

# ALASKA

Strategic Highway Safety Plan

2018-2022



**Toward  
Zero  
Deaths**

Everyone Counts on Alaska's Roadways



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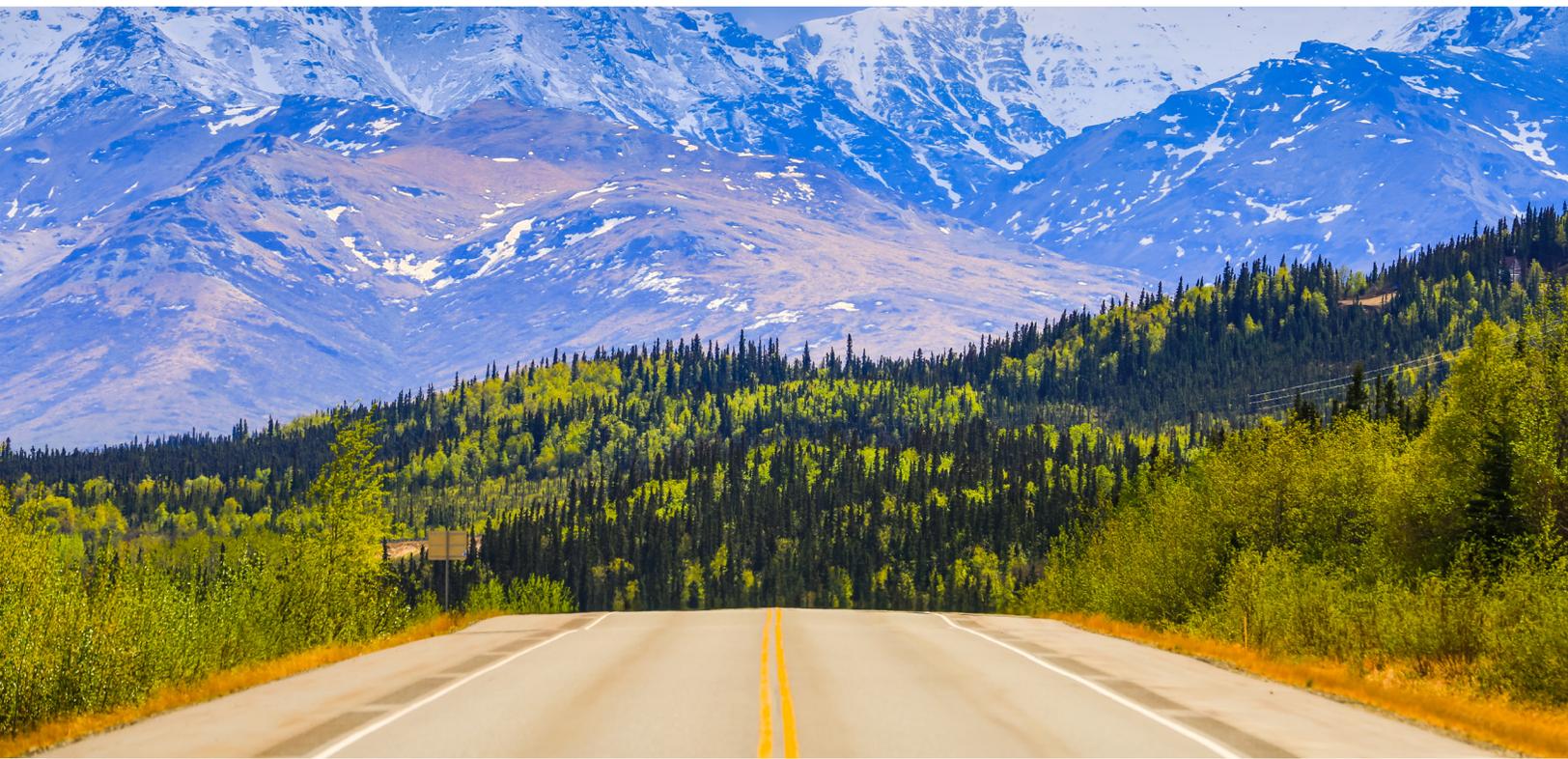
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# Executive Summary



Alaska is a unique and special place. Many individuals get around on snowmobiles and off-road vehicles, and ice roads are common. Alaska is, however, no different than any other state when it comes to traffic-related fatalities and serious injuries. Since Alaska developed the first Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) in 2006 and updated it in 2013, traffic-related fatalities have stayed relatively the same going from 74 deaths in 2006 to a low of 51 in 2013, and now back up to 79 in 2017. Traffic-related serious injuries have gone from 437 in 2006 to a low of 333 in 2013, and now trending back up to 392 in 2016.

