-stop restaurant tray liners
■ Employee newsletters	■ Give-aways (key-chains, pens, etc.)

Table 2.2 Ways to Communicate Work Zone Information

Communication strategies can be modified to fit the needs of the project for which they are being used. A combination of several of strategies may make sense for some projects, while only one or two of the strategies may be necessary for other projects. Typically there will be a significant amount of interaction between different means of communication. For example, informational materials such as brochures and fact sheets are often posted to project web sites, thereby making them more widely accessible. Similarly, information posted to project web sites or gained from project materials may be used by news media to provide information through newspapers, the radio, and television news. Furthermore, drivers are likely to use a variety of different means of communication, meaning that messages must be consistent across all communication strategies. A driver who reads something in the newspaper stating that road closures will be occurring over the weekend could potentially refer to the project web site for further information. It is important that the information on the web site is consistent with what was in the newspaper, and also expands on that information by providing more details.



TIP: Use as many communication strategies as needed to effectively communicate work zone information to all target audiences, but ensure that a consistent message is used throughout.

In general, the largest proportion of the public tends to notice information provided by the mass media outlets, including newspaper articles and traffic news. In a survey done for the Central Freeway Replacement Project in San Francisco, California, newspaper articles and TV news, followed by freeway signs, were mentioned as communication methods the public noticed the most (see Figure 2.6). These sorts of statistics will vary from place to place and over time as media usage changes. For instance, web sites are increasingly the place people go first for information prior to getting in their car, while dynamic message signs are becoming more widely used for in-route information.

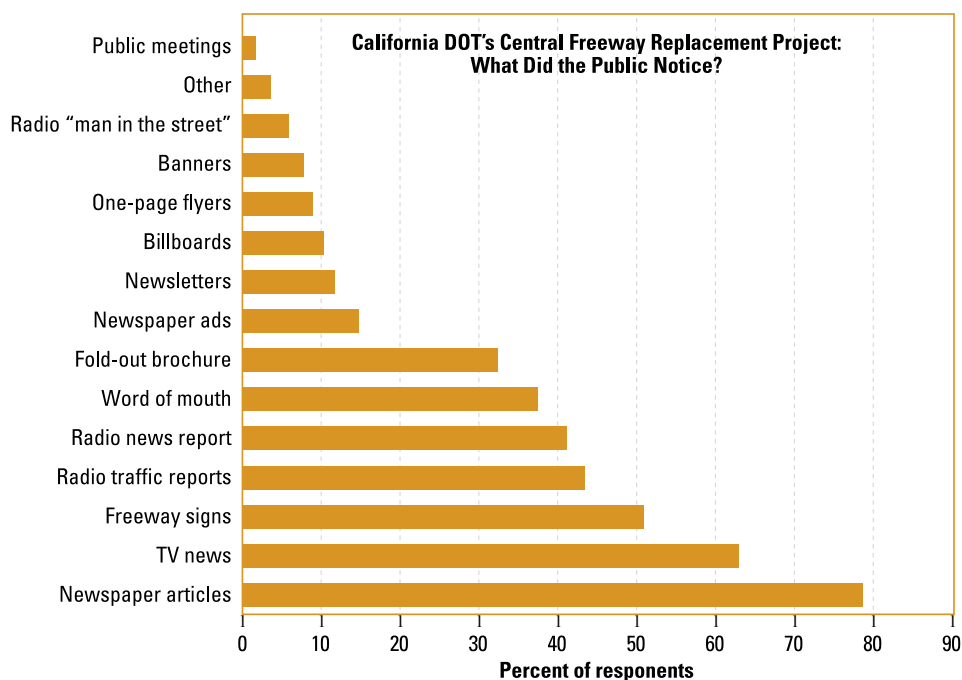


Figure 2.6 California DOT's Central Freeway Replacement Project: What Did the Public Notice? (Source: California Department of Transportation)



In its study of public outreach for the Rebuilding I-235 project, the Iowa DOT found that:

- Those who saw the special section in the [*Des Moines*] *Register* in June are more aware of the I-235 Web site and more likely to use DriveTime radio reports.
- Those who received the I-235 *Travel Planner* are more aware of the I-235 Web site, DriveTime radio reports, and the Avoid the Rush business commuter program.
- Those who saw the DOT ads on Wednesdays and Sundays in the *Register* are more aware of the I-235 Web site, project office, DriveTime Radio reports, 511, and the Avoid the Rush campaign and are more likely to use project maps throughout the community.

Source: Iowa Department of Transportation, "I-235 Reconstruction Project, 2004 Communications Plan, Approved January 8, 2004."

Section 4 goes into more detail about communication strategies, further describes those strategies that are typically employed, and provides examples of how States have used these strategies.

2.7 Determine When to Communicate

Providing information to the public should not be limited to when a work zone is up and running. A public information and outreach campaign should also consider strategies to be implemented before construction begins and after the project is complete. In the before phase, the campaign should concentrate on general information about the project, the problems it may cause, and how to find out more information. This might involve a range of outreach and communication methods such as working groups/planning advisory groups, public workshops, a project web site, print media, legislative briefings, and branding. Near the commencement date of a work zone, it may be appropriate to add other methods such as free media coverage and paid advertising, a telephone "hotline," and the use of dynamic message signs.

After the completion of the project, an agency can provide information about successes and failures of the project and thank project partners. This is a chance to enhance the image of the transportation department as a government agency with a customer-driven focus.



After completing the I-64 project, the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet ran full-page newspaper advertisements to inform the public the project was finished, to thank those involved, and to publicize the project was completed three weeks ahead of schedule.

Similarly, after completing the I-670 full closure, the Ohio DOT held a celebration and ribbon-cutting ceremony to publicize the end of the project and thank the public for their patience during the project. The Governor of Ohio, the mayor of Columbus, and the Director of the Ohio DOT gave presentations at the event, which was held under a bridge on the rebuilt section of I-670. Following the event, the public had the opportunity to take trolley tours of a new section of I-670.

Sources: Interview with Kentucky Transportation Cabinet personnel, June 2005.

The Columbus Dispatch, "Wait is Over: I-670 Opens Today", by Brian Williams, September 19, 2003.

The project web site may also be used to publicize information about project completion. Some people may only occasionally travel the area and may be checking to see what is happening. An old web site, if not updated or removed, can become an ambiguous source of information and cause confusion about whether or not the work zone is still in place. If the web site is removed, it is recommended that agencies retain ownership of the web site domain name for a period of time following completion of the project in order to prevent others from purchasing the domain name and using it for undesirable means.

