

Online version – September 27, 2010

# WTSC Web Standards & Style Guide

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For internal use only

Errors? Questions? Suggestions? E-mail Mark Medalen at [mmedalen@wtsc.wa.gov](mailto:mmedalen@wtsc.wa.gov)

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# Part I – WEB STANDARDS

## 1. The importance of web standards

Washington is committed to creating and maintaining websites that are easy for visitors to use and understand. “Plain Talk” Executive Order 05-03 requires all state agencies to use simple and clear language when communicating with citizens and businesses.

Plain Talk is a communication style that makes it quick and easy for people to find and understand information. Rewriting just one letter using Plain Talk principles saved the Department of Revenue millions of dollars.

Our website is designed using Plain Talk principles for writing and visual design. You'll notice that paragraphs are short, and that much of the information is presented in bulleted lists. We designed the site so that visitors can consistently locate information such as:

- Videos,
- Contact information
- Materials

It's a challenge to keep a website clear, clean, and simple and to avoid clutter. There is always new information to add, and old information that needs to be modified or removed. With many people responsible for web content, it can be difficult for us to keep a uniform tone.

The WTSC Web Standards and Style Guide help us keep our website clear, easy to use, and clutter-free. These documents

- Make it easy for you to add content to the website
- Ensure that everyone's content follows Plain Talk principles
- Keep the web site from becoming cluttered

If you have additional questions about website content or suggestions for the Style Guide please contact:

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## 2. Updating the website

We want to make sure our website content is up to date and accurate.

Responsibility for each page on the site is assigned to a specific WTSC employee. We also provide pages for some Traffic Safety Task Forces.

### **Content owners must update web pages on a regular basis.**

Content owners will:

- Serve as the expert on their areas
- Review pages every 2 months (based on the GMAP schedule)
- Supply ready-to-publish content to the Communications Consultant with specific placement instructions
- Add new materials and remove old materials
- Check for out-of-date content and broken links

Requests for website updates must specify an existing web page and must come from the staff member who is responsible for that web page, including the homepage. Please refer to [Appendix A](#) for a listing of web page responsibilities.

### **Decide where new information belongs**

When we redesigned the website in 2010, we decided to include only information and documents originated within WTSC. That decision was made so that we can assure the accuracy of our website. If someone in another organization has created a document, we have no way of knowing if that information is accurate and up to date.

We also decided to include on the website only information that is of use to a large audience. If information is of use only to a small group (such as a working group or committee), determine who is the most appropriate person to be responsible for that information. Is it you, as WTSC staff, or is it someone in another organization? If you are the most appropriate host, use WTSC's password-protected partner extranet, the Basecamp website, to post the information.

These guidelines can help you decide whether to put information on Basecamp or on the WTSC website:

Post on Basecamp materials that are used for collaborative processes. These include:

- Meeting agendas

- Working documents and drafts
- Meeting minutes
- Other materials of use only to a small working group or committee

Post on the WTSC public website materials that are of use to our three major audiences: law enforcement, researchers, or the general public. Make sure these materials are:

- **Information that can be understood by and shared with the public.** Ask yourself if you would want to see the information appear in the news tomorrow. If your answer is “no,” it should not go on the website.
- **Materials that we have the rights to distribute via the web.** If the materials (photos or text) have been created by another organization or individual, we need permission to put them on our website. Note that we use an AG-approved release form for photos. The form is available in the Forms folder on the shared drive.

**Use the web work form to request updates.**

All requests for web updates must be accompanied by the WTSC Web Work Form ([Appendix B](#)).

### 3. Tips for writing for the website

**TIP #1. Keep our audience in mind.**

When we developed the WTSC website, we interviewed people who use the website. We found that the WTSC has three main audiences.

1. **Law Enforcement** — Visitors from law enforcement agencies want to apply for grants, find out about programs, get educational and training materials, and register for conferences.
2. **Research** — Legislative staff, other state agencies, contractors, staff from local traffic safety agencies, and the media are interested in data and reports.
3. **Community** — Concerned citizens, students, and community groups are looking for local traffic safety information (ranging from task forces to funding), crash data, and information about traffic safety laws.

You’ll find information about those audiences’ top tasks in [Appendix C](#).

**TIP #2. Use a friendly, conversational tone.**

Focus on what the site visitor understands and their top tasks as much as on

what you want to communicate. Imagine that you are explaining a WTSC program or event to a neighbor who doesn't know much about government or traffic safety.

- Use “we,” “us” and “our” to refer to the WTSC.
- Use “you” and “your” when referring to the visitor.

