Arizona Tribal Transportation Safety Summit

Summit Report

May 14-15, 2008

Francisco Grande Hotel, Casa Grande, Arizona
Sponsored by the Federal Highway Administration

Prepared by Cambridge Systematics, Inc.

Background

The 22 Tribes in Arizona

- Ak-Chin Indian Community
- Cocopah Tribe
- Colorado River Indian Tribes
- Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation
- Fort Mojave Indian Tribe
- Fort Yuma – Quechan Tribe
- Gila River Indian Community
- Havasupai Tribe
- Hopi Tribe
- Hulapai Tribe
- Kaibab-Paiute Tribe
- Navajo Nation
- Pascua Yaqui Tribe
- Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community
- San Carlos Apache Tribe
- San Juan Southern Paiute
- Tohono O'odham Nation
- Tonto Apache Tribe
- White Mountain Apache Tribe
- Yavapai-Apache Nation
- Yavapai-Prescott Indian Tribe
- Zuni Tribe

Traffic safety is a serious problem in Arizona. In 2006, more than three people were killed on Arizona roads every day; a total of almost 1,300 that year. Over the last several years, as more people have moved into the State, the number of fatalities has increased. Arizona's annual fatality crash rate is now more than 40 percent higher than the nationwide rate.[1]

Arizonans have taken steps to deal with the problem. One of the most important of these was the development of the State Strategic Highway Safety Plan. The plan sets a bold vision for the future of traffic safety in the State: "*Zero Fatalities on Arizona Roads, Your Life Depends on It.*" The plan also sets out the idea that "everyone counts." No fatality is acceptable.

Tribes are a crucial part of the "everyone counts" vision. Tribal lands make up a quarter of the land mass of the State, and contain about 20 percent of the Arizona State Highway System.[2] It is not possible for Arizona to reach its fatality reduction goals without the commitment of the tribes.

The Arizona Tribal Transportation Safety Summit held May 14-15, 2008, was an important step in reducing traffic fatalities and injuries among tribal members. This document describes the Summit, focusing on the insights gained and lessons learned.

The Summit was carried out through the collaborative efforts of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) (Federal Lands Highway and Arizona Division Offices), the Tribal Technical Assistance Program (TTAP) at Colorado State University, the Inter-Tribal Council of Arizona (ITCA), the Governor's Office of Highway Safety (GOHS), the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT), the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), and the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA).

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[1] Arizona's Traffic fatality rate was 2.06 in 2006; the national rate was 1.41 (data from the Fatality Analysis Reporting System).

[2] Statistics from the Arizona Strategic Highway Safety Plan.

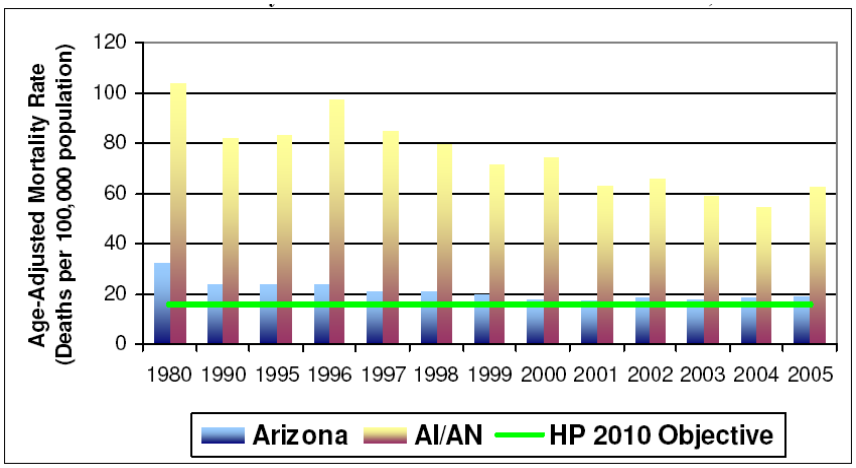
The Summit location: Casa Grande, Arizona.

Purpose of the Summit

Traffic safety is a problem in every community, but it is particularly severe among the tribes. The table below, excerpted from the Arizona SHSP, shows that the motor vehicle crash mortality rate was two to three times higher for Native Americans than for other members of the Arizona population.

The graph also shows the Healthy People 2010[3] objective for the State of Arizona, which is to reduce deaths caused by motor vehicle crashes to no more than 16 per 100,000 population. The rate for tribal populations exceeded 60 deaths per 100,000 population in 2005, well above the limit. The rate is decreasing over time, but traffic crashes continue to claim the lives of a disproportionate number of tribal members.