2.8 Evaluate Effectiveness

Evaluating the effectiveness of a public information and outreach campaign should be part of an agency's long-term effort to improve safety and mobility in and around work zones. During a long road construction project it is advisable to periodically evaluate the effectiveness of the public information and outreach campaign with the aim of redirecting resources if necessary. An evaluation might include:

- Documenting and reporting the impacts of the work zone, such as the number of crashes and traffic delay.
- Documenting and reporting the questions, comments, compliments, and complaints received via hotline, web site, letter, etc.
- Assessing perceptions of successes and failures among the project partners.
- Surveying the public, businesses, or commercial truck drivers affected by the work zone.
- Surveying tourism bureaus or other major facilities near the work zone, such as rest stops.

One of the best ways of evaluating the effectiveness of a public information and outreach campaign is through a statistically valid telephone survey. Items assessed may include the following:

- Awareness of the project and project information resources.
- Changes in travel behavior including trip timing, routes, travel modes, and destinations.
- Employers' provision of incentives such as flexible schedules, transit payments, company vanpools, etc.
- Travel problems encountered.
- Levels of traveler dissatisfaction.
- Methods of accessing work zone information.
- Usefulness of the information.
- Knowledge of the reasons for the construction project.

3.0 Planning the Public Information and Outreach Campaign

When planning for a public information and outreach campaign, agencies often develop a public information and outreach plan. This plan allows agencies to keep track of what has been done and what needs to be done. It also facilitates planning for future campaigns as agencies will be able to review a written record of needed resources, timeframes, and other pertinent information. Therefore, it is important that the plan is updated as the campaign progresses so that at the completion of the campaign there is an accurate record of what was done.

Table 3.1 is a checklist that can be used to identify the tasks often involved in public information and outreach campaigns. The efforts made or that need to be made for each of these tasks should be included in the public information and outreach plan. The information should include appropriate milestones, budget allocation, task responsibility, and completion date.

Appendix B contains a set of templates that can be used to help develop a public information and outreach campaign and document the components of the campaign in a plan. These templates can be used in coordination with the checklist in Table 3.1 to document target audiences, messages, products, goals, resources, and other needed information. Appendix C includes two of these templates filled in with information for a fictional project. The templates in Appendix C are meant to serve as a sample to demonstrate to agencies how to fill in the templates with enough detail and information to make them useful.

1. Develop Foundation/Framework for Campaign		✓
1.1	Define goals and objectives for outreach campaign	
1.2	Determine approach, resources, and scope of outreach	
1.3	Define the outreach coordination team and necessary partners and define roles	
1.4	Identify target audience	
1.5	Develop messages	
1.6	Develop brand themes and logo for project	
1.7	Determine general opportunities to distribute the messages (public meetings, peak commute times, direct mail, etc.)	
1.8	Develop draft plan to implement outreach strategies (specific actions/timelines/points of contact)	
1.9	Determine success criteria	
1.10	Validate communications plan/secure buy-in from key leaders and partners	
2. Develop Outreach Strategies		✓
2.1	Confirm outreach product types and format requirements (negotiate pricing where possible/appropriate and determine final product types based on budget)	
2.2	Determine communication strategies to convey the messages (news, brochures, web site, radio ads, dynamic message signs, etc.)	
2.3	Identify audience for each product	
2.4	Confirm specific message for each product	
2.5	Determine design of product	
2.6	Develop specific content of product	
2.7	Produce outreach products	
3. Implement Outreach Strategies		✓
3.1	Confirm outreach opportunities/distribution channels and identify deadlines or special requirements. Document in plan.	
3.2	Match outreach products to specific distribution channels identified in item 1.7.	
3.3	Continue to identify outreach partners and possible outreach opportunities	
3.4	Develop/maintain contact lists	
3.5	Distribute products through channels	
4. Evaluate/Improve Outreach Strategies		✓
4.1	Regularly review and update each outreach strategy.	
4.2	Conduct regular process reviews as appropriate (will depend on length of project)	
4.3	At completion of outreach, evaluate effectiveness of outreach results based on success criteria, document lessons learned, and implement improvements in the future.	

Table 3.1 Public Information and Outreach Campaign Checklist

4.0 Communication Strategies

This section describes a number of commonly used communication strategies and includes examples of how agencies have used these strategies. The section ends with a table that lists all of the strategies described and provides some characteristics that can help an agency determine which strategies to use.

4.1 Branding

Branding, such as distinctive project names and “trademark” graphics, logos, and catchphrases, is often an effective method to enable the target audience(s) to easily recognize any information related or pertaining to the work zone. The use of a brand assists the public with validating the accuracy of the information being issued. Delaware Department of Transportation (DOT), for example, created the “Traffic Creep” character, shown in Figure 4.1, for its public information and outreach campaign on the I-95 Reconstruction Project in 2000.¹ Travelers were invited to “Beat the Creep” through actions such as carpooling or using transit. The Creep was brought out of retirement for use on outreach materials during major bridge repair work on I-95 in 2005.

Similarly Illinois DOT developed “Jack Hammer,” shown on page 2-10, for its Upgrade I-74 Project in Peoria. This character was used on a variety of materials including the web site, on radio spots, and as a costumed character at schools and community events. Another way to use branding is demonstrated by the public information and outreach manager for the Springfield Interchange construction project in Virginia. When out in public he wears a polo shirt bearing the project logo to generate questions from the people he meets.



TIP: Provide downloadable logos that others can incorporate into presentations and materials, such as employee newsletters and newspaper articles.



Figure 4.1 The “Traffic Creep” character used during major construction projects in Delaware. (Source: Delaware DOT)

¹ Fact Sheet 4 – Delaware’s Survival Plan for the I-95 Shutdown, FHWA-OP-00-025, July 2000, <http://www.ops.fhwa.dot.gov/wz/practices/factsheets/factsheet4.htm> (Accessed 10/19/05) and Full Road Closure for Work Zone Operations: A Case Study. Reducing the Impact of Construction During the Rehabilitation of a Major Interstate Highway. Interstate 95 in Wilmington, Delaware, FHWA-OP-05-012, December 2004, http://www.ops.fhwa.dot.gov/wz/docs/Delaware_v3/index.htm (Accessed 10/19/05).

4.2 Using the Mass Media

Radio, television, and newspapers are still some of the main ways people receive traveler information.² Hence, using these methods to share information should be a cornerstone of any public information and outreach campaign. Paid advertising is relatively expensive, but can be a cost-effective way to reach a wide audience. Paid advertising may be necessary in the case of dramatic changes to the road network such as full closure of an Interstate (see box). Regularly purchasing advertising space and on-air time may allow agencies to negotiate cheaper rates.