Examples:

We have designed a new grant application with a special section for schools.

You can submit your budget estimates with the completed application.

**TIP #3. Write clearly and use Plain Talk principles.**

[Plain Talk principles](http://www.plainlanguage.gov/) ([www.plainlanguage.gov/](http://www.plainlanguage.gov/)) for conversational writing help you write web content that is clear to all visitors without talking down to experts. It's possible to write a page that explains traffic safety concepts to concerned citizens and helps law enforcement get key information without wading through paragraphs of detail.

Write clearly:

“Talk” to your site visitors. Write it the way you would say it.

- Use active voice, not passive voice.
- Write in short, straightforward sentences.
- Put the action in the verbs, not the nouns.
- Start paragraphs with a topic sentence that provides context.
- Keep paragraphs short — two or three sentences is plenty.
- Give extra information its own place. If you have a lot of details or dates, put them in separate page or an linked document visitors can download.

Check your work:

- Read your sentences out loud.
- Re-read them, and then cut unnecessary words.

**TIP #4. Understand visitors’ top tasks and emphasize their key words.**

People read differently at their jobs than they did at school. They are task oriented rather than learning oriented, which leads to page scanning.

Most people using the web want to accomplish their tasks quickly and easily, which also promotes page scanning.

Good web writing makes sure visitors can easily find the words they’re looking for (such as the name of a document, or the description of a process). Put these key words at the beginning of a phrase, in a heading, or as a link on the page.

Examples:

Beginning of a phrase: Grant money is available for XYZ.

Heading: How to apply for a traffic safety grant

Link on the page: Interested in applying? You can download a grant application.

**TIP #5. Keep it short.**

Save time for site visitors by driving them to the information they need as quickly as possible. If you need to provide more detailed information, such as a fact sheet, a form, or a legal document, put that information in a text file or PDF and create a link to it.

- Chunk information. A chunk on the web should be smaller than in print. Think “phrases” not “paragraphs.”
- Write sentences with one main point, in 20 words or less.
- Layer information so visitors can quickly get general information, then find details.

**TIP #6. Avoid buzzwords.**

Industry jargon, buzzwords, and acronyms confuse many visitors. Avoid jargon and explain acronyms the first time they appear on a page. Don’t assume the visitor has seen a “previous” explanation page — they may have reached a page from a search engine or from another agency’s website.

Examples:

Fatalities are called deaths.

Describe *FARS* as the *Fatality Analysis Reporting System* when it is first mentioned.

**TIP #7. Avoid long blocks of text.**

Visitors to a website are more likely to skim than to read. Put each topic under its own heading. A heading should be only a few words, and does not require a period at the end.

Examples:

2010 grant deadlines

How to apply for a grant

Special grants for rural communities

Don't worry if the text under a heading is only one or two sentences long. What's important is that it conveys the necessary information.

Break up blocks of text under a heading. Use lists or bullets that a visitor can easily scan.

## 4. Links

We use internal links on the website to make it easy for visitors to get directly to WTSC documents and other WTSC web pages. We also use external links to web pages maintained by other government agencies, non-profits, and educational groups.

When you add a link to a web page, follow these guidelines:

- **Name links clearly.** Give your links titles that closely match the titles or wording the visitor will see on the destination page. Don't create links using language like "click here."
- **Link only to high-quality external websites.** They should be accurate, well updated, and have content that is appropriate for our audiences. Make sure that the whole website, and the agency or organization that created it, would be considered an appropriate partner for WTSC.
- **Keep external links to a minimum (6 or fewer) to avoid clutter.** If you have the option of sending visitors to several informational websites, select the best one or two or select a website that contains an index of all the websites for the topic. With today's search engines, visitors no longer expect our website to be a "portal."
- **Manage the links.** You are responsible for making sure that the links are working and updated.

## 5. Images

When submitting images to be added to the website, keep these points in mind:

- **Use only a few images.** Each page should have only a few high quality images. Do not use website pages to host large galleries of pictures from events or award ceremonies. Pictures on the website should have long-term value for our major audiences.
- **Use only good quality images.** Images for the website should be high-quality photos or graphics that are crisp and clear.
- **Provide caption information.** Caption information should include who is in the picture, where and when the picture was taken, and what it illustrates. When possible, provide information about who took the picture or created the artwork, and what agency or organization owns the rights to the image.
- **Secure permission.** If the image was created by someone other than WTSC staff, get appropriate permission to use the image on the website. This includes images from other government agencies, private individuals, advertising agencies, and other websites. You can find a release form that includes photographs (Permission to Create and Use Recordings) in the Forms folder on the shared drive.
- **Use the correct format.** Images that appear on web pages must be in formats such as JPG, GIF, or PNG. These formats can be “read” by web browsers. Images in other formats (such as EPS) can be put on the website for download and use, but won’t display on the website.



