President’s Message:

So far 2019 has been a great year for MASITE. Personally, it’s been a pleasure to serve as President this year. The number of talented people helping to keep the organization vibrant and active is incredible and it’s been an honor to support them.

This includes the Annual Meeting Organizing Committee, led by Liz Schwartz (benesch). The program for the 2019 Annual Meeting (September 26 and 27) is shaping up nicely. The Marriott is newly renovated, and if you haven’t visited Downtown Lancaster lately it’s just incredible. All this and centrally located within our Section. Looking forward to a great turnout for a fun and informative event.

Other notable volunteers include our Area Coordinators: Mike Davidson (PA Turnpike), Becky Biro (JMT) and Lindsey Ulizio (WRT). Mike, Becky and Lindsey, with the help of even more great volunteers, have been putting together educational and social events across the Section. Be sure to check out the Secretary’s messages and our website (www.MASITE.org) to keep abreast of upcoming events.

Finally, our new and outgoing Web Masters, Charles Gushue (McCormick Taylor) and Erik Schmidt (McCormick Taylor) deserve to be recognized for all the work that went into launching our new website. Truly, it wouldn’t be all that hard for me to go on recognizing the many volunteers that are engaged in making MASITE such a great organization. This is really a testament to the talent of our members, and their commitment to our profession. And maybe that’s the point, as a volunteer organization we’re only as good as our members, and right now that’s a great place to be.

Al Federico

2019 MASITE President
2019 MASITE BOARD MEMBERS

President
Albert P. Federico, P.E., PTOE
Albert Federico Consulting, LLC
133 Rutgers Avenue
Swarthmore PA 19081-1713
Phone: (610) 608-4336
albert@federico-consulting.com

1st Vice President
Steven Palmer, P.E.
Gannett Fleming, Inc.
207 Senate Avenue
Camp Hill, PA 17011
Phone: (717) 763-7212
spalmer@gfnet.com

2nd Vice President
Mahmood Shehata, P.E., PTOE
R, K & K
680 American Avenue, Suite 300
King of Prussia, PA 19406
Phone: (484) 322-2812
mshehata@rkk.com

Secretary
Peter O'Halloran, P.E., PTOE
Urban Engineers, Inc.
530 Walnut Street
Philadelphia PA 19106
Phone: (215) 922-8080
paohalloran@urbanengineers.com

Treasurer
Amy B. Staud, P.E., PTOE
HDR Engineering, Inc.
11 Stanwix Street, Suite 800
Pittsburgh, PA 15222-1357
Phone: (412) 497-6066
amy.staud@hdrinc.com

Immediate Past President/Dist. Rep.
Christopher A. Prisk, P.E., PTOE
Langan
2400 Ansys Drive, Suite 403
Canonsburg, PA 15317
Phone: (724) 514-5100
cprisk@Langan.com

Eastern Area Coordinator
Rebecca Biro, P.E., PTOE
JMT
1600 Market St, Suite 520
Philadelphia PA 19103
Phone: (215) 496-4736
rbiro@jmt.com

Central Area Coordinator
Mike Davidson, P.E.
Gannett Fleming
207 Senate Avenue
Harrisburg, PA 17106
Phone: (717) 763-7211
mdavidson@gfnet.com

Western Area Coordinator
Lindsey N. Ulizio, P.E.
WRA, LLP
2009 Mackenzie Way, Suite 240
Cranberry Twp, PA 16066
Phone: (724) 779-7940
lulizio@wrallp.com

