

Rhode Island Distracted Driving and Pedestrian Safety Summit
NHTSA Regions 1 and 2
April 3 through 5, 2018

The following information is provided to any State or Territory considering hosting a large, multi-state/multi regional traffic safety related summit. The planning, preparation and execution actions, suggested herein, have been learned during three Bi-Regional summits conducted by Regions 1 and 2 states who've hosted such summits those states are:

- A seatbelt summit hosted by Connecticut during March 2016
- An impaired driving summit hosted by New York during March 2018
- A distracted driving/pedestrian safety summit hosted by Rhode Island during April 2018

The information contained in this document is offered as a guide to those considering hosting similar summits. It becomes more effective when used in tandem with a "Summit Time Line" and "Summit Execution Plan".

The Planning Process

Suggested Summit Theme and Focus

Time Frame: 8 to 9 months prior to summit

The host state, working with the Regional staffs will survey all their States and Territories and determine levels of interest in conducting a summit focusing on specific traffic safety topics. Please note, the planning team for the Rhode Island summit distributed a "Survey Monkey" to each of their summit's attendees. If possible, ask each of the States and Territories to provide a projection of the number of attendees they think will attend from their locality.

If appropriate, more than one specific focus area can be selected. For example, a summit may contain a day on: "The Effects of the Opioid Crisis on Impairing Driving" and a second day on a closely related, loosely related or a completely unrelated topic. Please note, it's most important to provide the summit's attendees with the most significant "takeaways" possible.

The Summit Planning Team

The suggested lead time for the planning process should be approximately eight to nine months prior to the actual start of the summit.

Once a State or Territory agrees to host the summit, a summit planning team should be created. It is certainly important to include each State or Territory from the very beginning

of the planning process, but the planning team, itself, should have a controlled number of actual members. The planning team core group should be comprised of the following:

- The host state will identify a Summit Coordinator who'll function as the chair of the summit planning committee.
- The hosting state Office of Highway Safety coordinator or their designee and appropriate staff will participate in the process. It is suggested that whatever the primary area of focus for the summit is, that the state program coordinator for that specific traffic safety program participate. In addition, the state Law Enforcement Liaison (LEL) and (if appropriate) the State Traffic Safety Resource Prosecutor (TSRP) and Judicial Outreach Liaison (JOL) will participate.
- If planning a multi-regional summit, two Regional Program Managers from each Region should participate. These RPMs should be the RPM assigned to the host state and the RPM responsible for that summit's focus area (impaired driving, occupant protection, etc.). The Region containing the host state will be identified as the "Home Region". If there is more than one Regional office involved, the other Regions will be identified as the "Second Region" etc.
- The Regional LEL and, if appropriate, the Regional JOL will participate.
- If more than one Region is involved, a second state representative should act as liaison for the states located in the second Region.

Summit Team Meetings

Time Frame: 8 to 9 months prior to summit

It is suggested that the summit team members from the hosting state and home Regional staff conduct an initial face to face meeting. If possible the RPM(s) from the second Regional office and the states' representative should also be in attendance. The meeting may last from two to four hours. During this meeting, the team can provide suggestions relating to possible presenters, moderators, presentations, projects or other possible ideas for the development of summit session topics.

Immediately following this meeting, a "Draft Agenda" will be developed. Once a draft agenda has been created each of the summit's sessions will be assigned to an individual member of the planning committee. That member will be identified as the session coordinator and will be responsible for all matters related to that specific session. Usually the agenda will undergo quite many changes, additions and subtractions. From the very beginning of the summit planning process the host state will maintain and manage the "master copy" of the agenda. The agenda will be clearly dated and previous editions of the agenda will be archived.

The summit coordinator will host regularly scheduled conference calls. During the initial stages of planning, the calls should be at least once a month and more often if functional. During the last two months of planning, conference calls should occur on a weekly basis.

It should be decided if the weekly calls will all occur at a pre-determined time and day or should be selected prior to each call, based on team availability. The calls will be facilitated by the summit coordinator and will provide updates and other important information. There should also be a review of the Summit Time Line and adjustments to that schedule if needed. The calls should not last more than 60 minutes and should be guided by a pre-distributed call agenda. Team members are encouraged to communicate with each other off-line and reserve the conference call time for team discussions and updates.