## Part II – WTSC website style

[A](#) [B](#) [C](#) [D](#) [E](#) [F](#) [G](#) [H](#) [I](#) [J](#) [K](#) [L](#) [M](#) [N](#) [O](#) [P](#) [Q](#) [R](#) [S](#) [T](#) [U](#) [V](#) [W](#) [X](#) [Y](#) [Z](#)

### A

#### accident

WTSC does not use the word *accident*. The preferred term is *crash*. *Collision* (which implies two objects, both in motion) can also be used when appropriate.

#### acronyms

For the most part, acronyms should be avoided. While some site visitors know the acronyms, others won't. If you want to use an acronym on a page, spell out the name with the acronym in parentheses on first reference. Then you can use the acronym alone on the second reference on that page.

Example:

Please refer to the Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) data. FARS contains data on fatal traffic crashes in all 50 states.

#### addresses

When formatting addresses, put the division or section first, followed by the department name. Abbreviate names of roadways and states without periods. In most cases, put the mailing address first, followed by the street address.

Example:

Traffic Records

Washington Traffic Safety Commission

621 8<sup>th</sup> Ave SE – Ste 409

Olympia WA 98504-0944

If the address accompanies a map or directions, provide only the street address.

## affect, effect

Avoid using these words as verbs. Because they are so often used incorrectly, they are confusing to many readers.

## almost, nearly

Usually interchangeable, but can have different meanings. *Nearly* is better when numbers are involved.

Example:

There were nearly 500 fatalities.

## American Indian

Don't use the term "American Indian." The preferred term is the actual tribe, but if none is available, use *Native American*.

## Annual report

See [Washington Highway Safety Annual Report](#) for formatting information.

## any more, anymore

*Any more* means none left. *Anymore* means no longer.

## B

## bill, legislation

*Bills* are proposed legislation. Once approved, they become *laws*.

Example: The Ignition Interlock *Bill* became the Ignition Interlock *Law*.

## bullets

Bulleted text can be either complete sentences or short phrases. It's easiest if bullets are preceded by a complete sentence that sets the stage for the list. If the bullets are full sentences, they should each end with a period:

The commission announced three schedule changes:

- The executive team will meet quarterly to review reports.
- Sub-committee members will be selected in January.
- A report will be filed with the Secretary of State's office in June.

If the items in the bulleted list are merely phrases or items, they should not end with periods. However, they should each begin with a capital letter:

The committee will contact participants from three areas:

- Student leaders
- School advisors
- PTA committee members

## C

### .com

If a site includes the *.com* in its name, use it in the first reference on a page. You can drop the *.com* in subsequent references as long as the online identity remains clear even without it.

Examples:

nhtsa.com would be OK as NHTSA.

youtube.com would be fine as YouTube.

### capitalization

For capitalization of titles and reports, see the listing for [titles](#).

For capitalization of bullets, see the listing for [bullets](#).

For most headers on the website, use title case. For information that follows, below the header, use sentence case.

Example from the WTSC homepage:

**Target Zero Traffic Safety Awards**

*Call for entries*

### cause, caused, causing

Avoid using forms of the verb *cause* when talking about crashes or traffic deaths. Use the verb *involve* instead.

Example:

We have data on crashes that *involved* alcohol.

## cell phone

Because it's the common name for a wireless phone, use *cell phone* (avoid the technical terms *cellular phone* or *mobile phone*).

## charged, charged with, faces charges

These verbs should be used to describe situations in which a person is facing criminal charges or has been formally charged with something by a law enforcement agency.

Example:

*Four drivers were charged with DUI offenses.*

## clichés

Avoid using clichés like “great place to start” or “wealth of information.” Either remove the cliché entirely or substitute more specific information.

Cliché:

*The first chapter is a great place to start.*

Specific information:

*You'll find information for beginners in Chapter 1.*

## Click It or Ticket, Click It *and* Ticket Teen Seat Belt Project

The program name Click It or Ticket belongs to NTSCA, and must always be capitalized this way.

Click It *and* Ticket is the state's Teen Seat Belt Project. The *and* in it is italicized to help differentiate the two programs. Use italics for *and*, never all caps.

Incorrect: Click It AND Ticket.