2018 MASITE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District 2 Representative</th>
<th>Chair</th>
<th>Gannett Fleming</th>
<th>Phone</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2020 Mid-Colonial Annual Meet Chair</td>
<td>Sid New</td>
<td>Gannett Fleming</td>
<td>610-650-8101</td>
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<tr>
<td>2019 MASITE Annual Meet Chair</td>
<td>Liz Schwartz</td>
<td>Alfred Benesch</td>
<td>610-439-7066</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recognitions/Awards Chair</td>
<td>Nick Ross</td>
<td>HDR, Inc.</td>
<td>412-497-6034</td>
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<td>Membership Chair</td>
<td>Steve Gault</td>
<td>PennDOT</td>
<td>717-787-6988</td>
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<tr>
<td>Technical Chair</td>
<td>Joe Fiocco</td>
<td>SAFE Highway Eng.</td>
<td>215-355-2089</td>
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<tr>
<td>Educational Outreach Chair</td>
<td>Emily Hoffman</td>
<td>McCormick Taylor</td>
<td>215-592-4200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legislative Affairs</td>
<td>Alex Meitzler</td>
<td>Traffic Planning &amp; Design</td>
<td>610-326-3100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Newsletter Editor</td>
<td>Dean Kaiser</td>
<td>McMahon</td>
<td>610-594-9995</td>
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<tr>
<td>Website Coordinator</td>
<td>Charles Gushue</td>
<td>McCormick Taylor</td>
<td>215-592-4200</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nominations Chair</td>
<td>Sara Patterson</td>
<td>Michael Baker</td>
<td>215-442-5321</td>
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<tr>
<td>Traffic Bowl Coordinator</td>
<td>Nicole Kline</td>
<td>McMahon</td>
<td>610-594-9995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Chapter Liaison, Univ. of Delaware</td>
<td>Tucker Smith</td>
<td>McCormick Taylor</td>
<td>302-738-0203</td>
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<td>Student Chapter Liaison, Penn State University</td>
<td>VACANT</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student Chapter Liaison, Villanova University</td>
<td>Teresa Lord</td>
<td>McMahon</td>
<td>610-594-9995</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student Chapter Liaison, Univ. of Pittsburgh</td>
<td>Brad DiCola</td>
<td>Gannett Fleming</td>
<td>724-836-1972</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student Chapter Liaison, West Virginia Univ.</td>
<td>VACANT</td>
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<tr>
<td>Section Advisor</td>
<td>Jenn Walsh</td>
<td>HDR</td>
<td>484-612-1105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Area Engineer’s Club Liaison</td>
<td>Jenn Walsh</td>
<td>HDR</td>
<td>484-612-1105</td>
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Pursuant the MASITE Bylaws, the MASITE Nominating Committee is transmitting a list of qualified candidates to the Secretary for 2019 officer positions. The list is as follows:

**President:** Steven E. Palmer, P.E.
**1st Vice President:** Mahmood Shehata, P.E., PTOE
**2nd Vice President:** Amy Balmer Staud, P.E., PTOE
**Mid-Colonial Rep.:** Al Federico, PE, PTOE
**Treasurer:**
Christopher May, P.E., PTOE & Megan McDermott, P.E.

Additional nominations for any office may be made by petition, signed by not less than ten members of the section. Each petition shall be accompanied by the written consent of the nominee to run for the office for which they are nominated, and must be received by the Secretary no later than July 1, 2019.

Note that the position of Treasurer and Secretary are each elected for a two-year term. Peter O'Halloran, PE, PTOE was elected Secretary in 2018 and his term runs from January 2019 until December 2020. Therefore, there is no election for secretary this year. The position of Treasurer to be filled in the 2019 election will have a term from January 2020 through December 2021. All other positions are for a one-year term, beginning in January 2020.

**Eastern Area Events**

The Eastern Area hosted several informative and fun events in the first half of 2019.

**January**
- The Eastern Area kicked off the year with a Walking Tour of PennDOT District 6 Signal Technology on January 8-10th. Dave Adams and the District 6 Traffic Signal Section led six rounds of this very popular event.

**February**
- On February 28th, Steph Haight with General Highways Products led a seminar on Caltrans Standard Controller assemblies used by the City of Philadelphia. The session included an explanation of the comparison of Caltrans Controllers versus PennDOT NEMA / ATC Standard and a discussion about new developments and where the signal controller industry is going.

**March**
- March was a busy month in the Eastern Area. We started with a joint dinner meeting with ASHE South Jersey at The Hamilton Manor on March 6th. Richard Jaffee and James Hogan from Advantage Engineering Associate, Peter Drinkwater from T&M Associates, and Wasif Mirza from NJDOT presented on the Route 1 Hard Shoulder Running Pilot Project.
- On March 14th, Mike Shea of Signal Control Products led a unique training event called Traffic Signals 201: Controller Programming where attendees learned how to program a traffic signal controller through hands on experience with the controllers.
- MASITE hosted a second hands on training event in March, this time on Tru-Traffic software, the following week on March 19th. The event was hosted at PennDOT District 6 and was led by John Albeck and Brian Jatzke of Albeck Gerken.

**Central Area Events**

So far this year, we have held three events in the Central Area:

- In May, there was a joint organization happy hour at Café 1500 in Harrisburg. Eight professional organizations participated including ASCE, ASHE, MASITE, PAEP, KCA, ABCD, SMPS, and WTS, and about 75 people registered. The event benefitted Partnership for Public Health in Lancaster - https://www.partnershipforpublichealth.org/
- There was also a PA Turnpike Traffic Engineering and Operations Forum held in May. We teamed up with ITSPA to hold a joint lunchtime technical session at the PA Turnpike Headquarters building. The TE&O Department presented some of their latest projects and initiatives, including:
  - Tom Macchione, PE, Manager of Traffic Engineering, presenting Work Zone Safety
  - Mike Pack, Manager of Incident Management and Traffic Operations presenting the latest Connected Vehicle Projects
  - Chad Smith, PE, Engineer Project Manager 3, giving an update on Automated Work Zone Speed Enforcement
  - John Parker, Senior Traffic Operations Project Manager, talking about dashboards that the Traffic Operations Center uses and some of the mobile apps that the Turnpike has developed.
Be on the lookout for future Central Area announcements, including the annual event at PennDOT District 8-0 on August 22 and an event at Penn State in September. Thanks to those who attended events and special thanks to the presenters!

