

'Pilot States' Examining Role of ISMP in Planning

State transportation executives in search of more effective means of reducing fatality and injury rates are showing interest in using an Integrated Safety Management Process (ISMP) in developing a comprehensive safety plan.

Creating an ISMP in a state was the focus of a workshop conducted at the National Orientation meeting in Washington, D.C. in December 2003.

"The Integrated Safety Management Process is a management system for reducing highway injuries and fatalities across a jurisdiction," explained Ms. Geni Bahar from the consulting firm iTrans, who facilitated the workshop.

The ISMP is one of the critical components for implementing the AASHTO Strategic Highway Safety Plan. It was developed as a guide for state efforts to bring all critical stakeholders to the table when developing and implementing a strategic plan.

The ISMP is a model – not a requirement – that offers a systematic approach for including and tapping and channeling the knowledge and experience of all the agencies, disciplines and jurisdictions that can influence highway safety progress in the state.

Participants in the December workshop stepped into the role of Operations Manager in an exercise designed to familiarize them with the process and the ten steps involved in establishing an ISMP in their states.

"The ISMP stresses integration at all levels," Bahar reminded the participants. "It starts at the decision-making level with the top management of various agencies working together. And all during implementation it continues across the '4-Es' – enforcement, engineering, education and emergency services – and across safety agencies and jurisdictions."

The ISMP, which is the subject of NCHRP Report 501, is neither a legislative requirement nor a federal policy imperative. Rather, it is a tool that can be applied in whole or in part by states or localities seeking to create better highway safety plans and programs.

The program's implementation guides do not provide answers about which emphasis areas to prioritize, which combination of strategies to apply, how to integrate efforts of multiple agencies, how to optimize the implementation of multiple strategies simultaneously, or what deployment level should be implemented.

"These are issues that can be addressed within the framework of the ISMP," Bahar told the group.

Technical assistance is available to states to appraise their existing programs and safety planning process and help them identify the types of additional assistance they may need.

Detailed information on establishing an ISMP is contained in NCHRP Report 501. The document can be ordered in hard copy from NCHRP or downloaded electronically at:

<http://safety.transportation.org>.

The Pilot States working with the ISMP to develop their state plans have established a schedule for action in the early months of 2004 that should result in initial comprehensive highway safety plans by August.

"It starts at the decision-making level with the top management of various agencies working together."

Comprehensive Highway Safety Plans