Correct: Click It *and* Ticket

## co-author (n.)

Use as a noun, but not as a verb.

Example:

He is my *co-author*. We wrote the book together.

## collision

See *crash*.

## contractions

Use them. They help you write in a conversational tone appropriate for the web.

## crash

Use *crash*; do not use *accident*. *Collision* (which implies two objects, both in motion) can also be used when appropriate.

# D

## dates and times

For dates, abbreviate most months, and always list the year. For times, always use a.m. and p.m.

Examples:

Submit your proposal by *Dec. 5, 2011*.

The meeting starts at *1:30 p.m.*

## decision making (n.); decision-making (v.)

## definitions

Words that you are defining as words and foreign terms are put in italic. The definitions for them should be set in quotes.

Examples:

The word *comprised* means “completely made up of.”

*Crescit eundo*, the motto of New Mexico, means, “It grows as it goes.”

## "Drive Hammered, Get Nailed"

This is both a program and a campaign. It's best to put the name in quotation marks and to use a comma rather than an n-dash between the two phrases.

Example:

The “*Drive Hammered, Get Nailed*” campaign is highly effective.

## **DUI, driving under the influence**

*DUI* is often used in WTSC communications, but *impaired driving* is preferred for referring to driving under the influence. It’s fine to use *DUI* when it is part of a name used by another agency.

Example:

WTSC funds the *Thurston County DUI Court*.

## **E**

### **effect, affect**

Avoid using these words as verbs because they are confusing to many readers.

### **elderly**

See [seniors](#).

### **email**

The term has evolved to the simple *email*, without hyphens or capital letters.

### **emphasis**

To emphasize a word or phrase, put it in italics, using the Word Press controls. Avoid ALL CAPS. They are the online equivalent of screaming at visitors.

Example:

All documents *must* be submitted by May 10.

### **eTRIP (Electronic Traffic Information Processing)**

eTrip (Electronic Traffic Information Processing) is a Washington Traffic Records Committee project to make digital traffic records available over a network. Use the full name on first reference.

## **F**

### **FARS (Fatality Analysis Reporting System)**

The federal Fatality Analysis Reporting System. Use the full name the first time

it is mentioned on a web page.

## **fatality, fatalities**

Both are acceptable. However, for effective communication, *deaths* or *people killed* is preferred.

## **fatal collisions**

The phrase *fatal collisions* is acceptable, but the preferred usage is *deadly crashes*.

# **G**

## **gender**

If gender of an individual is not specified or important, use *he*. It is increasingly common to see *they* used, but it is grammatically incorrect to use *they* when the subject is singular. If you want to use *they*, you can recast the sentence to have a plural subject.

Examples:

If a *driver* receives a citation, *he* can contact the court for more information.

If *drivers* receive citations, *they* can contact the court for more information.

## **grant**

Unless it is in a title (of a document or program) *grant* is lowercase.

Example:

The agency has a traffic safety grant.

We applied to the Traffic Safety Grant Program.

# **H**

## **Highway Safety Performance Plan**

Don't confuse this *performance* plan with the *strategic* plan called *Target Zero* or with the annual report. Use an n-dash dash rather than a hyphen. Avoid alternate names, such as ones beginning 2010 Highway Safety Performance Plan. Always add the year at the end of the title.

(Note: We publish the *Highway Safety Plan* (budget information) and the

*Highway Safety Performance Plan* (goals and outcome data) in the same document.)

Example:

Highway Safety Performance Plan – 2010

## home page

Two words.

## hyperbole

Avoid modifiers such as *very*, *extremely* or *really*. They're meaningless. You can use a more precise adjective or adverb, but the best solution is not using them at all.

Examples:

The rules are invariably strict.

The rules are strict.

## hyphens

The rules for hyphens are complicated. If you aren't sure, look the word up in a dictionary. Here's a tip: Most compound modifiers are hyphenated, but not if the first of two adverbs ends in *-ly*.

Examples:

We have a *first-rate* team.

We use a *highly rated* bank.

## I

## impact (n.)

Use as a noun, but not as a verb.

Example:

New regulations will *have an impact* on teens.

## Injury, injuries

Avoid using disabling injuries. Use serious injuries instead.



## **injury accidents**

Preferred: *injury crashes*.

## **internet, the net, web**

The *internet* and the *web* are increasingly used in lowercase. Avoid using *net*, as it is slangy and ambiguous.

## **italics**

Use italics for emphasis or definitions (see [definitions](#)) as well as for foreign words and phrases.

Italicize the titles or names of books, TV shows, movies, albums, plays, exhibits, ships, and trains.