2019 Section Annual Meeting

Planning for the 2019 MASITE Annual Meeting is in full swing! This year’s meeting kick-offs on Thursday, September 26, 2019 and runs through Friday, September 27, 2019 in Lancaster, Pennsylvania at the Lancaster Marriott at Penn Square. The Lancaster Marriott is situated next to the Lancaster County Convention Center in downtown Lancaster.

The Save the Date announcement for the meeting was emailed to members and friends of MASITE in April. The hotel room block is now open and with 150 attendees anticipated, now is a great time to reserve your room here. Contact Tyler Hartman (Tyler.Hartman@mbakerintl.com) for more information.

The technical program for this year’s meeting is in the works and going to include a broad array of interesting and engaging transportation topics. Contact Bridget Postlewaite (bpostlewaite@kmjinc.com) and Greg Frisby (gfrisby@wrallp.com) for more information. Look for the Call for Abstracts in your inbox soon!

If you’re interested in becoming a sponsor for this year’s meeting or if you’re a vendor, contact Sid New (snew@GFNET.com) for more information.

Meeting updates can be found in the MASITE email blast. Contact Annual Meeting Chair Liz Schwartz (eschwartz@benesch.com) for more information.

Future City 2019

We had a great competition day this year on January 19. There were 35 teams there, with about 300 students and over 100 volunteers attending and working to make the day a lot of fun.

The 2019 Philadelphia Regional Future City Competition was a great success thanks to our many supporters including MASITE. Your contribution of $250 was a great help in funding the competition and its many awards. This was a wonderful outpouring of appreciation to the over 300 middle school students, their teachers and engineer mentors who participated on January 19.

Your Most Innovative Transportation Concept Award was presented to the team from:
Downingtown Middle School
115 Rock Raymond Road
Downingtown. PA 19335
Mr. Derek Mastrangelo
610-518-0685
derekmastangelo@dasd.org

To introduce more students to the program and to help educators get started, particularly those new to the program, the Philadelphia Region Steering Committee is hosting an Engineering Fair on October 26. We are looking for local firms, technical societies, and universities to provide hands-on activities for middle-school students; see the attached flyer for more information. To express interest and receive updates, please complete the “Expression of Interest” Form at https://rebrand.ly/FC-Exhibitor-EI.

Thank you again for your support and sponsorship and we hope you will participate again next year. If you want, you may make your pledge now for the 2020 competition, using the attached form. We can invoice you in the fall or next January if you wish.

City of Philadelphia

Vision Zero and the Transformation of the Roosevelt Boulevard

Every year in Philadelphia, our residents are subject to approximately 10,000 traffic crashes. These crashes take the lives of around 100 people each year in Philadelphia, and severely injuring 250 more.

On November 7, 2016, Mayor Kenney signed Executive Order 11-16, setting a target of zero traffic-related deaths by 2030. Since this Executive Order, the Office of Complete Streets has developed an action plan outlining a comprehensive strategy address traffic fatalities through engineering, education, enforcement, evaluation and engagement.

Research confirms that speed is a fundamental predictor of crash survival. In Philadelphia, approximately 53% of the city’s traffic-related deaths are a result of aggressive driving, which includes speeding and failure to yield. Philadelphia took a major step forward with addressing speed management on Roosevelt Boulevard when City Council unanimously voted on May 16, 2019 to approve a five-year pilot of automated speed enforcement on Roosevelt Boulevard, a 12-mile corridor that sees 8% of all fatal and severe injury crashes in the City.

Kelley Yemen, Director of Complete Streets and Angie Dixon, Director of Planning for the Office of Transportation, Infrastructure & Sustainability, will present the latest about Vision Zero and the City’s efforts to transform Roosevelt Boulevard.