Table 1. Age-Adjusted Mortality Rate among American Indians and Other Members of the Arizona Population



Source: Excerpted from the Arizona Strategic Highway Safety Plan.

The ultimate goal of the Arizona Tribal Traffic Safety Summit was to help reduce these crash-related injuries and deaths within tribal communities. The Summit pursued that goal by identifying key tribal safety challenges and the resources (human, material, and financial) available to address them, and by stimulating multidisciplinary collaboration among safety stakeholders. Specifically, the objectives of the Summit were:

[3] See http://www.healthypeople.gov.

1. To review Arizona's priority tribal transportation safety issues and challenges;

2. To identify safety resources available to the Arizona Tribes; and

3. To develop and endorse a process for continuing the dialogue among the Federal, State, and Tribal transportation communities for discussing safety issues and solutions.

Key Organizations

Many organizations work on traffic safety issues in Arizona. Two of them, ITCA, and the Governor's Traffic Safety Advisory Council (GTSAC), are important to highlight in the context of the Tribal Safety Summit. Many Summit attendees were associated with one or both organizations.

The GTSAC is a partnership of 18 organizations with a stake in traffic safety. Its theme is "safe today, safer tomorrow."

ITCA is a private, nonprofit organization focused on improving coordination among Arizona tribes; providing technical assistance and training; and identifying resources for tribal members. The Tribal Safety Working Group of ITCA focuses more specifically on reducing motor vehicle collision-related injuries and fatalities on tribal lands.

GTSAC is the designated body for leading traffic safety efforts in Arizona. Established by executive order in 2004, it is focused on developing cost-effective strategies to improve safety within the State transportation system. There are 18 members on the council, including ITCA, ADOT, GOHS, FHWA, and many others.

With support from member organizations, GTSAC's roles include coordinating the development and implementation of Arizona's Strategic Highway Safety Plan.

Themes

The Morning of the Summit

Getting to the Tribal Safety Summit was not easy. On the morning of the summit, two fatal crashes occurred within hours of each other on the highways leading into Casa Grande (I-10 and I-8), where the Summit was held. Both highways were backed up for miles, delaying some participants and speakers by several hours. The incident served as a pointed reminder to everyone present of the heavy toll due to traffic crashes.

The Summit focused on a series of key themes developed by the Summit Planning Committee. This report documents the insights provided by speakers and other participants. A detailed Summit agenda, listing all speakers and activities, is included in Appendix B.

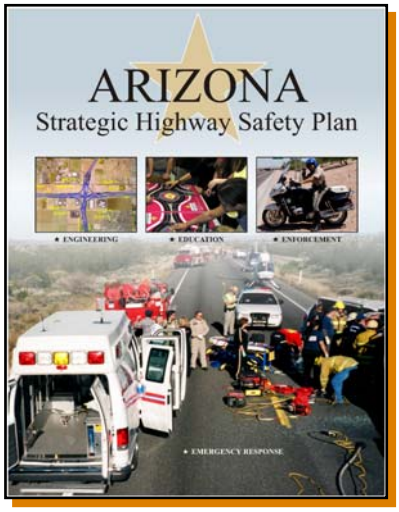
Resources

Tribal members mentioned an acute lack of resources in their communities. This is manifested in many ways, including poor infrastructure conditions (e.g., unpaved, unlit, or unmarked roads) and lack of funds to support ongoing enforcement and education initiatives (e.g., Driving Under the Influence (DUI) checkpoints and media campaigns).

While there is no easy solution to the resource problem, a number of creative responses were shared at the Summit.

- **Free and low-cost communication strategies.** The White Mountain Apache Tribe is using simple, low-cost communication techniques to get important safety messages across to community members. For example, they distribute paper placemats bearing safety messages to local eateries. The Tohono O'odham Nation distributes child safety seat instructional flyers to mothers through the Women, Infant, and Children (WIC) program, and uses local basketball tournaments as an opportunity to promote safety.

- **Low manpower enforcement strategies.** DUI checkpoints typically are manned by multiple police officers. The San Carlos Apache Tribe Police Department, however, staffs its checkpoints with just one individual, which allows it to significantly reduce enforcement costs and expand coverage with limited staff. Increased DUI enforcement has resulted in a substantial decrease in the number of crashes on the reservation.