The Alaska SHSP is designed to address those fatalities and serious injuries through a collaborative, multi-disciplinary approach that actively involves the four main disciplines of safety: engineering, enforcement, education, and emergency medical services. Beginning in 2017, Alaska began the process to update this data-driven plan. Led by the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF), a 55 member Steering Committee reviewed data and determined the vision, mission, goals, and emphasis areas for the plan. The Committee decided to stay with a 3.1 percent per year reduction for the fatality and serious injury goals which were determined for the plan overall and for each of the sub-emphasis areas. The Committee also selected the following for the emphasis areas in the plan:

## Driver Behavior

- Impaired Driving
- Young Drivers
- Older Drivers
- Occupant Protection

## Roadways

- Lane Departures
- Intersections
- Animal-Vehicle Collisions

## Special Users

- Pedestrians
- Bicyclists
- Motorcyclists
- Off-Road Vehicles

Strategies and actions for each of these emphasis areas were drawn from stakeholder recommendations obtained at meetings in March 2018, information from the previous plan, and what research indicates are proven countermeasures. The emphasis area teams met three times to review this information and make the recommendations to the Steering Committee. The Committee met twice to make the final determination.

This document provides the specifics for each of the emphasis area plans. As implementation gets underway one of the first activities for the Steering Committee will be to develop an evaluation plan that ensures Alaska can follow progress and make changes when and where needed.

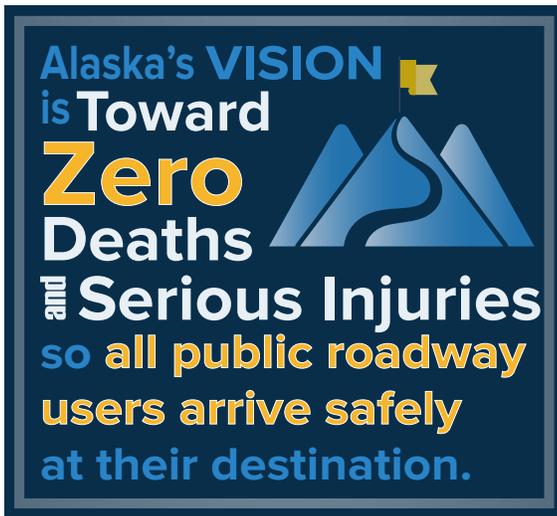


# Overview

# 1



The SHSP is more than a document in Alaska. It reflects the overall nature of traffic safety in the State and the people, organizations, and agencies that are essential to ensuring Alaska can identify effective and innovative approaches to improving safety on the State's roadways. Federal law requires an update every five years. This update of the SHSP presents an opportunity to improve traffic safety through data analysis, organizational structure, business processes, collaboration, partner engagement, implementation, and evaluation. The SHSP document captures the opportunities for improvement in a user-friendly plan that will provide guidance for the next five years. A vision and mission statement guide the SHSP and provide detail on its purpose.



**Alaska's VISION**  
is **Toward**  
**Zero**  
**Deaths**  
and **Serious Injuries**  
so **all public roadway**  
**users arrive safely**  
**at their destination.**

The graphic features a dark blue background with a stylized mountain range and a winding road in shades of blue and white. A yellow flag is positioned at the top right of the mountain range.



**The SHSP MISSION** is to improve the  
**safety of all roadway users** through a  
**collaborative approach**  
that focuses resources on the  
**most effective solutions** using

- 🚧 evidence-based engineering,
- 👮 enforcement, 🎓 education, and
- 🚑 emergency response initiatives.

The graphic features a dark blue background with a target icon and a dart hitting the bullseye. The text is in white and yellow.

To select the measurable fatality and serious injury goals, the Steering Committee reviewed current trends and the impact of the previous plan's 3.1 percent per year decrease and determined the reduction was achievable and doable.

**Using a five-year rolling average, the goal for the overall plan is to reduce fatalities from 79 in 2017 to 67 in 2022 and serious injuries from 392 in 2016 to 331 in 2022.**

## The SHSP Provides Direction

The SHSP is a statewide, comprehensive safety plan that provides a coordinated framework for reducing fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads. The plan:

- Identifies the priority emphasis areas Alaska will address over a five-year period;
- Uses data to select critical factors contributing to crashes and the potential solutions;
- Establishes common performance goals for reducing traffic-related fatalities and serious injuries;
- Provides proven strategies and actions to address each of the emphasis areas;
- Complements and urges incorporation into other safety plans at the state, regional, and local levels; and
- Monitors process and performance to determine where Alaska is making progress and where there is a need for more effort.