MASITE Annual Conference

September 26 – September 27
Lancaster Marriott at Penn Square

The 2019 MASITE Annual Conference is set for Thursday, September 26th through Friday, September 27th in Lancaster PA. The conference is now accepting abstracts for presenters. Go to www.masite.org for information.
Traffic Planning & Design is an award-winning transportation engineering firm serving the eastern U.S., celebrating their 30th anniversary in business. Founded in 1989, TPD began with 6 employees, and over the years, has grown into 10 offices throughout PA, NJ, MD and NC. TPD has prioritized developing and maintaining its staff of professionals whose contribution to infrastructure, workforce, and economic development has earned the firm merit on local, regional and national levels. The firm has consistently ranked among the best places and civil engineering firms to work for in the U.S. Their ever-evolving flexible, family-friendly policies have been essential in cultivating an atmosphere in which employees can thrive professionally without sacrificing essential personal or family obligations, producing retention rates in the upper 10% of all engineering firms.

TPD recently relocated their western PA office to a larger space in Bridgeville, closer to downtown Pittsburgh, to accommodate their growth.

KMJ

On June 5, 2019, Rich Montanez, Deputy Commissioner of Transportation, City of Philadelphia accepted a Grand Jury Award for restoration from the Preservation Alliance of Greater Philadelphia at the 2019 Preservation Achievement Awards. KMJ along with Gilmore & Associates, and Olivieri & Associates played a role in the reconstruction of historic Philip Street.

KMJ designed two curb ramps at the intersection of Philip Street/Delancey Street for this reconstruction project. Small historic streets present a number of design challenges, such as proximity of existing buildings and staircases as well as underground vaults. Close coordination and collaboration between and among the City of Philadelphia, Gilmore & Associates, and KMJ was critical for the successful implementation of this project. Kudos to Olivieri & Associates for exceeding expectations of the residents along Philip Street.

In addition to the Grand Jury Award, the reconstruction of Philip Street has also been awarded the Local Government Initiative Award from Preservation Pennsylvania to be presented at the 2019 Pennsylvania Historic Preservation Awards Ceremony held on Wednesday, June 19th.

Visit www.masite.org for Sponsor Career Updates…
Risky phone use while driving is soaring, and it's killing Americans, IIHS study finds

1/24/2019 USA Today

Americans are using their phones in riskier ways while driving, worsening the nation’s crash crisis, according to a new report.

Although overall cellphone use on the road is down, drivers were “observed manipulating their phones” 57 percent more often in 2018 than they were in 2014, according to research by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety.

That means people are putting themselves at significantly higher risk of dying in a car crash.

"People are talking on the phone less than they were in 2014 and they're manipulating it more, which is things that include texting and potentially browsing the internet or potentially using it for navigation, audio, music," said David Kidd, senior research scientist for the Highway Loss Data Institute, a sibling organization to IIHS.

Using the most recently available figures, IIHS estimated that about 800 people were killed in crashes in 2017 due to drivers who were using their phones for something other than a call.

The findings are significant because researchers have historically found it difficult to gauge the effects of distracted driving.

But IIHS experts were able to track the problem by positioning researchers on the side of the road at traffic lights, straight sections of roads and roundabouts. The researchers recorded what drivers were doing when they passed by.

About 1 in 4 drivers were doing something other than focusing on the road, a figure that includes phone use, smoking and eating, according to the study.

The study adds credence to suspicions that the nation’s spike in deadly crashes over the past few years is due in part to smartphone use. Distracted driving can occur for other reasons, too, including the use of vehicle infotainment systems.

The best available data suggests that using your phone for something other than a call while driving increases your risk of a crash by about 66 percent, Kidd said.

"When you’re taking your eyes off the roadway and you don’t see what’s coming ahead of you, you're less able to react to what’s ahead of you, and that can result in crashes," Kidd said.

U.S. crash deaths fell slightly in 2017 but still reflected the second-deadliest year on the road in the past decade.

The number of people killed in traffic crashes in 2017 was 37,133, down 1.8 percent from the year before, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Figures from 2018 have not yet been released.

The IIHS study was conducted in northern Virginia. Kidd said there’s no reason to believe northern Virginia drivers use their phones more or less than the average American.

"I don’t have any reason to think it’s any different because of how ubiquitous smartphones are now," he said.

Examples of how US drivers are distracted while driving

1. Talking on hand-held cellphone
2. Manipulating hand-held cellphone
3. Holding hand-held cellphone
4. Wearing Bluetooth earpiece/headset with mic
5. Wearing headphones or ear buds
6. Manipulating in-vehicle system
7. Talking or singing
8. Eating or drinking
9. Smoking
10. Grooming

SOURCE Insurance Institute for Highway Safety study

Are Automakers Doing Enough To Curb Distracted Driving?

www.forbes.com 2/14/2019

Virginia has now outlawed the use of hand-held cellphones while driving as of January 20, 2020. Motorists spotted violating the new law will receive a $125 summons for a first offense and $250 for additional infractions. Talking on a hand-held cellphone while driving is banned in 16 states and the District of Columbia, and text messaging is banned for all drivers in 47 states and the District of Columbia.

