



April 5, 2005

TO: Lorena Eng Don Senn  
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FROM: Chris Christopher  
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SUBJECT: Partnership with Washington State Patrol in Work Zones

One of the benefits the Work Zone Safety Task Force has enjoyed over the years has been the ongoing partnership with the Washington State Patrol. The WSP has always been very supportive of the Task Force and the work we do here at WSDOT. We are all aware that workers and drivers in our work zones have benefited from WSP assistance and enforcement through higher levels of driver compliance and safety.

A recent Task Force meeting provided a forum for a particularly good exchange of information with the WSP. The discussion identified some valuable information on WSP enforcement operations in work zones but also raised the issue of communication and coordination between the two agencies when work activities are being planned and implemented.

The WSP is very interested in knowing about our plans to conduct work operations and the status of ongoing highway work zones and encourages WSDOT to involve WSP in the process through ongoing communication with our construction and maintenance work. Aside from phone calls and meetings, E-mails were suggested as a particularly good means of forwarding information since all of the WSP commanders carry PDA's and check their mail frequently. Using e-mail allows us to transmit the information in sufficient detail and provides a record for follow up action as needed whether the contact person is immediately available or not.

All six WSDOT Regions have established successful relationships with the WSP and the Task Force members agreed that this type of ongoing communication not only provides an important information exchange, but also strengthens our cooperative relationship with the WSP. Both agencies benefit from sharing information as it brings us together to address those issues where we have a common concern.

The Task Force wants to encourage region managers to go beyond "keeping the WSP in the loop" as we usually do, and consider making them part of the process as a partner by **involving them as we plan** and conduct work zone operations. **The WSP** can offer valuable input based on their expertise with traffic enforcement, crash prevention,

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localized traffic issues and more. The following activities and occurrences may be good opportunities to notify and seek WSP involvement:

- Work zone design strategy conferences or discussions
- Preconstruction conferences
- Construction project progress meetings
- Maintenance project planning meetings
- Advance notice of roadway restrictions (lane closures, road closures, etc.)
- "High traffic impact" work zones
- "Near miss" or other reoccurring traffic violations
- Work Zone crash investigations and accident reporting follow-up

Updating and exchanging a contact list with the WSP may also be appropriate.

Please disseminate this information as appropriate within your region and by all means add any further specific guidance as it relates to your relationship with the WSP.

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