Arizona's Strategic Highway Safety Plan set a goal of "Zero Fatalities – Everyone Counts."

- **Nonprofit organizations.** The San Carlos Apache Police Department motivates police officers to increase DUI arrests by providing home-cooked meals with assistance from the nonprofit group Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD). Other nonprofit organizations also provide direct grant funds to support safety projects. For example, the Bikes Belong Coalition and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation provide grant funds to support bicycle and pedestrian mobility and safety-related projects.

- **Federal and state grant programs.** Many grant programs are available from the Federal and Arizona governments to help tribes address traffic safety issues. ITCA created a comprehensive guide to these funding sources titled, the Tribal Traffic Safety Funding Guide.[4] Specific grant programs highlighted during the Summit include: Safe Routes to School, Transportation Enhancements, Planning Assistance, Weed and Seed, and Hazard Elimination.[5] In addition, several initiatives presented at the Summit were funded through the Centers for Disease Control Injury Prevention Program.

Coordination and Trust

Lack of funding is related to another theme discussed at the Summit: the importance of coordination and trust.

Coordination is an effective strategy for overcoming resource limitations, since it allows pooling of resources among groups with common goals.

Coordination and trust also are necessary to allow formal transfers of resources (such as grant monies) between groups. In many cases, grant applications require safety issues be documented with data. Some Federal grants, for example, require any proposed solution to a safety problem be supported with a benefit-cost ratio. At times, however, lack of trust prevents tribal members from sharing crash data.

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[4] http://www.aztribaltransportation.com/FAQ/faq.asp

[5] John Dickson at the Arizona Department of Transportation is the contact for the Hazard Elimination Program. His contact information is in Appendix A.

While trust may not always come easily, it is furthered by numerous collaborative safety initiatives involving tribes and nontribal members. These initiatives allow tribal and nontribal members to better understand one another's needs and concerns. Tribal members at the Summit spoke in particular of the need for others to understand the diversity in their communities. Each of Arizona's 22 tribes has unique traffic safety challenges, and no "one size fits all" solution works for every tribe. Solutions must be appropriate to the tribe's culture, geographic location, level of infrastructure, etc. Some communities, for example, are very rural and lack Internet and cell phone access, while others indicate their teens are always on the Internet.

Ron Hall of TTAP welcomed everyone to the summit.

One of the best examples of collaboration discussed at the Summit is the GTSAC, which brings together the ITCA, ADOT, GOHS, FHWA, and many other transportation organizations throughout the State. Other notable examples of collaboration discussed during the Summit include:

- The San Carlos Apache Tribe and the Arizona Department of Public Safety (in Phoenix, Safford, Globe, and Payson) are partnering to improve DUI enforcement. The partnership has been very successful, and has been recently expanded.
- The White Mountain Apache Tribe Injury Prevention Program is a partnership project among several tribal agencies, the Bureau of Indian Affairs Roads Department, ITCA, and other organizations. The team organized many safety-related initiatives, such as a mock motor vehicle crash aimed at local teens.
- ITCA partnered with the Federal Highway Administration to develop a tribal Highway Safety Improvement Program.

Safety Problem Identification

Another theme that emerged during the Summit was the importance of using analytical tools to identify and document safety problems. Appropriate analysis not only improves success in the grant application process (as described above) but ensures that the underlying causes of safety problems are understood. Without this analysis, it is possible to misunderstand the problem or apply the wrong solution, leading to wasted resources.

The San Carlos Apache Tribe held this candlelight vigil to honor a child killed in a traffic crash.

There are many tools available to help understand and document safety problems, ranging from quantitative techniques such as crash data analysis to qualitative techniques such as observation, interviews, and focus groups. Some examples discussed at the Summit include the following:

- The Arizona Department of Transportation discussed methods of using crash data to identify safety hotspots (locations with high numbers of crashes). Analyzing the number, severity, and types of crashes that occur at a hotspot location as well as any information from police reports provides clues to the underlying source of the problem. It is important to be aware of pitfalls in crash data; for example, there is a tendency to assign all crashes along a stretch of highway to the nearest milepost number, which leads to the illusion that there is a crash hotspot at every milepost.

- The San Carlos Apache Tribe used focus groups and interviews to identify solutions to impaired driving. The focus groups revealed a common misunderstanding of the "designated driver" concept. Some tribal members believed the designated driver should be the least intoxicated individual in a group. By uncovering this misunderstanding, the tribe was able to focus its educational efforts on the need for a designated driver who does not drink at all.