The plan's intent is to focus resources on Alaska's most serious traffic safety problems. Based on a review of the data, the following areas and sub-emphasis areas were selected:

## Driver Behavior



Impaired Driving



Young Drivers



Older Drivers



Occupant Protection

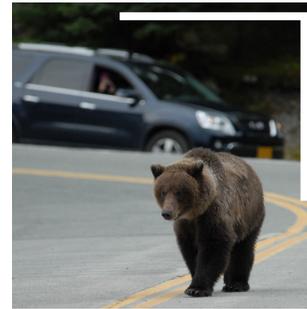
## Roadways



Lane Departures



Intersections



Animal-Vehicle  
Collisions

## Special Users



Pedestrians



Bicyclists



Motorcyclists



Off Road Vehicles

Similar to the 2013 SHSP, there will be sub-emphasis areas with a recommendation to focus strategies in those areas and to prioritize actions so that implementation can take place over the five year life of the plan.

# Emphasis Area Plans 2



This chapter provides a description for each emphasis area, supporting crash data analysis, and the strategies and actions to lower fatalities and serious injuries. Data is available for fatalities through 2017 and for serious injuries data, at the present time, is available through 2016. Alaska based selection of the strategies and actions in the plan on their effectiveness and the ability of stakeholders to take on implementation. The plan includes a champion for each action. This champion agrees to oversee the action and ensure it is implemented or information provided to the SHSP Steering Committee on why implementation cannot take place. Each of the actions fall into one of the 4Es of safety.



**ENGINEERING.** This E involves the design of roadways and the surrounding environment using solutions that reduce crashes or minimize the severity of crashes when they occur.



**ENFORCEMENT.** This E involves the actions and efforts by the thousands of state and local law enforcement officers throughout Alaska who are working to ensure road users follow the law. Strategies and actions in this area often involve targeted efforts in areas where crashes happen and involve changing road user behavior.



**EDUCATION.** This E involves providing information to road users that help them make good choices. A strong enforcement message, such as Click It or Ticket, can accompany the education.



**EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES.** This E involves the efforts of emergency responders in providing medical services quickly and effectively to individuals involved in crashes.

Each emphasis area plan was prioritized to reflect those actions which could be done in: one year (short term); two to three years (mid term); and four to five years (long term). It also includes actions on a watch list, which the Emphasis Area Teams felt were important to include in the plan for possible inclusion at a later date.

## Legend

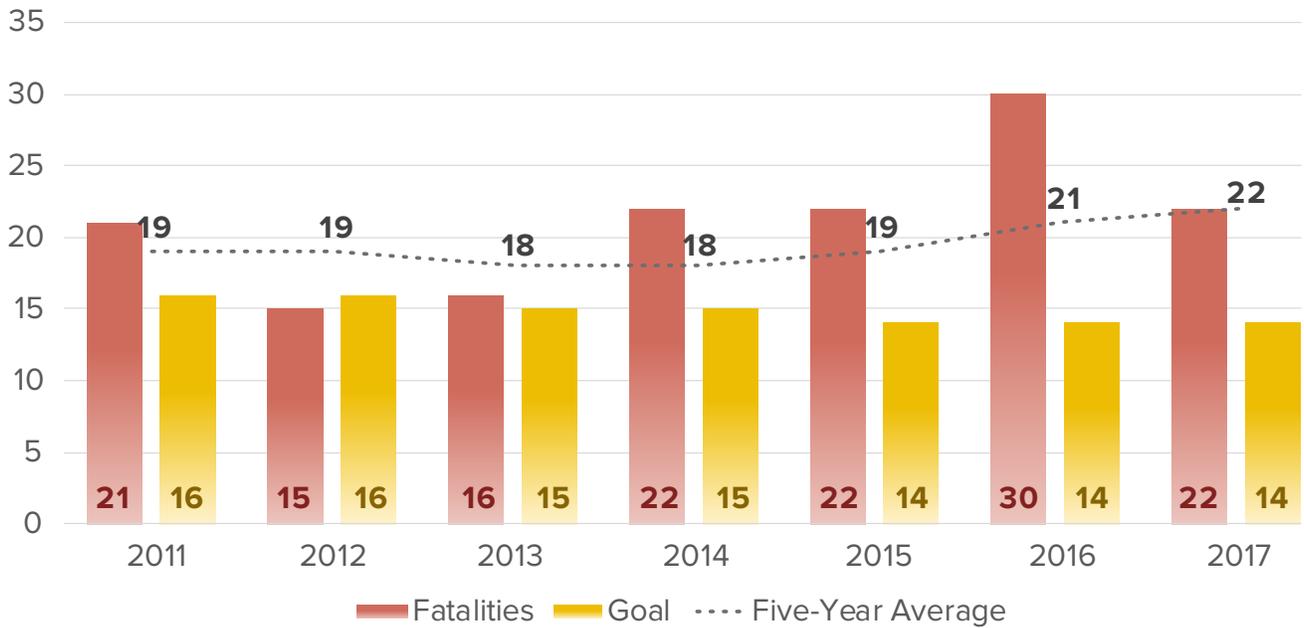
■ Year 1   
 ■ Year 2 & 3   
 ■ Year 4 & 5