Do not italicize the titles of songs — for those, use quotation marks. See *quotation marks*.

Italicize words in foreign language (*Homo sapiens*).

Example:

Whitney Houston sang “I Will Always Love You” for the soundtrack of *The Bodyguard*.

## **its, their**

When something belongs to an inanimate thing or an organization, the possessive is *its*. When something belongs to an individual, use *his* or *her*. When something belongs to multiple individuals, use *their*.

Examples:

The *commission* issues *its* rulings quarterly.

The *commission members* are interviewing *their* staff.

## J

## K

## L

### law, bill

See [bill](#), *legislation*.

## M

### MB, megabyte

Loosely, a *megabyte* is 1 million bytes. MB is OK in all references. Do not use a space between the number and the abbreviation: a *12MB* file.

### mobile phone

Use *cell phone* instead.

### months

Abbreviate the months Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov. and Dec. when the date follows the month: Oct. 15, 1964. If there is no date, don't abbreviate: October 1964.

## N

### National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)

Be sure to spell out on the first reference on any page or document: *National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)*. On second reference, it can be *NHTSA*.

### Native American, Tribal Nations, tribe, tribes

It is preferred to use the name of the actual tribe or the collective *Tribal Nations*, a term that reflects sovereignty. You can also use *Native Americans*, *tribal*, *tribe*, or *tribes*.

Example:

The agency staff met with leaders of the *Tribal Nations*, including the chairman of the *Quinault Tribe*.

## nearly, almost

See [almost, nearly](#).

## numbers

Traditional style rules spell out numbers from 1 to 10, but plain talk guidelines encourage the use of figures instead, particular when they refer to a specific amount or statistic. However, if the number begins a sentence or headline, spell out the number.

Examples:

Traffic deaths occur *4* times more often at night.

The department has *4* new offices.

*Four* of the offices are in Kitsap County.

## O

### online

Always one word. You can find information *online*; there is an *online* source.

## P

### partially, partly

*Partially* is overused when *partly* would do. *Partly* refers to individual sections of the sum. *Partially* is a matter of degree.

*Example:*

The view is *partly* obscured; the project is *partially* completed.

### percent

The percent sign is OK only in headlines or in lists, charts, or graphs of statistical data.

### phone numbers

The preferred format for telephone numbers is separated by periods. Don't use

parentheses around the area code, or hyphens to separate numbers.

Example:

*Phone: 360.586.6489*

## property accidents

Preferred: *property damage crashes* (also, *property damage only*).

## Q

### Q&A

It's fine to use an ampersand: &

## quotation marks

Quotation marks are used to indicate verbatim words, spoken by a person or written in a document. Quotation marks are also used for the titles of songs. Avoid using quotation marks to indicate that something is cute or unusual.

Use double, not single, quotation marks, as in this example:

*The document refers to "four county commissioners and two agency directors."*

## R

### really

*Really* is a form of emphasis that adds little meaning. Do not use.

## S

### seat belt

Two words.

### seniors, senior citizen

These terms are preferable to *elderly*, or *the elderly*, which are correct but can sound offensive.

## spaces between sentences

For web writing, there is only *one* space between sentences.

## Strategic Highway Safety Plan: Target Zero

There are a variety of ways this appears, and it should be strictly standardized. Options are:

- *Target Zero: The Plan*
- *Washington State's Strategic Highway Safety Plan: Target Zero*
- *The Strategic Highway Safety Plan: Target Zero*

Use a colon (:), not a dash (-) in the name. The Highway is singular. Don't confuse with the WTSC periodic plan called the *Highway Safety Performance Plan – 2010*. (And see the [listing](#) for that.)

## T

### Target Zero: The Plan

There are a variety of ways this appears, and it should be standardized. Options are:

- *Target Zero: The Plan*
- *Washington State's Strategic Highway Safety Plan: Target Zero*
- *The Strategic Highway Safety Plan: Target Zero*

Use a colon (:), not a dash (-) in the name. The Highway is singular. Don't confuse with the WTSC periodic plan called the *Highway Safety Performance Plan – 2010*. (And see the [listing](#) for that.)

### Target Zero Managers

This is the name that should replace *Traffic Safety Task Force coordinators*. The document (roster) is titled “Target Zero Managers Roster.”

## telephone numbers

[See](#) phone numbers.

## titles

**Job titles.** When a job title appears in front of an individual's name, it has initial capital letters. When a title appears *after* a name in a sentence or is not

associated with a name, the initial letters of the title are lowercase, with these exceptions:

- The title for the Governor of the state of Washington always has an initial capital letter, before, after, or without the name.
- Titles that appear *after* a number in a signature, or list, may have initial capital letters.

