



WASHINGTON
Traffic Safety
COMMISSION

Centennial Accord Agreement 2014 Plan

**Between the State of Washington
(Washington Traffic Safety Commission)
and the Tribes of Washington State**

Purpose

The following document is a formal Government to Government agreement established between the state of Washington (Washington Traffic Safety Commission) and the Tribes of Washington State, in accordance with the Centennial Accord, the 2000 Millennium Agreement, and related Executive Orders for the purpose of enhancing traffic safety, thereby saving lives, preventing injuries, and the loss of property on Tribal lands throughout Washington resulting from traffic crashes.

Introduction

Traffic safety continues to be a high priority for the citizens of Washington State based on the dramatic impact traffic crashes have on their personal safety, the quality of their lives, and the state's economy. Governor Jay Inslee maintains public safety as one of his administrations highest priorities.

Survey data, both locally and nationally, documents that citizens throughout the country are more afraid of being killed or injured in a traffic crash than they are from violent crime. When comparing state and national crash data, it is clear that Washington has some of the safest roads in the country. However, Washington still lost 438 lives in 2012, and a majority of these deaths were preventable.

When analyzing Washington fatal crash data by heritage group, an alarming trend emerges when it comes to the number of Native American lives lost each year. If we make a comparison based on their representation within the state's population, the results are even more staggering. Worse — the gap is widening.

Native American fatalities compared to the general population:

- 2.4 times higher in the early 2000's
- 3.3 times higher per 2010 *Target Zero*® data
- 3.9 times higher per 2013 *Target Zero*® data

Looking at Washington Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) data from 2003 - 2012, we see that the traffic fatality rates of Native Americans are higher than the general population in several areas.

- Unbelted fatality rate is 7.2 times higher
- Pedestrian fatality rate is 5.3 times higher
- Impaired-driver-involved fatality rate is 5 times higher
- Speeding fatality rate is 4.5 times higher
- Occupant vehicle fatality rate is 3.8 times higher

To complicate this situation, researchers and traffic safety experts agree that Tribal roadway crash data are under reported, making the death rates outlined above even worse.

Roads on tribal lands in Washington are often a mix of tribal, state, county, and city jurisdictions, resulting in complexities with law enforcement and collision reporting. Reservation roads are predominately two-lane rural roadways. When this road environment is combined with low seat belt usage, speeding, and impaired driving, the resulting death rate makes reservation roads a key concern for reaching the goals of *Target Zero*®.

Discussion

The WTSC continues to partner with the 29 federally recognized Tribal governments to provide data, technical support, and funding to assist in creating a safer motoring environment by improving traffic safety on Tribal roads.

Given that the trend of traffic related deaths involving Native Americans in Washington continues to rise, new and innovative strategies and countermeasures must be implemented if this trend is to be reversed. Moreover, the level of partnerships and sharing of resources between the state of Washington and the Tribes will significantly impact the success of these efforts in the future. The following initiatives are proposed as the basis for enhancing traffic safety on Tribal lands, therefore improving the health and welfare of Tribal communities throughout Washington.

Action Items

As a result of the 2009 Centennial Accord meeting, the Tribes and the state of Washington agree to implement the following initiatives to enhance traffic safety on Tribal lands in order to reduce the deaths and injuries among Native Americans in Washington State resulting from traffic crashes:

Maintain a Tribal Traffic Safety Advisory Board to the WTSC comprised of representatives from the following areas:

- Tribal Leadership (with one member acting as the Advisory Board Co-Chair)
- Tribal Law Enforcement
- Tribal Planning and Engineering
- Tribal Health and Education
- Tribal Emergency Medical Services
- Governor's Office of Indian Affairs
- Department of Transportation
- WTSC - ex-officio members to support the board and one to act as the Advisory Board Co-Chair

The Tribal Traffic Safety Advisory Board is responsible for assisting both the Tribes and the Washington Traffic Safety Commission to:

- 1) Use *Target Zero*®, Washington's Strategic Highway Safety Plan, as a guide when developing and implementing effective traffic safety initiatives on Tribal lands.
- 2) Effectively invest human and financial resources on Tribal lands in proven strategies and best practices, as identified in Target Zero, that are proven to save lives and prevent injuries.
- 3) Assist in the planning and facilitating a Tribal-State Transportation Conference every other year to address behavioral traffic safety issues on Tribal lands, which support items #1 and #2 as outlined above.
- 4) Assist in facilitating a block grant to the Northwest Association of Tribal Enforcement Officers for Tribal traffic safety equipment purchases and public education and enforcement initiatives.
- 5) Work to improve the collection and analysis of crash data on Tribal lands.
- 6) Develop performance measures to evaluate the progress of these initiatives and create an accountability link directly to Governor Inslee.
- 7) Provide a highlights report on the above initiatives to the Governor's Office of Indian Affairs.
- 8) Coordinate with Federal agencies to identify additional funding for traffic safety initiatives on Tribal lands.
- 9) Work to build stronger and more effective partnerships between the WTSC and Tribal governments which mutually support traffic safety statewide as well as on Tribal lands.
- 10) Maintain Tribal government involvement in the updates of *Target Zero*®.

Director, Washington Traffic Safety Commission

Date

Agency Contact Information:

Washington Traffic Safety Commission
621 8th Avenue SE, Suite 409
PO Box 40944

Olympia, WA 98504-0944
Main Line – 360.753.6197
Fax – 360.586.6489
www.wtsc.wa.gov

Tribal Liaison

MJ Haught
360.725.9879
mjhaught@wtsc.wa.gov

Agency Director

Darrin T. Grondel
360.725.9899
dgrondel@wtsc.wa.gov