- The San Carlos Apache tribe tracked data on the number of DUI arrests and crashes over time. The results showed a significant decline in crashes associated with expanded DUI enforcement efforts, allowing the Police Department to demonstrate the success of the program to the tribal council. The Tohono O'odham tribe demonstrated the success of its primary safety belt law by tracking belt use over time. Safety belt use increased by 48 percent just two years after the law was passed.

- The ITCA developed and tested a process for helping tribes use data to identify safety problem areas and position themselves to access resources from the State and Federal government.

- As part of the ITCA effort, the Tohono O'odham Nation identified intersections needing safety improvements using Indian Health Services (HIS) crash information and police data. Road Safety Audits were conducted at the intersections to determine which improvements were needed to address the problem.

- The Yavapai-Apache Nation solicited a Safe Routes to School expert to visit the tribe and help them identify and address safety problems faced by school children.

Leadership Support for Safety Policies

The Tohono O'odham Nation used this billboard to communicate its safety message.

Tribal leaders have a central role to play in supporting safety initiatives. As one participant commented, "Leadership support is needed to keep the fatality and injury numbers moving down." Without this support, a greater risk exists that any new safety initiative will not be successful. This is especially true when it comes to passing new safety-oriented legislation, such as mandatory safety belt laws and lower Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) levels. Participants noted cases in which a new law was passed, but had little effect because tribal leaders failed to support its enforcement.

Summit participants discussed multiple ways of reaching out to their leaders. Some specific solutions mentioned in the breakout sessions (see Summit Results below) included establishing a safety-focused committee in tribal council and using data and presentations to persuade tribal leaders.

Several tribes have been successful at passing new safety-related policies backed by tribal leaders. Examples presented at the Summit include:

- The Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation adopted a position of zero tolerance for alcohol and drugs. Government employees are tested every quarter. They also implemented a primary safety belt law and lowered the legal BAC from .10 to .08.

- The Tohono O'odham nation passed a primary restraint use law in 2005. The first offense is $50 and the second offense is $100. The law has made an enormous change in levels of safety belt use.

- The San Carlos Apache tribal council unanimously passed resolutions to lower the legal BAC level and to institute a primary restraint law in 2007. These changes were made in part in response to the success of the tribe's DUI enforcement work.

- The Hualapai Nation updated its tribal code to strengthen its occupant protection.

Tribal Education and Training

The White Mountain Apache Tribe held this mock motor vehicle crash at a high school to educate teens about the dangers of drunk driving.

A final theme discussed at the Summit was the need for training and education. Education is crucial to raise awareness of safety issues among tribal members, including young children, teens, parents, tribal leaders, and many others.

Educational and training strategies highlighted at the Summit included the following:

- **Community outreach –** The Tohono O'odham tribe has used community events such as rodeos and fairs to raise safety awareness.

- **Special events –** The White Mountain Apache tribe conducted a mock motor vehicle crash targeting high school teens just before prom and graduation. The event made a large impact on the teens. The San Carlos Apache tribe conducted a candlelight vigil to honor a four-year old killed in a traffic crash.

- **Marketing and media campaigns –** The Tohono O'odham tribe has used billboards and public service announcements on the tribal radio station (KOHN) to get the word out about safety. The radio series highlights crash survivors who were restrained, and provides information about the new primary safety belt law.

- **Training courses –** The Tohono O'odham tribe has instituted a two-hour Safe Native American Passengers (SNAP) training course for police officers to educate them about passenger safety. The White Mountain Apache Tribe offers car seat education and parenting skills classes.

Summit Results

One of the main objectives of the Summit was to identify the most important transportation safety issues facing the tribes and to define solutions. To achieve this, Summit participants were divided into four breakout groups. Each group brainstormed a list of problems and potential solutions, and ranked them in priority order. The groups began their discussion with a list of issues already developed by ITCA's Tribal Safety Working Group. The list includes education, enforcement, infrastructure, and data.

Education

Key issues identified by the infrastructure group, ranked in priority order, included:

1. Teens need to be educated about safety belt use, alcohol and drug use, and driving on tribal versus nontribal lands:
    - Mock crashes at high schools;
    - Youth councils;
    - Assemblies and presentations at high schools;
    - Community events (booths at county fairs); and
    - Team sports, e.g., athletes can be subjected to penalties for alcohol/drug use.
2. Young children and parents need to be educated about safety belt use, child passenger safety, and drug use:
    - Integrate safety into existing fire departments programs at schools;
    - Integrate a safety message into the head start curriculum;
    - Distribute safety handouts, e.g., showing how to use child safety seats to mothers who use WIC service. Example: The Tohono O'odham Nation has developed a one-page handout on Child Passenger Safety;
    - Encourage nurses and doctors to discuss safety practices during medical visits; and

- Use community leaders, e.g., ministers, to promote safety.