For its I-29 project in Fargo, the North Dakota DOT (NDDOT) was able to get one free newspaper advertisement for every two it bought.

Source: Presentation given by Kevin Gorder, Project Manager for I-29 Project, North Dakota DOT, at the FHWA Work Zone Focus State Workshop, April 19, 2005, URL: <http://www.ops.fhwa.dot.gov/wz/publicinfostrategies.htm> (Accessed 10/19/05)



For eight weekends in the summer of 2001, I-64 in Louisville, Kentucky was fully closed for rehabilitation. Prior to starting, the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KTC) engaged in an extensive media campaign. Advertisements were placed in major newspapers (see below). KTC also used creative radio commercials describing the possible outcome of being stuck on the Interstate if weekday construction was done instead of the weekend closures. These commercials put a positive spin on the decision to avoid the heaviest traffic by performing the construction during the weekend. In addition, the KTC sponsored traffic reports developed for the top AM radio stations. Major positive outcomes included only one work zone crash, no detour crashes, no traffic congestion, and the project was completed seven weeks early.



Source: Kentucky Transportation Cabinet

Free media (also known as “earned media”), such as new stories and traffic information, should also be used to the maximum extent. Large projects are typically considered newsworthy by local media outlets so it is relatively easy to get news coverage. For example, Figure 4.2 illustrates a newspaper article providing information on a weekend closure during the I-64 project in Kentucky.

Nevertheless, it is important to establish a working relationship with reporters to encourage publicity that is positive, and information that is accurate. In addition, be sure to treat all media outlets, big or small, with the same level of care and attention.

Guides to working with the media are widely available and tend to make the same points:

- A successful media program requires more than just sending out a news release.
- Garnering favorable media attention often demands planning and creativity.
- Getting to know reporters who cover transportation and traffic can help ensure information about the project is included in traffic reports.
- Making information easily available with plenty of personal follow-up is necessary to developing an effective relationship with the media.
- Providing the media with accurate, up-to-date, and consistent information is important.³

I-64: Detours and delays (But only on weekends)



Figure 4.2 “Free Media”: A newspaper article on weekend closure of I-64 in Kentucky published in the *Louisville Courier-Journal*. (Source: Kentucky Transportation Cabinet)



Before major work began on I-29, North Dakota DOT representatives visited all the local media outlets to inform them about the project and to answer their questions.

Source: Presentation given by Kevin Gorder, Project Manager for I-29 Project, North Dakota DOT, at the FHWA Work Zone Focus State Workshop, April 19, 2005, URL: <http://www.ops.fhwa.dot.gov/wz/publicinfostrategies.htm> (Accessed 10/19/05)



TIP: Develop a press kit with all the information needed to write stories about the project. This should include project information, frequently asked questions (FAQs), fun facts, and contact information.

³ Community How To Guides On Underage Drinking Prevention, Guide 7: Community Guide on Media Relations, U.S. Department of Transportation, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, DOT HS 809 209, March 2001, http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/injury/alcohol/Community%20Guides%20HTML/Guides_index.html (Accessed 01/26/05).



Prior to and during the Upgrade I-74 project in Peoria, Illinois, the Illinois Department of Transportation developed and ran radio advertisements incorporating their fictional character Jack Hammer, including this one:

Jack: "Hey! This is Upgrade 74's mascot, Jack Hammer, with my pilot, Kenny." (Helicopter sound in background).

Kenny: "Yo!"

Jack: "We are in the I-74 traffic chopper checking out Peoria's rush hour."

Kenny: "You mean rush minute."

Jack: "Okay, we're over I-74 and uh..."

Kenny: "Here it comes..."

Jack: "And traffic's...smooth."

Kenny: "Exactly."

Jack: "Well, I mean I expected..."

Jack: "Wait a minute!! Adams and 74, two cars are merging!! The Horror!!"

Kenny: "Easy, Brando!!"

Jack: "Well, traffic's smooth now but construction's starting to heat up. So listen for "Keep-Your-Cool" promotions all week or visit upgrade74.com for more info."

Kenny: "Let's buzz Caterpillar.."

Jack: "Yeah, let's go!!"

Source: Illinois Department of Transportation, audio file available on <http://www.upgrade74.com/index.php/news/downloads.html> (Accessed 11/22/05)

4.3 Web Sites

Web sites are one of the primary tools for disseminating (pre-trip) traveler information. Internet usage has skyrocketed over the past few years. In 2003, 162 million adults (about 75 percent of the 218 million resident population 18 or older) had Internet access.⁴ Web sites have many advantages over other types of communication methods, with the primary advantage being that they can provide up to the minute information on a 24-hour basis.

There are usually two options for the use of a web site to provide information about a work zone project. Projects may be part of a larger-scale traveler information or planned lane closure web site. These types of web sites are usually implemented for an entire state, district, or geographic region and list information about many different projects. These types of sites may be useful for smaller projects in which information does not change frequently or in which there is not a lot of public information to post about the project.

The other option is to create a web site dedicated solely to the work zone project. This type of web site can provide both static and real-time information, including many of the other forms of project information such as all types of written material, traffic camera images, travel times, photographs, maps, and links to other sources of information. Moreover, many of these features can be made interactive with links to map icons and pop-up textual information and camera views. Project web sites are often used for larger projects and often these web sites have a web address that incorporates the name of the project. A successful project web site can be designed in many different ways, but most importantly, a web site must provide accurate and up-to-date information, be easy to locate, and people need to know about it. Better still is up-to-the-minute traffic information provided by traffic sensors or cameras. How often a web site is updated will depend on the project, but most large project web sites will need to be updated at least weekly.



Examples of project web sites include*:

- LBJ/Central Expressway Five Level Interchange in Dallas, Texas (I-635 and U.S. 75) – www.dallashighfive.org
- Springfield Interchange project in Springfield, Virginia (I-95 and I-495) – www.springfieldinterchange.com
- Interstate 29 project in Fargo, North Dakota – www.i29fargo.com
- Kansas City Triangle Interchange in Kansas City, Missouri (Hwy 71, I-435 and I-470) – www.kctriangle.org

* These web sites were available online as of October 2005. Project web sites may be taken offline as projects are completed.

⁴ U.S. Census Bureau, Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2003 (Washington, DC: 2004), p. 735.

Regularly updating a project web site is just one aspect of providing useful and trustworthy information. A web site with out-of-date and/or misleading information will likely have limited success. Additionally, care must be taken with the links provided on a project web site. The links must be current and provide credible information.



TIP: Retain ownership of the project web site domain name for a period of time after the project is completed in order to prevent others from purchasing the domain name and using it for undesirable means.