But are automakers doing their part to curb distracted driving?

Manufacturers have added as much tech as seems possible into vehicles to keep occupants safer in a crash, with ABS brakes and other safety measures now standard as well as assorted airbags and side curtains, crumple zones, alerts on all four sides if your ride comes close to an object, seat belt warnings, automatic braking, the muting of the sound system if you’re backing up, rings on standard shifts which must be lifted to put the car in reverse, having to step on the brake to start the car, and the list goes on.
But the use of cell phones in cars is now estimated to be involved in 26 percent of all motor vehicle crashes, according to a report from the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety. Surprisingly, it isn’t texting that causes the majority of crashes – it’s talking, with an estimated 5 percent of crashes involving tapping on keys or reading messages from others, while 21 percent involved drivers gabbing, even hands-free.

What specifically are automakers doing to curb the carnage caused by distracted driving? Not enough, according to a report from AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety a little over a year ago which examined ways to reduce the approximately 3,500 humans killed and the roughly 390,000 injured in U.S. crashes each year due to distracted driving.

“What we’ve been studying for the last three or four years is the explosion to technology in the vehicle — hundreds of buttons, touch screens, gesture controls, heads-up displays, voice commands,” according to the author of the study, David Strayer, a professor of cognition and neural science at the University of Utah. “Our concern is that in many cases the driver will assume that if it’s put in the vehicle, and it’s enabled to be used while the vehicle’s in motion, then it must be safe. That’s just simply not true.”

Strayer concluded that Google’s Android and Apple’s CarPlay shaved crucial seconds that from the time a driver was distracted when compared to the “infotainment” the car came with.

“If you start to take your eyes off the road for more than two seconds you start to see the crash risk increase,” Strayer said. “The matter of time it takes to read a text is about 4½ seconds, so the shorter the interaction and the easier the interaction, the less it competes with driving.”

The auto industry has, to their credit, attempted to compensate for the fact that the majority of drivers, especially young drivers, are going to continue to leave their phones on and use them while driving. Ford’s SYNC system, for example, will send texts dictated by drivers, and read incoming texts out loud. Hands-free communication has been found to be far “safer” than the use of phones held by the driver, says a new study from the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute.

But in the end, if may be simple human nature to let one’s mind wander, whether due to a long distance traveled or being stuck in traffic and wishing to amuse oneself to pass the time. The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety and Erie Insurance released a study analyzing the data kept by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to draw a picture of distracted driving. The study found that good old-fashioned daydreaming was the cause of 61 percent of fatal distracted crashes, while overall cellphone use — texting, talking, dialing, or listening — ranked second at 14 percent.

Approved by the full Assembly and waiting for action in the Senate is a measure requiring that E-ZPass lanes on the Garden State Parkway, New Jersey Turnpike and Atlantic City Expressway be able to transmit immediate notification to a customer when a vehicle on their account has passed through a toll plaza.

"This bill says we should be entitled to having the option of getting an electronic receipt when a transaction is made. It's as simple as that," Assemblyman Roy Freiman, D-Somerset, said during a legislative hearing on his bill. "It's getting E-ZPass in line with all our other electronic purchases."

Freiman said consumers wouldn't put up with zero receipt or electronic acknowledgement when using their credit card at a store or online.

"But when it comes to E-ZPass, we don't get any acknowledgement or receipt that our transaction occurred," Freiman said.

The instant notification can occur by email, text message or through a mobile application, the bill states. If it were to become law, the measure "shall not infringe upon any contract that is currently in place."

E-ZPass customers can currently view their toll activity by accessing their account online.

There is no fiscal estimate attached to the bill on the New Jersey Legislature website. It cleared the Assembly 71-4 on Feb. 25. It was referred to the transportation committee in the Senate.

Don't give wild N.J. drivers the finger. You could be helping cops nab them, instead.


It's not yet known what it would cost to equip New Jersey's E-ZPass system with the ability to issue instant receipts electronically, but legislation that requires the move has already received overwhelming support from New Jersey's lower house.

Approved by the full Assembly and waiting for action in the Senate is a measure requiring that E-ZPass lanes on the Garden State Parkway, New Jersey Turnpike and Atlantic City Expressway be able to transmit immediate notification to a customer when a vehicle on their account has passed through a toll plaza.

It'd be up to the New Jersey Turnpike Authority, which operates the Parkway and Turnpike, and the South Jersey Transportation Authority, which operates the Expressway, to install and operate devices that can make it happen.