Examples:

Kitsap Country Task Force Manager Jane Wilson opened the meeting.

The moderator introduced Sally Lake, director of program assessment.

The agency has a new assistant director.

The moderator introduced the Governor.

(signed) Jane Wilson, Kitsap County Task Force Manager

**Report titles.** Many reports are issued periodically, such as annual reports. On first reference on a page, use the full title with the year (or date, if necessary) at the end.

Example:

The Highway Safety Performance Plan – 2010

## Traffic Safety Task Force Coordinators

Don't use this outdated title. These are now *Target Zero Managers*. The online document (roster) that lists them is titled "Target Zero Managers Roster."

## Tribal Nations, tribe, tribes

It is preferred to use either the name of the actual tribe or the collective *Tribal Nations*, a term that reflects sovereignty. You can also use *Native Americans*, *tribal*, *tribe*, or *tribes*.

Example:

The agency staff met with leaders of the *Tribal Nations*, including the chairman of the *Quinault Tribe*.

## U

### US

It's fine to abbreviate *The United States* as *US* on first reference.

## V

### versus, vs.

Abbreviate the word *versus* if it is used in a title or headline.

Example:

Bikes vs. Motorcycles: Who Has the Right of Way?

In this situation, it was the community *versus* the planners.

## W

### Washington

The correct use is *Washington*, not *Washington State*. The exceptions are web pages in which Washington, D.C., is also mentioned, or if *State* is part of the name of a document or an agency.

Example:

Washington has a high rate of seat belt use. You can find the statistics in the Highway Safety Performance Plan – 2010.

### Washington Association of Sheriffs & Police Chiefs (WASPC)

On first reference on a page, it should be the *Washington Association of Sheriffs & Police Chiefs (WASPC)* and on second reference, it can be the acronym *WASPC*.

### Washington Highway Safety Annual Report

This is the WTSC annual report. Always use with the date at the end: *Washington Highway Safety Annual Report – 2009*.

### Washington State Department of Transportation

Use as above on first reference. On second reference, *WSDOT* is fine.

## Washington State's Strategic Highway Safety Plan: Target Zero

There are a variety of ways this appears, and it should be strictly standardized. Options are:

- *Target Zero: The Plan*
- *Washington State's Strategic Highway Safety Plan: Target Zero*
- *The Strategic Highway Safety Plan: Target Zero*

Use a colon (:), not a dash (-) in the name. The Highway is singular. Don't confuse with the WTSC periodic plan called the *Highway Safety Performance Plan – 2010*. (And [see](#) the listing for that.)

## Washington State Highway Safety Performance Plan

[See](#) listing under the preferred title, *Highway Safety Performance Plan – 2010*.

## Washington Traffic Records Committee (TRC)

Use the full name, followed by the abbreviation, on first reference. Then use *the TRC* or *the committee*.

## Washington Traffic Safety Commission (WTSC)

Use the full name, or *the commission* on first reference. On second reference, we ([us](#)), *the commission*, or *the commission staff* would work well.

## we

Following plain talk guidelines, you'll often use "we" at the beginning of a sentence. Be sure to use with a variety of verbs so it doesn't get repetitive.

Examples:

We fund, we partner with, we coordinate, we provide grants for, we lead, we encourage, we work with...

## Web, World Wide Web

[See](#) listing for *internet*.

## website

While you often see *web site* in print, online the preferred use is *website*.



## X

### X52 – Extra Patrols Every Week

Be careful to use the full title if it's the first reference on a page or a document. Don't just toss in *X52*.

There should *not* be a hyphen between *X* and *52* (even though you will see it that way in many early documents). However, always use an n-dash (–) between the *X52* and the full phrase that follows.

Examples:

X52 – Extra Patrols Every Week

## Y

### -year-old

Hyphenate as a noun or adjective. The caller is a *10-year-old* girl. She is a *10-year-old*.