The Texas Department of Transportation's Katy Freeway reconstruction web site (<http://www.katyfreeway.org>) is just one example of how to design an attractive, informative, and user-friendly site. Information is organized into sections that are easy to navigate. These include: "Program Overview," "Timeline," "Newsroom," "Lane Closures/Updates," "FAQs," "Feedback/Contact Us," and "Contractor Information." A "What's New" section is a way to provide quick information to regular users. The "Lane Closures/Updates" link allows the user to view all recent and long term lane closures and also gives access to an interactive map, real time traffic camera links, and alternatives for traveling in the area. The "Program Overview" and "Timeline" sections provide project information including schedule and costs, and the "Newsroom" provides newsletters and press releases for the user to view, download, and print.



Source: Texas Department of Transportation, Katy Freeway Web Site, <http://www.katyfreeway.org> (Accessed 11/22/05)

4.4 Email Alerts

Email alerts provide another way for travelers to get timely information on work zone activity and traffic delays. Lane closures, delays, and incident/crash information can be distributed to travelers who have signed up to receive the information. Information can be sent to a computer, cell phone, or hand-held device. The sign up process is usually simple, requiring only that an email address be given via a form on an agency web site. Again, it is essential that the information provided be accurate and timely.

4.5 Printed Materials

There are many ways to employ printed materials to convey work zone information to the public, including brochures, newsletters, flyers, fact sheets, and maps. These materials can include upcoming project phases, events, and other important work zone details. Printed materials may be mailed, handed out, placed for pickup (in welcome centers, commuter stores, etc.), placed in newspapers, or distributed door to door. If the work zone is in a location frequented by truck traffic, the materials can also be handed out at truck stops and through local trucking associations. Printed materials may also be posted to project web sites for downloading and printing.



Innovative ideas for printed materials:

In Fargo, during a major reconstruction of I-29, North Dakota DOT produced what they call “leave behinds,” flyers with project information and a map given to businesses and other organizations after a meeting. These proved so popular businesses began copying and distributing them at their own expense.

In Louisville, the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet distributed 50,000 door hangers alerting residents and businesses about the Interstate 64 project.

To publicize work zone information, North Carolina DOT distributed tray liners for use at rest-stop restaurants.

Sources: North Dakota and North Carolina: Presentations given by Kevin Gorder, Project Manager for I-29 Project, North Dakota DOT, and Jo Ann Oerter, State Technology Implementation and Maintenance Engineer, North Carolina DOT at the FHWA Work Zone Focus State Workshop, April 19, 2005, URL: <http://www.ops.fhwa.dot.gov/wz/publicinfostrategies.htm> (Accessed 10/19/05)

Kentucky: Interview with Kentucky Transportation Cabinet personnel, June 2005

4.5.1 Brochures/Flyers/Fact Sheets

Small fold-out brochures or one-page flyers and fact sheets are a great way to summarize a lot of general information about a project and are easy to mail, hand out at community meetings and events and other places, and make available for downloading from a web site. Eye-catching graphics, project logos, photographs, and maps can make these materials very effective for getting the message across and promoting project web sites, telephone hotlines, and other media.

The “Program Overview” fold-out brochure for the I-95 New Haven Corridor Improvement Program produced by the Connecticut DOT is shown in Figure 4.3 and contains the following sections:

- Project overview.
- Why are improvements needed?
- A description of project phases with color-coding related to a map.
- Impacts to traffic.
- Route and mode alternatives.
- Sources of up-to-date project information.
- A message from the Governor.
- A tear-off, postage-paid “keep me informed” page

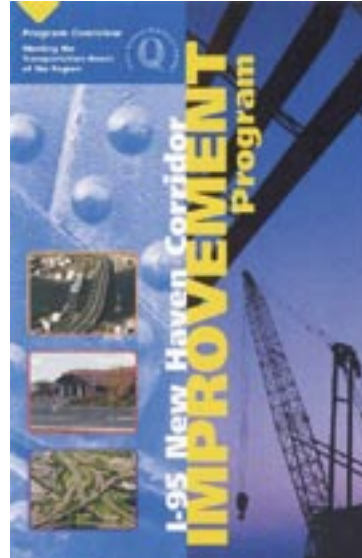


Figure 4.3 Connecticut DOT’s fold-out brochure for the I-95 New Haven Corridor Improvement Program (Source: Connecticut DOT)

4.5.2 Newsletters

Periodic newsletters are another way to package various elements of a work zone project including project details, general traveler information, dates and times of community meetings, and contact information. When using a newsletter as a public information and outreach strategy, it is important to set a consistent timeframe for producing new editions of the newsletter. Establishing a consistent timeframe helps ensure that producing the newsletter does not “fall through the cracks” and lets readers know when to look for the next issue. If project details are constantly changing, then it may be useful to update the newsletter frequently, while a project that does not have a lot of new information may benefit from a less frequent distribution cycle.



The “HiLight Newsletter” published for the Katy Freeway reconstruction project is vibrant and easy to read. It recaps the work accomplished on the project each season. A “public corner section” is used to promote the Katy Public Information Office that was established to interact with the public, media, and other stakeholders. Facts are placed on a special section of each page in an effort to remind readers of the purpose and need for the project.

Source: Texas Department of Transportation, newsletters available on <http://www.katyfreeway.org> (Accessed 10/19/05)

4.6 Project Information Phone Line and 511

Travel information provided through a toll-free telephone “hotline” is accessible both pre-trip and en route. In addition, a project telephone line can be used to publicize public meetings, survey information, and for the public to leave comments and suggestions.



Figure 4.4 511 Logo (Source: <http://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/511/index.htm>)

Travel information may also be made available through the 511 system, if 511 is available in the project region. Signs placed along the roadway using the logo shown in Figure 4.4 are used to alert drivers to the availability of 511 in a region. As of March 2005, there are twenty-six 511 systems operating in all or parts of 23 States, providing access to 511 services to almost 30 percent of the nation’s population. One of the main advantages of a 511 system is accessibility. With the availability of cell phones today, a call can be made from almost anywhere at any time.



In North Carolina, the 511 system is actively used to provide both real-time and static work zone information including the area of lane closures, start and end times, the expected severity of impacts, and, if available, detour information. Data for the system is collected from construction/maintenance personnel, transportation management center (TMC) personnel, and incident management assistance patrols. North Carolina DOT (NCDOT) is also working on integrating real-time information derived from several recently deployed smart work zone systems. To get the word out, NCDOT did significant marketing for the 511 system through the media, flyers, brochures, etc.