Summit Draft Agenda

Time Frame: 5 to 6 months prior to summit

Based on information developed during the previously described face to face meeting. A rough draft agenda will be prepared. The draft agenda will contain the venue location; the start times; session times; break times; lunch times; and closing remarks times for each day. Actual session time allowances will be projected and may change significantly as the agenda becomes more mature and reaches the stage of a realistically relative draft agenda. Understanding that there will be on-going changes to the agenda, it's still important to make it as accurate as possible based on the existing information available at the time of the agenda's posting. This early development of the agenda is an important element for the purposes of attendees obtaining timely travel authorization.

Recruiting Presenters, and Moderators

Time Frame: As soon as possible

The host state will work with the home region and the second region to continue to poll the attending states and solicit suggestions regarding presenters and moderators. In addition, planning team members will conduct continual additional research to locate topics, projects, programs, presentations, presenters and moderators. Once session moderators have been identified the session coordinator will contact the moderator and start the communication process.

Summit Dates and Location

Time Frame: Approximately 5 months prior to the summit

The host state should begin to identify and select the best available dates to hold the summit. Usually, the actual selection of the dates may be impacted by the availability of a suitably functional venue.

The three previously mentioned summits were held in hotels which can provide overnight stays for those attending. This reduces travel from the lodging site to the meeting location and reduces time lost in transit.

Ideally, the venue should be as centrally located as possible. It should be near a travel friendly airport and other transportation hubs and facilities. Previous venues have been immediately adjacent to major interstates.

Obviously, the selected venue must be a facility containing a plenary session meeting space large enough to accommodate the number of projected guests. The three, previously mentioned summits, had plenary meeting rooms capable of comfortably seating at least 150 attendees or more. The Rhode Island summit was attended by 182 guests. The host state should be prepared to guarantee the hotel a certain number of overnight guests. The hotel will establish a block of rooms for the summit and usually provide a block rate per sleeping room for the duration of the summit.

During the initial conversations with the venue's point of contact (POC), it should be determined if the summit will utilize breakout sessions and identify those areas of the venue that most effectively hold these sessions.

Considering that attendees will be sitting in place for two to three days, comfort factors should be considered in addition to sight lines and audio levels. In previous summits, round tables with 6 to 8 chairs have allowed each guest to be facing the front of the room. Providing comfortable spaces between tables offers ease of movement for those attending. Having two well located video screens and ample audio speakers certainly increases the comfort level of those attending.

At this same time a list of all needed equipment should be identified and the POC should be provided with a written list of equipment needed. This list should include such items as: dais, podiums, microphones, viewing screens, registration tables, and all other equipment and fixtures to be used during the summit. It is important to ensure that the hosting venue will supply an on-site dedicated AV technician who will be immediately available for any technical malfunction.

The planning team members from the host state and the home Region staff should conduct a site visit to the actual plenary meeting room. The meeting room should be empty during this visit and the planning team should be escorted by the POC. At this time, the POC should provide the team with a schematic of the room, depicting seating and other specified fixtures and equipment such as dais, viewing screens, presentation tables etc.

Invitations and Other Notifications

Time Frame: Approximately 4 to 5 months prior to the summit

Once the venue has been identified a "Save the Dates" notice should be sent by the host state to each of the participating State/Territories Office of Highway Safety. Please consider that the Rhode Island summit was held in Early April 2018, the "Save the Dates"

notices were distributed in early December 2017, approximately four months prior to the summit.

In addition to "Save the Dates" notice, the host state will provide each participating locality with hotel registration information, such as a direct on-line link, and will include the summit rate. Also provide each state with a copy of the most current draft agenda and any other helpful information. At this point the host state will begin and maintain an attendance spreadsheet containing all pertinent information including guest contact information. The attending localities will be provided with specific deadlines for both summit registration and hotel registration. It is suggested that the summit registration deadline remain as flexible as possible, but also considering the need for the management of attendance.

