



**FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
Transit Bus Accident Study – Phase II
Yield to Bus Campaign - Stakeholder Meetings
District 5**

Date: October 26, 2005
Time: 1:00 PM
Location: 719 South Woodland Avenue
DeLand, FL 32720

Attendees:

Amy Datz	State Transit Environmental Planner
Fred Mead	Dovetail Consultant
Tony Nosse	FDOT Traffic OPS
Diane Poitras	FDOT Public Transportation
Rick Sparer	Earth Tech
Jennifer Clements	Lynx
Steve Homan	FDOT Public Information Office
Karen Paul	FDOT Planning

Annotated Agenda:

- Overview
 - The “Yield to Bus” campaign stems from the FDOT analysis of transit route accidents on the state and Federal highway system.
 - The current focus of this campaign is the development of several safety related strategies and improvements.
- Public Awareness Strategy
 - The objective of this campaign is to inform motorists of the Florida law that requires drivers to yield to buses entering the travel lane from a bus bay.
 - This project will involve the use of multiple communication channels: Radio, television, billboards and other signage; driver education courses, license and tag renewals; driver license test and driving improvement school
- Target Audience
 - The primary audience for this campaign is the general public driving in Florida.
 - The reason for our meeting with the districts is to identify persons and organizations willing to be champions for safety and the support awareness/communications campaign.
- Our Goal
 - The goal of this project is develop, seek funding for, and implement an awareness campaign plan that will influence driver behavior and lead to increased bus transit safety.
- Main Tasks
 - Our primary task is to gather input and support from the Offices of Public Transit, Safety, Traffic Operations and Public Information, along with the local transit agencies.

- We will then develop public awareness action plan/concept paper to apply for funding that will lead to programs that will enhance bus safety.
- The concept paper will be submitted to the FDOT Safety Office for a funding grant application to implement the awareness campaign.
- Schedule
 - Oct 2005 - Nov 2005 Gather stakeholder input and ideas
 - Feb 2006 Complete public awareness action plan
 - May 2006 Grant award notification
- October 2006 Funding allocation and program initiation

Meeting Summary:

1. Attendees were provided with a copy of "Accessing Transit", and the "Yield to Bus Public Awareness & Safety Campaign Fact Sheet".
2. Amy Datz delivered an introduction to the project that included the following:
 - A review of the bus transit accident experience involving collisions of motor vehicles with rear-ends of transit buses (design flaw vs. behavioral flaw).
 - An explanation was made regarding the concept paper and grant process.
 - An overview and history of "Yield to Bus" campaign efforts was provided
 - An in-depth discussion of the existing Florida Statute (written 5 years ago) as it relates to yielding to transit buses and bus bays. Ms. Datz confirmed that the law does not address buses pulling into and out of traffic from bus stops.
 - An update of recommendations, concerns and issues expressed by the districts visited thus far (Districts 1, 7 & 2).
 - An explanation of the main objective of project -- to assemble all the stakeholders involved including public information, safety, operations, and others in a discussion of awareness campaign goals and strategies, and measures of success.
3. LYNX feedback:

In Lynx operators lounge, an operator suggested that any modification or retrofit involving the operation by operator of a LED be wired into the left turn signal of the bus to avoid the operator having to push a button or perform another task. Operators were receptive to ideas of an LED on rear of bus and yield signs approaching bus stops. Lynx has installed a 'Yield to Buses' triangle sticker on the rear of its buses. Regarding bus bays in general, Lynx is in favor of bus bays as evidenced on the SR 436 Project.

Jennifer Clements of Lynx briefly discussed problems resulting from bus accidents. A frequent and major complaint of Lynx drivers is being cut-off by motorists. In order to re-enter traffic easily at various locations, some Lynx operators have been observed not properly curbing their buses.

Lynx ideas for Public Service Announcements include:

- sponsoring drive time traffic radio spot
- moving billboards on side and rear of buses
- publications and advertising inside of buses,

- hand-outs,
- transit television on Lymmo.

Paint fee approximately \$4,000 to \$8000 for each Lynx bus.

4. Ms. Datz briefly discussed best transit design practices and a scenario that depicted a bus stop located in an exclusive right-turn lane. FDOT has encouraged far-side stops for this particular configuration.
5. Ms. Datz explained school bus and funding issues as they relate to the campaign. She explained that the awareness campaign may be able to compliment similar campaigns or organizations with similar goals or target audiences. Also, Ms. Datz would like the campaign to include high-school driver's education classes (ideally the information will be shared with parents, teachers and others).
6. Lynx suggested that project encourage agencies to extract data from their Safety Departments regarding accident locations, vehicle types, traffic and other data to help in the awareness effort.
7. There was a discussion of how it would be best to work with the police to enforce the current laws. Can we find out how many tickets have been issued for driver failure to yield to the buses and how much the ticket might be?
8. We also discussed what we could do to measure the effectiveness of the campaign by looking at the number of rear end crashes that occurred before and after the campaign.
9. We talked about focusing on the high school students' drivers educational manual so we could catch young drivers before their bad habits were established.

APPENDIX A

PUBLIC INFORMATION & AWARENESS TECHNIQUES

The following is a list of techniques under consideration for the Yield to Bus Campaign:

- Information Kits (distributed at driver education courses, license and tag renewals; driver license test and driving improvement school)
- Advertisements (30 and 60 second)
- Informational Videos
- Video library/clippings of bus transit safety television news coverage
- Press releases
- Media Advisories
- Newspaper articles
- Press conferences
- Newsletters
- Reports
- Brochures
- Posters
- Audiovisual presentations
- Websites
- Special Events
- Displays and exhibits with pockets for informational materials placed in public gathering places (grocery stores, banks, churches, shops)
- Public Service Announcements (radio and television)
- Billboards
- Speakers Bureau/Public speaking engagements
- Citizen Advisory Group
- Programs at Schools for Parents
- Theme/Logo/Brand Identity for Campaign
- Community Walk (i.e. "Walk for Safety")
- Buttons, magnets, other promotional items
- Contests
- Public workshops/meetings/open houses