According to NCDOT, the biggest challenge of providing work zone information through its 511 system has been to provide accurate and timely information that does not conflict with its travel information web site, the Travel Information Management System (TIMS). Apart from instituting a strong quality control process, NCDOT found that identifying and working with stakeholders, such as construction contractors and emergency responders, from the very beginning is important. Relying on a large, diverse set of people for data also emphasized the need for training.

Source: Presentation Jo Ann Oerter, State Technology Implementation and Maintenance Engineer, North Carolina DOT at the FHWA Work Zone Focus State Workshop, April 19, 2005, URL: <http://www.ops.fhwa.dot.gov/wz/publicinfostrategies.htm> (Accessed 10/19/05)



TIP: To make it easy to remember, use a project related word as part of the telephone number. For example, Nebraska DOT’s West Dodge Project used 592-ROAD (7623).

Source: Nebraska DOT

4.7 Dynamic Message Signs and Highway Advisory Radio

Other traveler information systems useful for informing travelers en route are dynamic message signs (DMS) and highway advisory radio (HAR). DMS can be used to publicize when a work zone will begin, other types of traveler information (for instance, “tune to 640 AM for traffic information), as well as traffic delay and safety messages such as “Slow Traffic 5 Miles Ahead,” and “Right Lane Closed 5 Miles Ahead.” To be most useful, DMS should provide information at key junctions giving drivers plenty of time to make an informed decision about which route to take (see box).

HAR is helpful in that it can broadcast nonstop traffic information 24 hours a day. Due to Federal Communications Commission (FCC) regulations the broadcasts have a very restricted range, so the information aired needs to be tailored to travelers in a very small area.



Automated work zone information systems (AWIS) were deployed in central Arkansas by the Arkansas State Highway and Transportation Department (AHTD) in and around several major construction and rehabilitation projects on Interstates I-30 and I-40 near Little Rock. These projects were started in 2000 and completed in 2005. In mid-2004, three AWIS were operational on I-30 and I-40.

The AWIS installation and maintenance were contracted out to a private company that owns and operates the equipment. The AWIS equipment used included remote traffic microwave sensors, radio transmitters, DMS, and stationary video cameras mounted on trailers. The data collected by the sensors and cameras were processed automatically to determine traffic conditions, such as locations and severity of slowing or stopped vehicles. Information was then relayed back to motorists via DMS, highway advisory radio (HAR) stations, and the AHTD web site. The AWIS was set up to identify nine levels of severity that warranted communication with travelers. The nine alert levels were triggered on speed, volume, and occupancy levels detected by the sensors. During the most severe congestion, the DMS would display messages such as “Stopped Traffic Ahead At Mile Marker 123. Extended Delays Possible.” When significant delays were detected, flashing beacons on HAR alert signs advised motorists entering the broadcast area to tune in with “urgent when flashing, tune to 1490 AM.” If both lanes were closed, travelers were advised to use alternate routes.

While the roadside message boards and radios required a 5-minute relay time, sensor-recorded traffic speeds were transmitted instantaneously to the AHTD web site. Web site visitors saw a complete view of work zone traffic conditions with color-coded roadway segments indicating whether traffic was flowing, slowed, or stopped. Hovering the mouse over any of the equipment icons called up a live video image or displayed the text and audio messages motorists were receiving out on the road.

An evaluation of a central Arkansas AWIS on I-40 determined that people were willing to change routes when warned of congestion caused by a work zone. Truckers were much more likely to take an alternate route than travelers as a whole.

Source: Managing Demand Through Travel Information Services, U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, FHWA-HOP-05-005, 2005, URL: http://www.ops.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/manag_demand_tis/travelinfo.htm (Accessed 10/19/05)

4.8 Public Meetings, Workshops, and Community Events

As noted earlier, interaction with the public can be the determining factor in the success of a public information and outreach campaign. Hosting public meetings or developing a community task force gives the affected parties an opening to gain knowledge about the project but also to convey information and concerns to the project partners. Events such as ground-breaking ceremonies are great for grasping the attention of the public. Additional events that can be outlets for spreading information are fairs, school assemblies, tours, and informational workshops.



The New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) held nine special events with the public during the Big I reconstruction project. This included a groundbreaking, a halfway celebration, and a completion party, that involved more than 5,000 guests and partners. In addition to these events, NMDOT held a monthly Public Advisory Group meeting with effected neighborhoods and businesses during the Big I reconstruction project, gave presentations to civic and community groups, and offered tours of the construction site.

Source: Case Study: Big I Reconstruction Project: We're All In This Fix Together!
http://www.cooneywatson.com/case_study_big_i.htm (Accessed 11/9/05)

4.9 Project Information Center

For large, long-term work zones, an information center can be a useful strategy to disseminate information and provide a key point of contact for the public. Like any store, an information center can be a destination for individuals or groups and also a place of interest for people just walking by. For the greatest benefit a center should be located in an area with high foot traffic in the general vicinity of the work zone location.



The Virginia DOT has a Springfield Interchange Information Office located in the Springfield Mall, within close distance to the project location. The Information Office has real-time construction camera monitors showing the actual construction site as well as a model of what the end result will look like. In addition, there are a wide range of materials aimed at travelers including brochures and maps and information about commuting alternatives. Information is also available on other projects in the area. To provide parents the opportunity to spend time learning about the project, the Information Office provides child-oriented educational materials and toys.

Source: Interview with Virginia DOT personnel, June 2005.

4.10 Videos

A powerful way to give the public a clearer view of the intended outcome of the work taking place is via video. Videos can be shown in an assortment of settings such as public meetings, fairs, school assemblies, and workshops. While videos can be expensive to produce, the advantage of a video is the projection of a consistent message.



For the reconstruction of I-235, Iowa DOT produced a video specifically aimed at helping businesses deal with the disruptions caused by the project.

Source: Iowa Department of Transportation, "I-235 Reconstruction Project, 2004 Communications Plan, Approved January 8, 2004."

4.11 Major Characteristics of Selected Communication Strategies

Table 4.1 lists the communication strategies discussed in this section and provides a summary of some of their major characteristics, including target audience type, applicability, timing, and general cost information.