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Don't give wild N.J. drivers the finger. You could be helping cops nab them, instead.

www.nj.com March 12, 2019

There are drivers we encounter who are weaving in and out of traffic, tailgating, talking on their phone and looking like a crash waiting to happen.

While many motorists have a specific finger they’d like to use to respond to that driver, there’s a more productive use for that angry digit — dialing the state’s #77 hotline to report those crash test dummies.

But the initial enthusiasm for the hotline from drivers seems to have waned, which safety experts said is a sign
it needs to be more widely advertised. Currently, that consists of signs on state highways that aren’t too plentiful.

State Police took over operation of the aggressive driver hotline with a highly publicized re-launch in April 2017. The #77 hotline was expanded to include distracted driving and officials encouraged anyone who has seen dangerous driving of any sort to phone it in.

Distracted driving has been the top factor in fatal crashes for six years, according to a State Police analysis, followed by driving while intoxicated and speeding.

The relaunch spurred a flurry of calls, with 1,071 incidents phoned in during the first two months of operation that resulted in 600 letters being sent to vehicle owners. The letters warned them that the vehicle was spotted being operated dangerously and warned them about penalties for doing so.

Last year, drivers made 23,884 reports to the #77 hotline. That averaged to about 1,990 calls a month in 2018.

Of those calls, 863 reported drivers suspected of using cell phones, said Sgt. First Class Jeff Flynn, a State Police spokesman.

Those numbers were a drop from 2017 when the state took over the program. That year, State Police received 35,547 calls, and of those, 2,510 reported drivers allegedly using a phone, he said.

Warning letters are only sent to the owners of vehicles reported on #77 for alleged cell phone violations, Flynn said. That only happens if the make and model match the vehicle registration, he said. In 2017, 1,325 letters were sent, which dropped off to 497 last year, he said.

However, it’s hard to tell how many calls resulted in a summons because New Jersey doesn’t have a specific aggressive driving statute, Flynn said. Usually aggressive drivers are cited for speeding or for tailgating or other specific violations, he said.

“A trooper observing a driver will use the statute that fits, such as tailgating or unsafe lane change,” Flynn said.

State troopers also can add notes to a summons and testify about what they saw in court, he said.

Why have calls dropped off? The program could be promoted better, which isn’t easy to do because of the state’s location in a high cost media market.

“It costs a lot to buy ad time,” said Pam Fischer, traffic safety consultant and former state Division of Highway Traffic Safety director.

The most obvious reminders are signs on highways promoting the hotline.

“There was an initial push and awareness campaign when they were launching the #77 hotline, but since then there has been relative silence aside for a highway signs,” said Tracy Noble, AAA MidAtlantic spokeswoman.

A good opportunity to increase promotion of the hotline would be before Distracted Driving month in April and with the start of “U Text, U Drive, U Pay” enforcement that runs April 1 to 21, Noble said.

While the state gets $11 million to $12 million in federal grants to promote safety programs, that has to be spread between many efforts and campaigns, Fischer said.

Still the hotline is valuable in the “see something, say something” vein.

“It is another tool in the arsenal to call attention to the behavioral problems happening on our roadways,” Fischer said. “And recognizing that law enforcement can’t be everywhere, supplementing that with public efforts like this is a way to expand the net.”

‘Going to School’ to Cultivate the Next Generation of Transit Employees


Each year, the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority (SEPTA) honors its retirees from the previous fiscal year with an awards luncheon. In 2016, there was a record 367 honorees. In 2018, the Authority recognized 344 retirees — 19 with at least 40 years of service with the Authority. One of those honorees had 45 years of service at SEPTA.

Replacing experienced, long-tenured employees — especially those in the skilled trades — is an issue SEPTA shares with industries across the country. To help mitigate the effects of a potential workforce shortage, SEPTA is taking its recruitment efforts to the next generation, reaching out to students about careers in transportation.

Participation in career fairs and school career days has helped SEPTA introduce its many job possibilities to thousands of students in the Greater Philadelphia region. A special relationship with a Philadelphia public high school could “drive” potential future employees in the Authority’s direction.

In January 2018, SEPTA kicked off its partnership with Samuel Fels High School at an assembly where authority employees shared information on the numerous careers SEPTA offers, internship opportunities and their personal career paths to 350 9th and 10th grade students.

SEPTA offers, internship opport unities and their personal employees shared information on the numerous careers with more than 400 students by holding work readiness workshops and hosting students for a day-long tour at the Authority’s direction.

A special relationship with a Philadelphia public high school could “drive” potential future employees to 350 9th and 10th grade students.

Over the past year, SEPTA has adopted Fels, interacting with more than 400 students by holding work readiness workshops and hosting students for a day-long tour at the Authority’s direction.

A special relationship with a Philadelphia public high school could “drive” potential future employees to 350 9th and 10th grade students.