## Z

## Appendix A – Web Page Responsibilities

| Pages                              | Content Owner Title                                  |
|------------------------------------|--|
| <b>PROGRAMS</b>                    |  |
| Impaired Driving                   | Impaired driving (Program Manager)                   |
| Speeding                           | Speeding (Program Manager)                           |
| Young Drivers                      | Young Drivers (Program Manager)                      |
| Seat Belts and Occupant Protection | Seat Belts and Occupant Protection (Program Manager) |
| Distracted Driving                 | Distracted Driving (Program Manager)                 |
| Traffic Records                    | Traffic Records (Program Manager)                    |
| Motorcycles                        | Motorcycles (Program Manager)                        |
| Pedestrians & Bicycles             | Pedestrians & Bicycles (Program Manager)             |
| School Zones                       | School Zones (Program Manager)                       |
| Trucks                             | Trucks (Program Manager)                             |
| Task Forces                        | Task Forces (Program Manager)                        |
| Task Force pages                   | Program Manager or Target Zero Managers              |
| Corridors                          | Corridors (Program Manager)                          |
| Tribes                             | Tribes (Program Manager)                             |
| Target Zero Overview               | Deputy Director                                      |
| Program Fact Sheets                | Research Analyst                                     |
| <b>STATISTICS &amp; REPORTS</b>    |  |
| Statistics and Reports             | Research Investigator or Research Analyst            |
| <b>GRANTS</b>                      |  |
| Annual Grants                      | Deputy Director                                      |
| Mini Grants                        | Program Director                                     |
| Law Enforcement pages              | Program Director                                     |
| School pages                       | Program Director                                     |

| <b>TRAFFIC LAWS</b>           |  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Traffic Laws                  | Deputy Director                          |
| <b>RESOURCES</b>              |  |
| Menu page                     | Communications                           |
| Forms                         | Executive Assistant or Program Assistant |
| Materials                     | Communications Consultant                |
| News                          | Communications Consultant                |
| Events                        | Executive Assistant                      |
| Links                         | Communications Consultant                |
| Watch Us on YouTube           | Communications Consultant                |
| <b>AUDIENCES</b>              |  |
| Homepage                      | Communications Manager                   |
| Law Enforcement               | Communications Manager                   |
| Researchers                   | Research Analyst                         |
| Community                     | Communications                           |
| <b>CONTACT US</b>             |  |
| Contact info                  | Executive Assistant                      |
| Staff Directory               | Executive Assistant                      |
| Driving Directions            | Executive Assistant                      |
| Extranet login page           | TBD                                      |
| <b>ABOUT US</b>               |  |
| Overview page                 | Executive Assistant                      |
| Meet the Director             | Director                                 |
| Commissioners                 | Executive Assistant                      |
| Goals & Results               | Deputy Director                          |
| Accountability                | Director and Deputy Director             |
| Jobs & Contract Opportunities | Executive Assistant                      |

| OTHER  |                |
|--|----------------|
| Privacy policy   | Communications |
| Copyright  | Communications |
| Staff only   | Communications |
| Visit <a href="http://access.wa.gov">access.wa.gov</a> | Communications |

## Appendix B – WTSC Web Work Form

To submit a request for web work, copy and paste the electronic version of the form into an email, fill it out, and send it to Mark Medalen at [mmedalen@wtsc.wa.gov](mailto:mmedalen@wtsc.wa.gov).

### **SUBJECT: WEB WORK REQUEST**

All requests for changes to [www.wtsc.wa.gov](http://www.wtsc.wa.gov) and web materials are sent to Mark Medalen via email at [mmedalen@wtsc.wa.gov](mailto:mmedalen@wtsc.wa.gov) or delivered on a CD/DVD. In the subject line indicate Web Work.

If you find a typo or broken link on any page, please paste the page URL into an email message body with a description of the problem.

Responsibility for content on each site page is assigned to a page owner. To request web work on a page you own, complete the form below. Unless designated as optional, all fields are required.

**Your name:**

**Your email address:**

**The URL of the page** (if this involves creating a new page, paste in the jump-off page URL):

**What is the urgency level number:** (1) Low, (2) Average or (3) Mission Critical.

**What is the preferred due date?**

**Which aspect(s) is/are involved** (Text, Photos, Outbound Links, Graphics)?

(Optional) If **text changes** are involved, copy all text from the page (recommended: into an MS Word document), edit the text, paste in the new text

here:

(Optional) If **photos** are involved, describe what is to be done (delete, replace, add) and if a photo relates to a specific line of text, note the line. Attach the photos to the email, if possible as 72 dpi JPG files.

(Optional) If **outbound links** are needed, what is the URL of the page (within the WTSC site or elsewhere)? If the link will to new non-webpage material (e.g., PowerPoint, audio clip), attach the file or supply a CD/DVD. Be sure to include the link language in the text copy above. [If you want another WTSC page to link to yours, ask that page owner to submit a web work request.]

(Optional) If **graphics** are involved, describe what is to be done (delete, replace, add). Attach any new graphics to the email.