Table 4.1 Major Characteristics of Selected Communication Strategies

Strategy	Primary Target Audience	Benefits	Issues	Timing	Relative Cost To Project ⁵
Web site	■ Pre-trip travelers ■ Most other audiences	■ Access to real-time information. ■ Ability to access all project related materials in one place. ■ May be easy to update.	■ Target audience must be aware of the web site. ■ May not reach all of the target audience (excludes people without an Internet connection). ■ Information must be current and accurate. ■ Cost will vary based on complexity of web site. ■ May need to create mechanisms to collect data/information to feed the site.	■ Pre-construction ■ Construction ■ Post-construction	Low/medium
Web-connected traffic cameras	■ Pre-trip travelers	■ Allows users to view real-time traffic conditions. ■ Users find information credible because they can actually see the traffic conditions on the road.	■ May exclude users with a dial-up connection. ■ Cameras can be costly.	■ Construction	Medium
Email alerts	■ Pre-trip travelers ■ En route travelers ■ Commuters ■ Commercial drivers	■ Low cost. ■ Can reach many people at one time.	■ Audience is limited to those people who sign up for the service. ■ Need to determine criteria for when to send alerts.	■ Construction	Low
Brochures/flyers/factsheets/newsletter	■ Local travelers ■ Commuters ■ Commercial drivers ■ Residents	■ Low cost. ■ Easy to distribute.	■ Information can become stale quickly. ■ Often targets local motorists only. ■ Must be designed in a manner that makes drivers want to read the information.	■ Pre-construction ■ Construction ■ Post-construction	Low/Medium
Public meetings/task forces/workshops/events	■ Local travelers ■ Major trip generators ■ Residents ■ Businesses ■ Public officials ■ Major employers ■ Local agencies	■ Good exposure to the public. ■ Gives agency a chance to raise credibility with the public. ■ Gives public a chance to voice their concerns.	■ Need to make sure the right audience is at the events. ■ Need to be wary of making "empty promises."	■ Pre-construction ■ Construction	Low

Strategy	Primary Target Audience	Benefits	Issues	Timing	Relative Cost To Project ⁵
Paid newspaper advertising	- Local travelers (pre-trip) - Commercial drivers (pre-trip) - Major trip generators - Residents and small businesses	- Can reach many people at one time. - The same ad can be used in many different newspapers. - Agency controls the content and timing of the message.	- May only target local motorists. - Newspaper readers may skip over ads. - Declining readership of print media.	- Pre-construction - Construction - Post-construction	Medium/high
Newspaper articles	All local audiences	Can reach many people at one time.	- May only target local motorists. - Project may not be portrayed favorably. - Coverage more likely for major projects.	- Pre-construction - Construction - Post-construction	Low
Paid TV advertising	- Pre-trip travelers - Local travelers - In rare cases non-local travelers	- Can reach many people at one time. - Agency controls the content and timing of the message.	May only target local motorists.	- Pre-construction - Construction - Post-construction	Medium/high
TV traffic news	- Pre-trip travelers - Local travelers	- Can reach many people at one time. - Little to no cost.	- May only target local motorists. - Coverage more likely for major projects.	Construction	Low
Paid radio advertising	- Pre-trip travelers - En route drivers	- Can reach many people at one time. - Agency controls the content and timing of the message. - Targets people who are most likely to use the information.	May only target local motorists.	- Pre-construction - Construction - Post-construction	Medium/high
Radio traffic news	- Pre-trip travelers - Local travelers	- Can reach a lot of people at one time. - Little to no cost. - Targets people who are likely to use the information.	- May only target local motorists. - Coverage more likely for major projects.	Construction	Low
Maps	Drivers, pre-trip and en route	- Low cost. - Can post online and have available in hard copy.	May only reach a limited audience, depending on how they are disseminated.	Construction	Low/medium

⁵ Costs are presented as low/medium/high because actual costs will depend on the scope of the strategy, and in some cases, location (e.g., newspaper advertising cost will vary greatly across different regions of the country).

Strategy	Primary Target Audience	Benefits	Issues	Timing	Relative Cost To Project ⁵
Employee newsletters	Major employers	Innovative way of reaching commuters.	- Need to ensure information is accurate. - Need to target the appropriate employers.	- Pre-construction - Construction	Low
CB radio network	Truck drivers	- Reaches the truck driving community. - Provides information to truck drivers who may be coming from out of the area.	- Users must have access to CB. - Messages must be worded in a manner that makes drivers listen. - Need criteria for when to disseminate messages.	Construction	Low
Information center or kiosk	All audiences	- Provides direct access to information and people to talk to about the project. - May reach non-local drivers.	- Must be located close to project area in an easy to access location. - Information centers must be staffed. - Information must be current.	- Pre-construction - Construction	Low/medium/high
Billboards	Drivers en route	- Provides information directly to motorists affected by the project. - Can refer motorists to other sources of information.	- Can only provide a limited amount of information. - Information must be current. - May be better for longer term projects.	- Pre-construction - Construction	Medium
Project hotline/511 System	- Pre-trip travelers - Drivers en route	- Information can be accessed whenever it is needed. - Can allow motorists to provide feedback via recorded message. - May be easy to update.	- Information must be current. - Audience needs to be aware of the hotline number. 511 is not available in all areas.	Construction	Low/medium
Dynamic message signs (DMS)	Drivers en route	- Provides information directly to motorists affected by the project. - Can provide detour information.	- Messages must be easy to read. - Signs must be placed appropriately. - Information should be useful and accurate.	Construction	Low/medium/high

Strategy	Primary Target Audience	Benefits	Issues	Timing	Relative Cost To Project ⁵
Highway advisory radio (HAR)	Drivers en route	- Easy to access. - Provides information directly to motorists.	- Motorists may not be aware of HAR. - Information must be current. - Should only be used when there is information to give. - Limited range.	Construction	Low
Press kit	Media outlets	- Allows consistent message to be given to the media. - Helps develop positive relationship with media.	- Should be made available to all types of media. - Information needs to be in a format that makes it easy to reuse for articles, ads, etc.	- Pre-construction - Construction - Post-construction	Low/medium
Business survival kit	All businesses	- Allows consistent message to be given to businesses. - Helps develop positive relationship with affected businesses.	- Needs to target the appropriate businesses. - Must not minimize the importance of businesses' needs during the project.	- Pre-construction - Construction	Low/medium
Branding	All audiences	- Helps convey a consistent message and image on all project materials. - Makes project materials easily recognizable.	Should be easily understood and easy to remember.	- Pre-construction - Construction - Post-construction	Medium
Videos	All audiences	- Can illustrate the before, during, and after of the project. - Can give viewers close-up details about the project. - Can be shown in various locations (schools, public meetings, information centers, etc.). - Helps convey a consistent message about the project.	- Quality videos can be expensive to produce. - Information can quickly become stale. - May require a lot of up front planning (script writing, storyboarding, etc.).	- Pre-construction - Construction - Post-construction	Medium/high

⁵ Costs are presented as low/medium/high because actual costs will depend on the scope of the strategy, and in some cases, location (e.g., newspaper advertising cost will vary greatly across different regions of the country).