The goal of the Adopt-A-School Program is to foster an environment of academic achievement and post-secondary education, while creating potential pipelines to future employment,” said Jennifer Thompkins, Assistant Director of Youth Programs for TriZen LLC. “The program is now in its third year and is targeting the classes of 2020 and 2021.”
This year, SEPTA is working with 11th grade students on their career plans and preparing them for summer internships through workshops held at their high school. In a recent session, Amspacher, and Thompkins introduced students to the various types of post-secondary institutions and discussed characteristics students should consider when researching schools.

“We want students to start thinking about the next steps they need to take to reach their career goals,” said Thompkins. “This includes understanding various types of financial aid, taking college tours and registering for summer internships.”

Six-week paid summer internships are offered by employers registered with the Urban League of Philadelphia/TriZen LLC program.

“The internships can help students find something they are passionate about,” added Thompkins.

In addition to SEPTA, some of the Greater Philadelphia’s biggest employers participate in the Adopt-A-School program, including Comcast, AmeriHealth Caritas, Independence Blue Cross, iHeartMedia, Philadelphia Gas Works, TD Bank and UPS.

After years of SEPTA asks, Google Maps adds transit lines in Philly

https://billypenn.com 4/16/2019

The authority and the search engine giant are finally fully integrated.

At last, Philadelphia transportation rail lines are visible on Google Maps.

Go ahead, try it out for yourself. Head over to Gmaps on your desktop or Android device (the function’s not yet available on iOS) and tap or click to turn on the “Transit” details, and you’ll see a web of interconnected colored lines. Included so far are BSL and MFL subway lines, plus some trolley, PATCO, Regional Rail and light rail routes.

Before this update, you could see transit stops on Google Maps — but the route lines were not highlighted till now.

This new mapping display didn’t come easy. SEPTA has been working on getting it implemented for half a decade, spokesperson Andrew Busch told Billy Penn.

“One of our goals was to show how multiple SEPTA lines pass through the same streets or tracks,” Busch said, “to help riders better understand how they can use our system and the options that are available to them.”

Busch explained to Billy Penn that conversations between Google and the transit authority were complex and long-lasting — and took years of back-and-forth.

SEPTA’s been providing its transit dataset for more than five years now, he said, but at first the mega-search-engine insisted the files weren’t compatible with its system.

The Philly transit agency didn’t give up — its tech staff made continuous adjustments, repeatedly nudging Google to speed up the process. At the end of 2018, SEPTA folks were connected with Google contractor Ito World, and the two parties collaborated to finally integrate the geospatial data and display it on Maps.

“This gives our customers another way to access information about the transit system,” Busch said.

The new map brings Philly up to par with most other cities. New York, Boston, Washington D.C., Atlanta, Los Angeles, Seattle — all of them already had their transit lines uploaded.

It’s part of a larger push on SEPTA’s behalf to update its digital presence. In tandem with its February 2019 schedule change, officials released some pretty new maps to better display bus frequency. They’re color-coded to easily show which routes run every 15, 30 and 60 minutes.

And if you’re really in a rush, there’s an extremely readable map that displays just the routes that arrive most frequently (that’s every 15 minutes, pending your usual SEPTA delays).

SEPTA riders, rejoice — we can finally use the Internet Machine to easily see the big picture.

Penn State named key partner in project to study truck platooning

https://news.psu.edu 4/24/2019

UNIVERSITY PARK, Pa. — The Thomas D. Larson Pennsylvania Transportation Institute (LTI) has announced that Penn State is one of seven key partners recently selected to participate in Phase 1 of a Truck Platooning Early Deployment Assessment. The $499,878 award from the Federal Highway Administration will be used to help industry and agency partners understand how truck platoons operate in realistic, operational environments.

Truck platoons, or grouping vehicles together on a roadway in a flock, have the potential to increase both road capacity and fuel efficiency. The adoption of autonomous driving technology could boost these benefits even more.

“This type of research is extremely important in order to accurately assess how truck platooning will impact safety, efficiency and mobility,” said Sean Brennan, LTI affiliated faculty member and professor of mechanical engineering at Penn State. “To date, most testing of connected and autonomous vehicles has been done using one vehicle, typically a passenger vehicle.”

Phase 1 of a Truck Platooning Early Deployment Assessment is part of a recent Broad Agency Announcement (BAA) made by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

The project will be led by Battelle, a global research and development organization, and funded by the Intelligent Transportation Systems Joint Program Office (ITS JPO) in cooperation with the FHWA and Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration.
“This project will provide a better understanding of the behaviors and improvements achieved when automation and communication systems are given more interaction across groups of vehicles, or a platoon, in this project,” continued Brennan. “In a truck platoon, for example, this may require coordinating the braking between vehicles, which enables closer spacing than a human can achieve with normal reaction times, resulting in greater fuel savings and emissions improvements than conventional driving.”