The host state will continue to monitor summit registration and compare that list with the hotel registration. At this point special attention should be given to ensure that all presenters and moderators are registered for the event and for the hotel, if overnight stay is required for either the presenters or the moderators and special prices are included the day before and after the scheduled event.

Operational Process

Continue to Confirm Presenters and Moderators

Time Frame: Approximately 3 months prior to the summit

By this time, the planning team should consider participating in weekly calls. During these calls the session coordinators should update the team regarding the progress being made with each summit session. In the past, both presenters and moderators have found it necessary to withdraw from the summit. The planning team, from the earliest possible time should identify at least two alternate presenters and two alternate moderators. If possible, the alternate moderators should be from either the host state or the home Region.

Session coordinators should be in contact with session moderators and determine who'll organize a conference call between session presenters, the moderator and, if needed, the session coordinator. The conference call between presenters and moderators is an essential operational step. During this call the presenters will be reminded of the need to adhere to strict time limits for their presentations. Conversations between presenters and moderators will reduce the amount of redundancy within each individual presenter's presentation.

At this same time session coordinators should be gathering presenters'/moderators' bios and contact information. In addition, collect short, summary descriptions of presentations, and if possible a copy of any Power Points or other presentation formats

that will be used during the sessions. It's easier to collect and collate this information by using a very simple fill in the blanks Word formatted table.

During this time frame the summit printed program should begin to take shape. The printed program reflects the efforts put into the development of the summit by the planning team and other contributors. It is suggested that it be a printed document, contained in a bound, card stock cover. The program should contain a copy of the agenda and a comprehensive alphabetic display of presenters and moderators including their bios.

Develop a Written Execution Plan

Time Frame: Approximately 2 months prior to the summit

A plan for organizing lunch, breaks, in-room refreshments and other amenities should be underway. In addition to the existing planning team, other members of the host state and home Region should be incorporated into this operational stage.

The execution plan should identify specific individuals responsible for each aspect relating to the summit from the first moment of the first day to the closing remarks on the last day. A detailed accounting of those assigned to each task **must** be clearly listed in the "Written Execution Plan".

Logistical Tasks

Time Frame: Approximately 2 months prior to the summit

As the weekly planning team calls continue, the host state begins to review the upcoming logistical tasks and ensure each task is assigned to a member of the host state or home Region. The printed program should be under development and a printer selected to produce the program when it's fully ready to go to the printer. This should be planned now, but the actual printing of the program should be held off until the absolute printer's deadline. This is to accommodate late changes and modifications.

At this point in time, strategies should be identified for the printing of nametags, tent tables, signage and other needed summit materials. It should be determined what other support materials are needed.

If any of the summit attendees need transportation (from the airport, train station etc.) members of the host state should be assigned to these responsibilities. A transportation coordinator should be identified and should remain responsible for all matters relating to transportation for attendees. Transportation vehicles should also be identified and reserved for use, if necessary.

The host state should keep in constant contact with the venue POC and a second venue site visit should be considered to ensure the plenary meeting rooms and all other ancillary meeting spaces are still functional.

Agenda Finalization

Time Frame: Approximately 30 days prior to the summit

The final 30 days prior to the summit should be expected to be hectic. Now is the time for continual review of activities conducted during the previous 7 or 8 months. This is the time for finalizing the agenda. At the same time, session coordinators should be in close contact with all the presenters and moderators working in their sessions to determine if they need any assistance.

Planning Team Meeting

Time Frame: Approximately 30 days prior to the summit

If possible, the planning team should come together for a final face to face meeting. If this isn't possible then a very detailed conference call should be convened. During this meeting or call, a detailed review of the execution plan should be conducted. Each item and action on the execution plan should be examined and those assigned should acknowledge the status of the action. Special attention must be paid to any foreseeable obstacle and, if so, strategies to overcome the obstacle must be implemented. It should also be confirmed that all team members have each other's cellphone number.

Final Site Visit

Time Frame: During the afternoon prior to Day 1 of the summit

Members of the host state and home Region should conduct one final walk through of meeting places, registration locations, dining areas and any other space being used during the summit. The visit must be conducted with the venue's POC. A live inspection of all audio-visual equipment will be conducted and adjustments, additions or modifications will be made at that time.