3. Tribal leaders need to be educated about the importance of safety. They need to know they should support and enforce existing laws and lead implementation of new laws related to safety:

   - Make presentations to leaders about the importance of safety;
   - Initiate special sessions of tribal councils focused on safety; and
   - Create a standing committee on safety to continually educate leaders.

4. Police officers need to be educated about the proper use of safety belts and child safety seats:

   - Make safety belt and child safety seat use a standardized part of police training; and
   - Utilize GOHS technicians to provide child passenger safety training.

5. Judges need to be educated about the importance of properly enforcing the law, and should not be allowed to reduce penalties for their friends and family members:

   - Place independent observers in the courtroom to hold judges accountable for their convictions. Mothers Against Drunk Driving currently uses this technique in courtrooms throughout the U.S.; and
   - Make judges undergo mandatory training programs.

Enforcement

Key issues identified by the enforcement group, ranked in priority order, are listed below. Note that some items have equal priority and are listed on the same line.

1. Data sharing.

2. Ability to identify offenders with multiple convictions and with suspended and revoked licenses.

3. Need for better information exchange among enforcement agencies (tribal, state, etc.).

4. Need for a statewide criminal justice data sharing network.

5. Need for a statewide communications program not limited to law enforcement but also fire, EMS, etc. The architecture for such a system is in place but funding is needed to implement it.

6. Insufficient enforcement capacity, including a lack of sworn officers, jail capacity, trained prosecutors, and proper equipment.

7. Inadequate prosecution of nontribal member traffic safety offenses on tribal lands.

8. Inconsistent traffic codes; lack of jurisdictional clarity in police enforcement.

9. Sovereignty.

10. Extradition issues.

11. Failure to observe traffic laws.

12. Speeding.

13. Violations of pedestrian right-of-way.

14. School bus stop signs.

15. Driver distraction.

16. Safety belt laws and usage.

17. Alcohol and/or drug impaired driving.

18. Unsafe speeds of border patrol while in pursuit.

19. Alcohol prohibition versus legalization: need to study prohibition to see if it works. Is the practice of not allowing alcohol on the reservation effective, or does it drive drinking off the reservation and result in more impaired driving crashes?

Infrastructure

Key issues identified by the infrastructure group, and ranked in priority order, are listed below. Note that some items have equal priority and are listed on the same line.

1. Inadequate funding for construction, maintenance, and safety. Some sources not being fully used include: Hazard Elimination Safety (HES), MADD, CDC, Safe Routes to School (SRTS), AAA, the High Risk Rural Roads Program (HRRR), and GOHS.
2. Need for warning signage and advance street signing.
3. Need for better fencing to restrict livestock and wildlife from crossing the road and causing crashes, and to assist the border patrol in high-speed chases.
4. Need for bus turnouts, roadway turning lanes, and roadway maintenance.
5. Need for speed limits.
6. Need for dust control.
7. Need for rumble strips.
8. Need for shoulder improvements.
9. Need for rest areas.
10. Need for vegetation control.
11. Lack of warning signs maintenance.
12. Need for additional sidewalks and pedestrians paths.
13. Need for better planning and coordination of facilities and improvements with the State and county.
14. Need for improved sight distance.
15. Need for better striping.
16. Need for better roadway network mapping.

Data

Key issues identified by the data group and ranked in priority order are listed below. Note that some items have equal priority and are listed on the same line.

1. Data sharing.
2. Privacy and the need to work out sovereignty agreements.
3. Obtaining uniform, complete, and accurate data.
4. Using Geographic Positioning Systems (GPS) to pinpoint crash data; using standardized data fields; obtaining the support of high-level officials; obtaining funds.

5. Linking roadway characteristics (inventory data) to crash data.

6. Developing data clearinghouses.

Although it was not explicitly ranked, it was agreed that trust and confidentiality were among the most important issues. Trust is necessary to reach the goal of having uniform, complete, and accurate data. One solution is to create a statewide data sharing network that includes information from the criminal justice system and information from first responders (EMS).

Next Steps

White Mountain Apache Tribe safety partnership team.

