

What is TRIPRS and Why Do I Care?

TRIPRS is the Traffic Records Improvement Program Reporting System. This is the newest release of the on-line reporting system developed to support the NHTSA State Traffic Safety Information System (TSIS) Improvement Program (Section 408) and contains information on all state TSIS Strategic Plans and progress reports since the beginning of the SAFETEA-LU implementation effort.

History:

The initial purpose of TRIPRS was to provide NHTSA's Traffic Records Team and the Section 408 Review Team that reviews Section 408 grant applications and progress reports with a database that can be used to track projects, performance measures, progress, etc. As the previous safety data program (Section 411) was closing and Congress was working on the language for SAFETEA-LU, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) performed a review and critique of the Section 411 program. This database and on-line tool set was initiated in response to the GAO critique that NHTSA was unable to adequately monitor and document the use of the Section 411 funds in terms of safety data improvement programs that were supported with Section 411 funds, and their impact upon the data systems at the state level. GAO criticized NHTSA for not being able to document the safety data strategic planning efforts and coordination efforts that were expected to be performed by the State Traffic Records Coordinating Committees.

As the Section 408 program took form and the Federal Register notice was published to guide the implementation of the State Traffic Safety Information System Improvement Program, the NHTSA Traffic Records Team charged TSASS with the development and implementation of a system that would track strategic plan contents, projects, progress, and in particular, performance measures that would document that state systems were indeed improving. The general process was rather convoluted as NHTSA and the states established how to best plan and implement states safety data systems improvements with Section 408. As more decisions were made and more state and headquarters requests materialized in the on-line tool, the system soon took on a fairly complex structure.

Early on, several states indicated that if the system were able to support the development, documentation and management reporting of their Strategic Plan, they would maintain the plans on-line. With this in mind, the system was built to support both the NHTSA reporting requirements as well as to facilitate state strategic plan development and management. By the summer of 2008 the system had stabilized in terms of key functions and content, but along the way the system had become rather cumbersome to use. Based upon feedback provided at the 2008 Traffic Records Forum and a subsequent solicitation of comments by the Review Team, a major re-write of the system was begun in the

fall of 2008. That re-written system has been placed on-line under the acronym TRIPRS.

Primary Uses:

The TRIPRS system supports the following core functions –

1. NHTSA Database for tracking state strategic plans and progress

The information within the database tracks all strategic plan projects and performance measures (and measurements) since the first year of Section 408. This database is either maintained by the states through the on-line interface, or by the TSASS staff that are responsible for entering any strategic plans and progress reports that are submitted as paper or electronic documents.

The NHTSA Traffic Records Team and the Section 408 Review Team are provided with summary reports and listings from the system to support their review of annual grant applications. These reports are also used as background data to support the next transportation bill in the hope of continuing or expanding the program. Reports that are provided to the Team include, but are not limited to the following:

- Total dollars of safety data system improvement activity that is leveraged by the 408 Funds and strategic planning process.
- Listings of data systems and performance areas where states have documented improvement.
- Listings of data systems and performance areas where states have documented program activity (projects).
- Changes in system metrics that have been reported by the states.
- Specific performance measures, by state, that have documented improvement.

2. Maintenance of state strategic plans, and related documents on-line

As noted above, many states are maintaining their strategic plan documents on-line, but those documents that are submitted off-line are also entered into the database. This facilitates the ability for NHTSA and the other U.S. DOT partners to search the database and identify what states are working on specific issues. This information is available to the public through the state safety data improvement program clearinghouse, which draws its contact and project information from the state strategic plans.

3. State management tool

A number of the states that are using the on-line system are taking advantage of the system's ability to archive all safety data improvement program information, including changes in performance measures, periodic project progress reports, and updates to project milestones. In the near future the new system will allow the state traffic records coordinator to search for projects that are behind schedule (milestones not met), projects for which there is no current activity report, and performance measures that are not showing progress.

The state-level tools within the site includes a *check my plan* utility that provides the person responsible for the on-line plan (or NHTSA staff) with a list of items that should be checked for inconsistencies and / or missing information. The state traffic records coordinator has the ability to delegate rights to others to update information at the project level and to allow all members of the TRCC to view the on-line plan; this means a reduction in paper exchanges and distribution of copies of new plan updates because everyone can view the current content on line and / or update their portions of the plan.

4. Section 408 Team management tool

The Section 408 Review Team and the Traffic Records Team utilize the system to manage the reviews of interim progress reports as well as the annual grant applications. The on-line system allows the sharing of reviewer comments and the exchange of information with other Team members, the state traffic records coordinator, and region staff.

Requested State Actions:

Ideally, states will choose to maintain their strategic plans and related information on-line so that it is as current and accurate as possible. As a minimum, each state traffic records coordinator is asked to go on-line and verify that the information there is current and correct. If there are sections that are not correct or up to date, you are asked to work with Kara Mueller (kmueller@tsass.com) so that she can update the database in those cases where the state is not going to use the system.

In addition, each State Traffic Records Coordinator is asked to at least verify their contact information and complete the statement of intent relative to use of the on-line system. States have the option to not use the system at all, in which case Kara will take any documents provided and enter them for the state. The second option is to upload documents to the system in preparation for the June grant review process. Should the state elect to upload their documents, Kara will do the data entry as the documents are made available. Finally, the state may elect to maintain the on-line system. In this case Kara will NOT make any changes to the content for the given state.

How to Find Out More:

If you are interested in a demonstration of the system or specific state-level training, please contact your Region Program Manager or Kara Mueller (kmueller@tsass.com). All training is provided in an interactive web-meeting format which only requires that you have a PC with web access for the visual presentation and a telephone for the audio portion.

Documentation on the system and access to the public content is available at www.nhtsa-tsis.net/triprs. If you want to check out the login-protected content and need, or forgot your username and password, contact Kara.