Appendix A – Project References

The research for this Guide included interviews with representatives of the following projects:

Agency/Firm	Project
■ Arizona DOT	Interstate 19
■ Colorado DOT	T-Rex Project
■ Idaho DOT	Menan-Lorenzo & Thornton Interchanges
■ Illinois DOT/Missouri DOT	New Mississippi River Bridge Project
■ Illinois DOT	Upgrade 74
■ Indiana DOT	Hyperfix
■ Indiana DOT	Revive 65
■ Iowa DOT	Rebuilding I-235
■ Kansas DOT	Kansas 511 System
■ Kansas City DOT/ Missouri DOT	Untangle the Triangle
■ Kentucky Transportation Cabinet	I-65
■ Kentucky Transportation Cabinet	I-64
■ Michigan DOT	Fix Detroit Six
■ Nebraska DOT	West Dodge Project
■ New Jersey DOT	Cooper's Bridge (Route 35)
■ North Carolina DOT	I-26 Connector
■ North Dakota DOT	I-29 Project
■ Ohio DOT	The Northeast Expressway Transformation
■ Ohio DOT	I-670
■ Santa Cruz City Redevelopment Agency	Mission Street Widening Improvement Project
■ Tennessee DOT	Smartfix40
■ Texas DOT	Katy Freeway
■ Texas DOT	Dallas High Five
■ Utah DOT	I-15 South Project
■ Virginia DOT	Springfield Interchange
■ Washington State DOT	New Tacoma Narrows Bridge

Appendix B – Public Information and Outreach Campaign Framework Templates

The following templates are meant to help agencies develop work zone public information and outreach campaigns for their road projects. The templates can be reproduced as needed. Each template builds upon the previous one, ending with an action plan to help guide agencies through the implementation of a public information and outreach campaign.

The templates are not meant to be the only approach to creating a public information and outreach campaign, and therefore may need to be modified to fit the specifics of the project or the agency's needs. Furthermore, it is understood that agencies may already have standard scheduling tools and software in place to create timelines and action plans and may instead choose to use these tools to develop their public information and outreach campaigns.

The templates cover the following topics:

- **Template #1 – Outreach Framework:** Covers the high level information used to shape the campaign.
- **Template #2 – Evaluation/Measures of Effectiveness:** Identifies measures of effectiveness to ensure the goals identified in Template #1 are met.
- **Template #3 – Outreach Strategy Target Audiences and Messages:** Identifies the target audiences, the desired outcomes of the outreach campaign for each audience, and the messages needed to attain those outcomes.
- **Template #4 – Product Development:** Identifies outreach products for each of the target audiences identified in Template #3, the goals of the product, content, and distribution ideas.
- **Template #5 – Distribution Channels:** Further expands on the distribution ideas identified in Template #4
- **Template #6 – Outreach Strategy Action Plan:** Pieces together the information described in all of the Templates into a set of steps for implementing the campaign.

Template #1: Outreach Framework

This template can be used to document the high level information that will be used to shape the public information and outreach campaign. The specifics of the campaign can be better defined once an agency has an understanding of the “who, what, when, and why” of the campaign, as well as the projected budget for the campaign.

Project Name:
Project Timeframe:
Timeframe for Outreach Strategy:
Outreach Goals(s): 1. 2. 3.
Who Needs to be Involved (Partners, Stakeholders, etc.):
General Expectation of Outreach Budget: _____
% of Outreach Budget to Overall Project Budget: _____

Template #2: Evaluation/Measures of Effectiveness

This template can help an agency determine how to ensure that the goals identified in Template #1 are being met throughout the campaign. For each goal, identify one or more measures of effectiveness that can be used to determine if that goal is being met. Then identify tools or strategies that can be used to obtain the data and information needed to determine if the effectiveness measures were met. Appendix C provides a sample filled out version of this template.

Timeframe for Outreach Evaluation (may be more than one point in time):

Outreach Goal(s) (from Template #1)	Effectiveness Measure(s)	Measurement Tool(s)/Strategy(ies)

Template #3: Outreach Strategy Target Audiences and Messages

This template can help an agency determine how to ensure that the goals identified in Template #1 are being met throughout the campaign. For each goal, identify one or more measures of effectiveness that can be used to determine if that goal is being met. Then identify tools or strategies that can be used to obtain the data and information needed to determine if the effectiveness measures were met. Appendix C provides a sample filled out version of this template.

Target Audience	Desired Response Resulting from Communication Plan/Outreach Strategy	Messages

Template #4: Product Development

This template is meant to help identify the outreach products to be developed (brochures, flyers, web sites, etc.) for each target audience identified in Template #3, the information to be included in these products, and methods for dissemination of the products. This template should be reproduced for each product to be developed. The completed template can be given to contractors, public relations firms, or others who may be responsible for developing the products. Appendix C provides a sample of how this template can be filled in for a newsletter.

Product: _____

Target Audience <i>(from Template #3)</i>	
Goals of Product	
Content	■ Attention-Getter: Why is this message important? ■ Core message: ■ Where to go to get more information:
Initial Distribution Ideas	

Template #5: Distribution Channels

This template can be used to further expand on methods of distribution for each of the products identified in Template #4. For each product, identify the opportunities for distribution (i.e., through businesses, rest stops, newspapers, mailing, etc.) and any special requirements for these distribution opportunities or known deadlines (i.e., newspaper ads must be sent to the newspaper by the second Wednesday of the month).

Product (from Template #4)	Distribution Channel/Opportunity	Deadline/Special Requirements

Template #6: Outreach Strategy Action Plan

This template lays out the steps for implementing the campaign. It should be as detailed and action oriented as possible. Begin by identifying the tasks involved with implementing the campaign (i.e., obtain buy-in from management for campaign, identify target audiences, identify messages, develop brand themes and logos, develop draft brochure, develop final brochure, disseminate brochure, etc.). Identify the expected start and end date for each task as well as necessary resources, both monetary and personnel. Note any comments or specific requirements for each task. This action plan should be updated as tasks or deadlines change. Additional rows may be added to the table as needed. The plan can be used to track what has been done and what still needs to be done.

Task #	Task Description	Start Date	End Date	Resource Allocation	Comments

Appendix C – Sample Templates

Sample Measures of Effectiveness (Template #2)

Timeframe for Outreach Evaluation (may be more than one point in time): Daily, weekly and monthly throughout the duration of the project.