Participants are expected to take the results and lessons learned from the Summit to Tribal Elders and other safety stakeholders in their communities to determine future directions with regard to transportation safety education, enforcement, infrastructure, and data. An important component of those directions should be to continue to foster multidisciplinary collaboration in the pursuit of safer roadways.

ITCA, with support from GTSAC, is expected to use the ranked priorities listed above to develop a program of solutions and projects. This will allow ITCA and the other members of GTSAC to focus their work on the most pressing issues affecting Indian country in Arizona.

Appendix A: Participants

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Appendix B: Agenda

MAY 14-15, 2008
TRIBAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY SUMMIT AGENDA

Purpose

1. Review Arizona's priority tribal transportation safety issues and challenges;
2. Identify safety resources available to the Arizona Tribes; and
3. Develop and endorse a process for continuing the dialogue among the Federal, State, and Tribal transportation communities for discussing safety issues and solutions.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 14TH TRIBAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY SUMMIT SESSION I

12:20 PM - 1:20 PM	**LUNCHEON,** (*Ballroom*) **Welcome and Introductions** ***Mike Hegarty***, Deputy Director, Governor's Office of Highway Safety **Keynote Address** ***Victor Mendez***, ADOT Director
1:30 PM – 2:30 PM	**Opening Session: Welcome and Introductions** ***Ron Hall***, TTAP **U.S. and Arizona Transportation Safety Issues** ***Bob Hollis***, Division Administrator, FHWA Arizona Division **Roles and Responsibilities of the Governor's Traffic Safety Advisory Council** ***Michael Hegarty***, Deputy Director, Governor's Office of Highway Safety ***Reed Henry***, State Safety Engineer, Arizona Department of Transportation **Purpose and Need: The Arizona Tribal Safety Summit** ***John Baxter***, Associate Administrator, FHWA Federal Lands
2:30 PM – 2:45 PM	**Break**
2:45 PM – 4:00 PM	**Tribal Safety Initiatives** **Sobriety Checkpoints and DUI Enforcement** ***Christine Reede***, Injury Prevention Coordinator, San Carlos Apache Tribe **Safety Belts** ***Priscilla Lopez***, Injury Prevention Coordinator, Tohono O'odham Nation ***Kateri Goseyun***, Injury Prevention Coordinator, White Mountain Apache Tribe ***Jesse Delmar***, Chief of Police, Ft. McDowell Police Department **Safe Routes to School** ***Robert Mills***, Yavapai-Apache Nation ***Michia Casebier***, President, M.G. Tech-Writing, L.L.C.
4:00 PM – 5:00 PM	**Breakout Groups – Part I**

Breakout Groups
- Infrastructure
- Education
- Enforcement
- Data

Agenda
- Fine Tuning the Issues
- Identifying and Aligning Resources with Issues
- Discussing Solutions

5:00 PM – 6:30 PM **Human, Technical, and Financial Resources: Roundtable Discussions**

Resource Roundtable Discussions

ADOT	GOHS
FHWA	BIA (IRR and 402 Program)
IHS	TTAP

THURSDAY, MAY 15TH TRIBAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY SUMMIT SESSION II

7:00 AM - 8:00 AM Registration

8:00 AM – 8:15 AM **Recap of Day One and Overview of Day Two**

8:15 AM – 9:15 AM **Tribal Safety Initiatives**
Overview: Building Tribal Traffic Safety (ADOT Research Project)
Don Sneed, Tribal Coordinator, ADOT

Using Data for Making Decisions and Identifying Safety Targets
Mike Blankenship, Road Safety Audit Program Manager, ADOT

Using Data to Target Road Safety Assessment Sites
Fred Stevens, Planner, Tohono O'odham Nation

Using Data to Target Enforcement Initiatives
Francis Bradley, Chief of Police, Hualapai Nation Police Department

Using Data to Target Highway Safety Improvement Program Projects
John Dickson, Local Government Section Manager, ADOT

9:15 AM – 9:30 AM **Break**

9:30 AM – 10:30 AM **Breakout Groups – Part II**

10:30 AM – 11:15 AM **Breakout Group Reports**
- **Infrastructure**
- **Education**
- **Enforcement**
- **Data**

11:15 AM – 11:45 AM **Continuing the Dialogue**
Esther Corbet, Coordinator, Inter Tribal Council of Arizona

11:45 – 12:00 **Reflections on the Summit and Next Steps**
John Baxter, Associate Administrator, FHWA