



# FHWA Roadway Work Zone Training Consortium

Spring 2009 Newsletter

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### Training for Safer Highway Work Zones

Workers routinely face many perilous dangers on the job site that cause serious injuries and fatalities each and every day. In order to reduce the causes of these hazards, worker education and training is vital. As part of the FHWA Roadway Work Zone Training Consortium (Consortium), the Laborers-AGC Education and Training Fund (Laborers-AGC) is striving to make highway construction and maintenance sites safer for workers by providing quality training and education programs to Construction Craft Laborers (CCLs) throughout the nation.

According to the Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) maintained by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), in 2007 there was a 17 percent drop in work zone related fatalities, compared to the previous year. This represents the sharpest single-year percentage decline in the past decade. This continues a multi-year trend of increasingly safe roads. There were 835 fatalities in 2007, a decrease from 1,004 fatalities in 2006.

The number of workers who were killed after being struck by vehicles or mobile equipment decreased from 379 in 2006 to 342 in 2007. There were 105 fatal injuries at road construction sites exclusively during 2007, with 46 fatalities resulting from workers being struck by vehicles.

**In 2007 there was a 17% drop in work zone related fatalities, compared to the previous year.**

With support provided by the Federal Highway Administration's Work Zone Safety Grant (FHWA Grant), Laborers-AGC, through its national network of affiliate training providers, is conducting training sessions directed at the hazards associated with highway work zones. The training program is comprised of two parts. The first consists of construction safety and health outreach training and the second is focused on highway work zone safety. *Continued on pg. 2*



Don Ellisburg, NAPA, at the Traffic Management & Work Zone Safety Conference

### Roadway Safety Training Program Version 9 Now Available

A greatly enhanced version of the Roadway Safety Training Program (RSTP) is now available! The version contains interactive modules on temporary traffic control design, in-depth training on night work, expanded information on preventing runovers and backovers, upgraded demos, auto-update features, and much more! RSTP contains over 20 modules developed and refined by leading industry organizations for over eight years. Through the FHWA Grant, resources were made available to further expand the program.

The newest version was "previewed" at the 2009 Traffic Management & Work Zone Safety Conference in March in Orlando, Fla., highlighting the latest information and new features. *Continued on pg. 4.*

## FHWA Roadway Work Zone Training Consortium Partners



## Training for Safer Highway Work Zones *Cont.*

Commonly referred to as the OSHA 10-hour course, the initial training focuses on the basics of safety and health hazard recognition and prevention for all construction projects. Topics covered in the first part of the program include an introduction to OSHA, the provisions of the OSH Act, focus four hazards (struck-by, caught in/between, falls, and electrical), personal protective equipment, and health hazards in construction.

The second part of the training program addresses highway construction project hazards and job site operations. Consisting of four modules, an affiliate training instructor provides specific area training to workers based upon their job responsibilities at the work site. The modules include:

- Highway Work Zone Safety, designed for workers whose primary responsibility is to perform construction activities within the work zone,
- Traffic Control, designed for those who have the responsibility of assisting in the set up and maintenance of traffic control devices in the work zone,
- Flagging, designed for those workers who direct traffic through the work zone, and
- Environmental Hazards of Highway Work Zones, which is designed for those workers who may encounter numerous environmental hazards on highway work zones.

“One of the most important components of Laborers-AGC’s training material is its ability to address the specific needs of workers on the job site” said Laborers-AGC Executive Director, John J. LeConche. “The module approach provides the flexibility that the trainers need for a truly successful training experience.” he added.

Training numbers compiled by Laborers-AGC suggests that training programs like the Highway Work Zone Training Program are popular among trainers and members alike.

“The training supported through the FHWA Grant program is being provided to journeyman and entry level apprentices who will work on heavy highway construction projects. The comprehensive program addresses the safety of workers, motorists, and pedestrians with emphasis placed on the proper procedures involved in setting up a safe Traffic Control Zone” said Gary McCabe, Director of Training for the Indiana Laborers’ Training Trust Fund in Bedford, Indiana. To date the Indiana Laborers’ have trained over 600 CCLs in both the OSHA outreach and Highway Work Zone Safety courses.

Through programs like the FHWA Grant, significant progress is being made to educate workers in the hazards of highway construction projects and to reduce the number of fatalities.

By providing comprehensive work zone safety training through this program, Laborers-AGC and its affiliate-training providers are striving to do their part in making highway work zone construction and those who work on them safer than ever before. 🚧



***Since training commenced in 2007, Laborers-AGC and the fourteen affiliate training fund providers participating in this program have trained over 3,400 construction craft laborers in both the OSHA outreach and Work Zone Safety training programs.***

## Consortium Partners Speak at Traffic Management & Work Zone Safety Conference

On December 4, 2008, FHWA's rule on Temporary Traffic Control Devices (Subpart K) became effective. One aspect of this Rule requires state transportation agencies develop guidelines to improve work zone access and egress (for construction traffic) on all Federal-Aid Highway projects.

During the Traffic Management & Work Zone Safety Conference held March 10-12 in Orlando, Fla. several members of the Consortium gave overviews of the regulations and provided feedback as to how they believe the new rule should be carried-out.

Presentations from this session and others are available on The National Work Zone Safety Information Clearinghouse website: [www.workzone-safety.org](http://www.workzone-safety.org).

During the conference 22 stakeholders took part in a 28-question Audience Response System (ARS) survey concerning work zone access and egress challenges in new FHWA Subpart K compliance activities. The survey was developed by the Consortium to aid in development of new supervisor training materials. The questions are based on a recent AASHTO survey conducted by the consortium for the same purpose. The aim of this latest survey was to expand stakeholder input. In addition to collecting information to aid in developing new materials, the feasibility of the ARS survey method was tested.