*When the work is completed, Mark Medalen will inform you and ask you to review and approve the work*

## Appendix C – Website Audience Personas

### Sam the Sergeant Law enforcement



*“I like the site because it’s 24/7 but some things are hard to find and I don’t have the time to hunt.”*

#### Goals

*Sam comes to the site to...*

- Apply for the annual grant
- Get statistics and data in order to
  - Identify traffic safety problems
  - Create a data-driven enforcement strategy for his community
  - Communicate to the city council that his traffic unit is vital
- Find funding for an enforcement activity: “X52”
- Get educational materials
- Register for a conference


#### Business objectives

*We want Sam to...*

- Understand the Target Zero priorities and advocate for top priorities
- Write excellent grant proposals
- Help himself to data, statistics & reports without calling WTSC
- Help educate people about key programs & campaigns
  - Recognize and recall key messages
  - Use educational materials aimed at law enforcement
  - Order or download, print & distribute frequently-used educational materials to the public
- Encourage his agency to participate in mobilizations
- Sign up for conferences & events without help from WTSC staff
- Connect to other appropriate resources (DOL, WSDOT, WASPC, etc.)
- Understand that web technology can help him accomplish his work

- **Age** 40
- **Income** \$78,000/yr
- **Education**  
Bachelor’s in Criminal Justice
- **Home life**  
Married to Lisa, 2 boys
- **Hobbies**  
Likes to take his boys fishing

#### Visit frequency

Yearly  Weekly

#### Web experience

Low  High

# Ron the Researcher

State government



*“I need the ability to locate topical information and statistics.”*

## Goals

*Ron comes to the site to...*

- Get detailed statistics and data to
  - Write a report on a specific topic
  - Answer a question for someone else/the media
  - Create a presentation for his manager
- Answer research questions such as
  - What are the # of traffic fatalities in each county?
  - Have the # of alcohol-involved fatalities increased or decreased?
  - How many fatalities involved people not using seat belts?
  - Where do most speeding fatalities occur?
  - What was the outcome of the nighttime seat belt campaign?
- Register for a conference
- Find out if WTSC has any job openings

## Business objectives

*We want Ron to...*

- Understand the data behind Target Zero priorities and advocate for top priorities
- Help himself to fatality data and frequently-used reports without calling WTSC
- Find out who to contact for complex research requests
- Connect to other appropriate data resources (DOL, WSDOT, WASPC, etc.)
- Be aware of similar programs and campaigns
- Report accurate GMAP (Government Management Accountability & Performance) Transportation measures & help achieve GMAP goals
- Sign up for conferences & events without help from WTSC staff
- Find up-to-date job listings & apply for jobs that he is qualified for or forward them to qualified colleagues

- **Age** 59
- **Income** \$66,000/yr
- **Education**  
Master’s in Sociology
- **Home life**  
Divorced, has a dog
- **Hobbies**  
Plays guitar in a folk music band

## Visit frequency

Yearly  Weekly

## Web experience

Low  High



# Cara the Concerned Citizen



*“The web site did not answer my question.”*

## Goals

*Cara comes to the site to...*

- Answer questions about a traffic ticket she received
  - Lookup a traffic law
  - Find out if her ticket will go on her driving record
- Get data and statistics to
  - Keep her street safe: make a case to get speed bumps
  - Educate: Talk with her son about the consequences of impaired driving
- Ask for additional help. She wants...
  - Action: beyond local law enforcement
  - Money: she thinks the state has ‘deeper pockets’ than her small town
  - Agency contact info: find out which state agency can help her

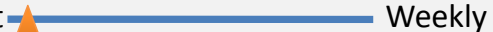
## Business objectives

*We want Cara to...*

- Improve her driving behaviors by receiving key program and campaign messages through WTSC partners
- Be familiar with the top causes of traffic deaths & serious injuries
- Help herself to information that answers common questions or directs her to appropriate resources outside WTSC
- Connect to resources at the federal and local levels
- Find links to
  - Programs such as WSDOT ‘s Safe Routes to Schools
  - Local funding sources
  - Her community’s Traffic Safety Task Force
- Learn about WTSC & programs
- Share her views about PSAs and traffic safety topics

- **Age** 33
- **Income** \$37,000/yr
- **Title** Office administrator
- **Education**  
High school graduate
- **Home life**  
Single mom who is teaching Dan, her 15-year old son, to drive
- **Hobbies**  
Active in aerobics and her son’s Parent Teacher Association

## Visit frequency

First visit  Weekly

## Web experience

Low  High