Other key team partners include the Center for Automotive Research, SAE International, Saia LTL Freight, Volvo Group and the University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute. Now through November 2019, the team will perform detailed planning and team building to develop proposals for consideration during Phase 2 of the project.

“During Phase 1, we will define the types of testing we wish to do, given present capability in trucks, infrastructure communication systems, sensing and data management,” added Brennan. “We’re particularly sensitive to the training of, and need for, human truckers who will be an integral part of the system’s behavior for the foreseeable future. The drivers will still be making decisions about when to engage and disengage functionality such as cruise control, anticipating traffic situations ahead, such as construction and congestion, and evaluating system health, such as breakdowns and faults, inclement weather or poor road conditions.”

If awarded to participate in Phase 2 of the project, the team will then execute plans, collect data, and conduct evaluations of truck platoons driven by professional drivers delivering commercial goods.

“For commercial trucks, which expend a great deal of fuel simply pushing air around themselves on open highways at constant speeds, there is additional significant opportunity for platooning, because the drag force on all the vehicles is reduced,” Brennan continued. “Past work and simulations suggest that there could be 10 to 20 percent fuel economy improvements in trucks within a platoon, versus driving a truck in isolation.”

With proposed platooning locations set to include Indiana, Ohio and Pennsylvania, LTI will work closely with the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) and Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission (PTC) during deployment.

“We are grateful for the support that we have received from PennDOT and the PTC and look forward to coordinating with them during this project,” said Eric Donnell, director of LTI.

To support the Penn State team, Donnell and Brennan have enlisted the expertise of the Department of Civil Engineering and anticipate opportunities to collaborate with others across the University.

The Thomas D. Larson Pennsylvania Transportation Institute is Penn State’s transportation research center. Since its founding in 1968, the Larson Institute has maintained a threefold mission of research, education and service. The Institute brings together top faculty, world-class facilities and enterprising students from across the university in partnership with public and private stakeholders to address critical transportation-related problems.

**Capital Area Transit set to launch electronic fareboxes next month**

https://fox43.com  June 11, 2019

HARRISBURG, Pa. - Capital Area Transit is launching a new fare system in July.

The transit authority which covers Cumberland and Dauphin counties are installing high tech electronic fareboxes on its buses.

"I think it’s very disturbing, it’s incapable, inconsistent and incompetent," said Willie Lyles who used to ride the bus.

That is just some of the feedback people are giving about Capital Area Transit's current fare card system. It is a system that is going away soon.

Some people I talked to are glad to see it go.

“My pet peeve is like for the elderly and stuff like people that are handicapped," said CAT rider Katlin Montgomery.

"It makes it a little bit of a slower process for them especially if the weather is extra windy or rainy or cold out.”

Right now, when riders get on the bus drivers have to punch holes in rider fare cards.

Beginning in July, CAT is putting electronic fareboxes on all buses that operate on fixed route fares.

Here is how it works, riders insert a card called "my pass" into the farebox.

The "my pass" card is kept and can be reloaded with more cash for fares at any time.

CAT says this will speed up the boarding process.

On Tuesday, CAT was doing a demo for riders on how the new fareboxes work.

"I came out to see what the machine actually did and how it operates," said bus rider Gary Kulip.

"So I’m not caught by surprised, come the first of July. It looks like it's going to make my life much easier." CAT is doing other demo sessions in the next several weeks before the fareboxes are rolled out next month.
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Should you have any questions regarding the meeting, please contact:

SID NEW
Conference Chair
snew@gfnet.com
(610) 650-8101

CHRIS MAY
Vendors/Sponsors
christopher.may@mbakerintl.com
(717) 221-2069

Conference Location: Sheraton Inner Harbor Hotel
300 South Charles Street, Baltimore, MD 21201
(410) 962-8300
Your editor had the honor and privilege to witness, firsthand, the rebirth of a transportation icon that had not been ‘driven’ since 1961 (do the math!!!). The Union Pacific Railroad’s Steam Shop Mechanics masterfully resurrected the world’s largest (132-foot long) steam engine over the past several years. A very successful run from Cheyenne, WY to Ogden, UT and back (May 5th through May 19th) was the culmination of the 150th Anniversary of the Golden Spike (for the final connection of the Transcontinental Railroad). Words are just too hard to describe seeing, hearing and feeling this beautiful engine…

Respectfully submitted,

Dean J. Kaiser, P.E., PTOE
2019 MASITE Newsletter Editor