Goal	Effectiveness Measure(s)	Measurement Tool(s) / Strategy(ies)
Provide information about the project to educate motorists and businesses that are most likely to be affected by the project.	- Positive feedback from motorists and businesses - Little to no reduction in business reported by local businesses - Delay on first day of construction is less than projected - Average of less than x incidents per week <i>Note: These are suggested measures and may not all be used.</i>	Conduct motorist/business surveys quarterly to determine if outreach efforts are sufficient, and what outreach methodologies have been the most useful.
Tell motorists/businesses where they can go for more information throughout the duration of the project.	- Number of web site hits - Number of calls to project hotline - Number of emails	Conduct motorist/business surveys quarterly to learn if they are aware of the web site and project hotline and determine how they found out about these resources.
Encourage the use of alternate routes.	- Delay on first day of construction is less than projected - Less than 5 complaints received per day on project hotline/web site/email - Average of less than x incidents per week	Count traffic on alternate routes to determine if reduction in traffic/incidents through project results from motorists using prescribed alternate routes.

Sample Product Development Information (Template #4)

Product Type: Multi-Page Newsletter (6-8 pages)

Target Audience	- Local motorists/regular commuters - Businesses affected by project <i>Note: This brochure is not intended for tourists or visitors to the area; it is meant for motorists/businesses who will be heavily affected by the project</i>
Goals of Product	Maintain safety and mobility in the project area by: - Providing information about the project to educate motorists and businesses that are most likely to be affected by the project - Directing motorists/businesses on where to go for more information throughout the duration of the project. - Encouraging the use of alternate routes.
Content	Attention-Getter: The cover of the brochure needs to clearly convey that I-123 is going under reconstruction and motorists and businesses will be affected, but this project is happening for a good reason. This can be done through the use of graphics and catchy phrases. One idea is to have an image of a sign that says “Safer Roads Ahead” and then a headline such as “How Will You Survive the I-123 Project?” The cover also needs to include brief descriptions of what is inside the brochure, specifically mentioning project timelines, detour routes, and planned improvements. Core message: The overall message of the brochure will be that while this project will inconvenience drivers and businesses, the long term results will be beneficial (improving safety and mobility), and there are ways to get around the project area. This brochure needs to provide information on several key items – what is the project, when will it occur, what will happen, who will be affected and how, what improvements will it bring, how can impacts be minimized (detour maps and routes), what traffic control strategies will be used, and who to contact/where to go for more information. The brochure will include a project timeline and a construction sequencing map, and illustrations of planned improvements. Where to go to get more information: The brochure will need to provide the project web address, project hotline, an email address of a real person (so that people feel like their email is really going somewhere), as well as the web address for the XYZ Department of Transportation.
Distribution	A strategic distribution plan will need to be developed to ensure sufficient distribution of the brochures. The plan will detail who the brochures are going to be distributed to, through what channels, and number of copies to be distributed through each channel. Likely places for distribution include: - Local businesses/restaurants (leave a stack near cash registers/front desk) - Hand out during public meetings or any public event - Major League Baseball/Football games in town (look into inserting them into programs) - Newspaper inserts - Door to door (insert into community newsletters/newspapers) - Kiosk at shopping mall - PDF version posted to project web site

1. Report No. FHWA-HOP-05-067	2. Government Accession No.	3. Recipient's Catalog No.	
4. Title and Subtitle Work Zone Public Information and Outreach Strategies		5. Report Date November 2005	
		6. Performing Organization Code	
7. Author(s) William J. Mallett and Jakia Torrence – Battelle, Jennifer Seplow – SAIC		8. Performing Organization Report No.	
9. Performing Organization Name and Address Battelle Washington, DC 20024 SAIC McLean, VA 22102		10. Work Unit No. (TRAIS)	
		11. Contract or Grant No. DTFH61-01-C-00182 and DTFH61-01-C-00180	
12. Sponsoring Agency Name and Address Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Office of Operations 400 7th Street, SW Washington, DC 20590		13. Type of Report and Period Covered	
		14. Sponsoring Agency Code HOTO	
15. Supplementary Notes FHWA Project Manager – Tracy Scriba			
16. Abstract This document is meant to help transportation agencies plan and implement effective public information and outreach campaigns for work zones. The focus of this document is not on project selection and design, but on the travel impacts of a work zone – such as lane closings, new traffic patterns, and traffic delay – and available travel alternatives (e.g., different routes and travel modes). This document provides information and strategies for developing public information and outreach campaigns for specific work zones, rather than general work zone education and safety campaigns. It is primarily designed for personnel in transportation agencies responsible for planning and operating highway work zones and those responsible for public relations and public information. It will also be of interest to transportation policy makers, work zone contractors, consultants, public relations firms, and emergency responders. This document also provides support to agencies in their efforts to implement the recently updated work zone regulations. In September 2004, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) published updates to the work zone regulations at 23 CFR 630 Subpart J. The updated rule addresses the use of public information and outreach as a work zone management tool. The updated rule is referred to as the Work Zone Safety and Mobility Rule (Rule) and applies to all State and local governments that receive Federal-aid highway funding. Transportation agencies are required to comply with the provisions of the Rule by October 12, 2007. The changes made to the regulations broaden the former rule to better address the work zone issues of today and the future. Growing congestion on many roads, and an increasing need to perform rehabilitation and reconstruction work on existing roads already carrying traffic, are some of the issues that have lead to additional, more complex challenges to maintaining work zone safety and mobility. To help address these issues, the Rule provides a decision-making framework that facilitates comprehensive consideration of the broader safety and mobility impacts of work zones across project development stages, and the adoption of additional strategies that help manage these impacts during project implementation. The Rule requires agencies to develop an agency-level work zone safety and mobility policy to support systematic consideration and management of work zone impacts across all stages of project development. Based on the policy, agencies will develop processes and procedures to support implementation of the policy. The third primary element of the Rule calls for the development of project-level procedures to address the work zone impacts of individual projects. This includes requirements for identifying significant projects and developing and implementing transportation management plans (TMPs) for all projects. For significant projects, the TMP must include public information and outreach strategies to inform those affected by the project of expected work zone impacts and changing conditions. This document is the second of four guidance documents on the Rule and contains guidance, as well as many examples of work zone public information and outreach campaigns used by transportation agencies.			
17. Key Words Work zone, safety, mobility, road construction, road projects, transportation management plan, work zone management strategies, public information, outreach, regulation, rule, guidance		18. Distribution Statement No restrictions. This document is available to the public.	
19. Security Classif. (of this report) Unclassified	20. Security Classif. (of this page) Unclassified	21. No. of Pages 63	22. Price



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

Office of Transportation Operations
Room 3408
400 Seventh Street, SW
Washington, DC 20590
Toll-Free Help Line: (866) 367-7487

www.fhwa.dot.gov/workzones

FHWA-HOP-05-067