The survey questions fall into three categories. 1) Identifying important areas that had to be addressed to meet WZ access and egress challenges posed by subpart K; 2) Identifying the degree to which the stakeholders have met their compliance and guidance needs for these important areas, and 3) identifying how the WZ contractor fits into the design of compliance or guidance options. A final question asked if participants could currently benefit

from additional guidance or information to help meet the new WZ Access and Egress challenges they face.

### Results, Importance of selected WZ access/egress challenges.

According to the data, 68% to 89% of the participants rated the topics as 'somewhat important' or 'very important' and 26% to 79% gave a 'very important' rating. About half rated the majority of items as 'very important.' Staging construction worker vehicles received the lowest 'very important' rating with 26%, and the highest 'very important' rating was for High Speed Roadways, with 79% of respondents rating it as 'very important.'

### Need for more information or guidance materials for selected WZ access/egress challenges.

In general, 53% to 76% of participants said they had 'some' or 'most' materials needed to meet their WZ Access and Egress challenges. However, between 12% and 29% of the participants believe they have 'none' of the materials needed to meet the challenge and the remainder in each category has 'few' of the materials needed. In addition, when asked if they had guideline documents available, only 18% said 'yes' (36% said 'no' and 45% did not know) and when asked if they could benefit from additional guidance or information to help meet the WZ access/egress challenges, 82% said 'yes' while just 9% said 'no.'

### Contractor Input.

Participants were asked if they permitted contractors to have input into the guidelines employed in construction contract specs. 59% said 'yes,' while 14% said 'no' and 27% did not know. The participants were also asked if they felt contractor changes could improve work zone access. Seventy-five percent of participants felt contractor input always or often improved work zone



access, while 25% felt they rarely or never did.

### Effectiveness of the ARS survey method.

The use of the ARS in this setting was examined for its effectiveness and feasibility. The Audience Response System (ARS) survey method proved to be effective in this environment. One hundred percent of the audience participated. Respondents appeared to enjoy answering the questions and seeing their responses displayed in aggregate with the others. In addition, the entire survey of 28 questions was completed in approximately 15 minutes. Because the data are written directly to an XLS file, all data input is completed simultaneously.

### Conclusion.

These results indicate that participants largely agree that the topics selected by the consortium for training materials development are important topics. In addition, while participants have developed some compliance guidance and information for these topics, they feel a need for additional guidance and information to help them comply with WZ access and egress challenges associated with subpart K compliance. The data from this ARS-based survey will be combined with the AASHTO data to provide a more complete view of the training needs. Cross tabulations by type of participant may be performed to determine how needs may vary among independent stakeholder groups, to allow better targeting of topics and guidance to specific groups.



# FHWA Roadway Work Zone Training Consortium

## Roadway Safety Training Program Version 9 Now Available *Cont.*

RSTP may be downloaded directly from [www.workzonesafety.org](http://www.workzonesafety.org) at any time for free. If you have trouble downloading the program or desire a hard copy, you request a CD-ROM from the following organizations:

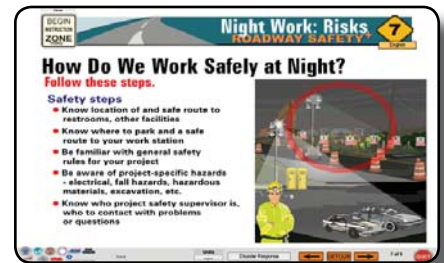
American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials contact: Marty Vitale, [MartyV@aaashto.org](mailto:MartyV@aaashto.org).

American Road and Transportation Builders Association contact: Brad Sant, [bsant@artba.org](mailto:bsant@artba.org).

International Union of Operating Engineers (IUOE) contact: Emmett Russell, [erussell@iuoe.org](mailto:erussell@iuoe.org).

Laborers' International Union of North America (LIUNA) contact: Scott Schneider, [schneider@lhsfna.org](mailto:schneider@lhsfna.org).

National Asphalt Pavement Association contact: Kim Williams, [kwilliams@hotmix.org](mailto:kwilliams@hotmix.org). 



## Roadway Safety Training Program Survey

If you have used the RSTP we would appreciate your taking a few minutes to complete a 7 question survey to let us know how the program is being used: <http://tinyurl.com/RSTPSurvey>. Your input is valuable!

## FHWA Roadway Work Zone Training Consortium Partners

Laborers' Health & Safety Fund of North America, American Road & Transportation Builders Association National Asphalt Pavement Association, International Union of Operating Engineers, Laborers-AGC Education & Training Fund, American Association of State Highway & Transportation Officials, CNA, Texas Transportation Institute, James E. Bryden, PE, FOF Communications, National Institute for Occupational Safety & Health

## Federal Highway Administration's Work Zone Safety Grant Information

**Background . . .** Work zones remain a dangerous element of the transportation network, representing over 1000 fatalities annually. The work zone related injuries and fatalities involve motorists traveling through the work zone, as well as workers working on roadway construction/maintenance/utility projects. The trends of growing traffic, increased road construction, and public frustration with work zones have contributed to the growing intensity of work zone safety impacts on workers and traveling public. The impacts raise an urgent need for guidance and training for work zone workers, the public, and transportation agencies and groups towards prevention of highway work zone injuries and fatalities.

**Grant Tasks . . .** The objective of this grant is to provide assistance for highway work zone safety training and guideline development towards the improvement of highway work zone safety. The Roadway Work Zone Training Consortium will perform the following tasks under this grant: Highway Work Zone Worker Safety Training; Highway Work Zone Safety Guidelines Development; and Highway Work Zone Safety Guidelines Training.

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