## 2.1 Driver Behavior

Driver behavior involves the actions and behavior of drivers in terms of impaired driving and occupant protection. It also focuses on two road user groups who are at a higher risk of becoming involved in a crash or being injured or killed: young drivers (individuals age 20 and younger) and older drivers (individuals age 65 and older). The following figures are graphs of the fatalities and serious injuries for each of the sub-emphasis areas in the Driver Behavior Emphasis Area.

Figure 2.1 shows the number of impaired driving fatalities from 2011 to 2017, how that translates into a five-year average and what the goal was in the previous SHSP. Impaired driving fatalities increased from 21 in 2011 to 22 in 2017, but did not reach the SHSP goal of 14 by 2017. Impaired driving fatalities in 2017 are in line with the trend. Figure 2.2 shows the same information for impaired driving serious injuries, but the time frame is 2011 to 2016. Impaired driving serious injuries increased slightly from 69 in 2011 to 71 in 2016, which is below the SHSP goal of 85.

**Figure 2.1 Impaired Driving Fatalities in Alaska, 2011-2017**



**Figure 2.2 Impaired Serious Injuries in Alaska, 2011-2016**

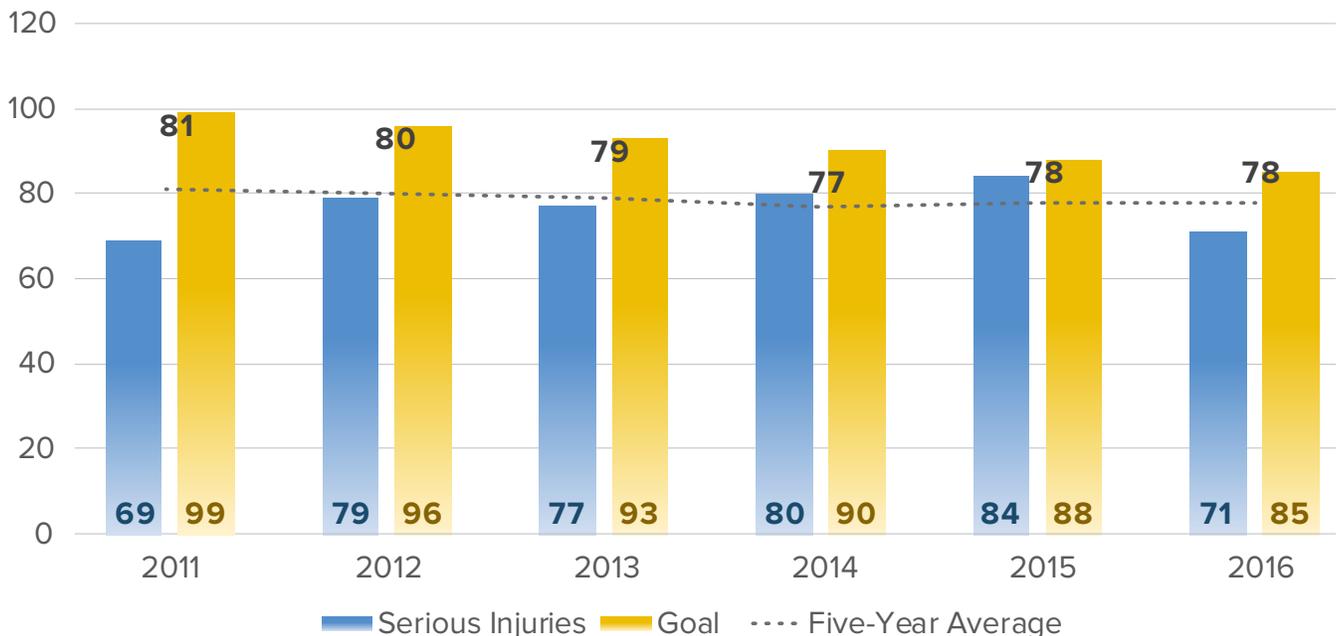
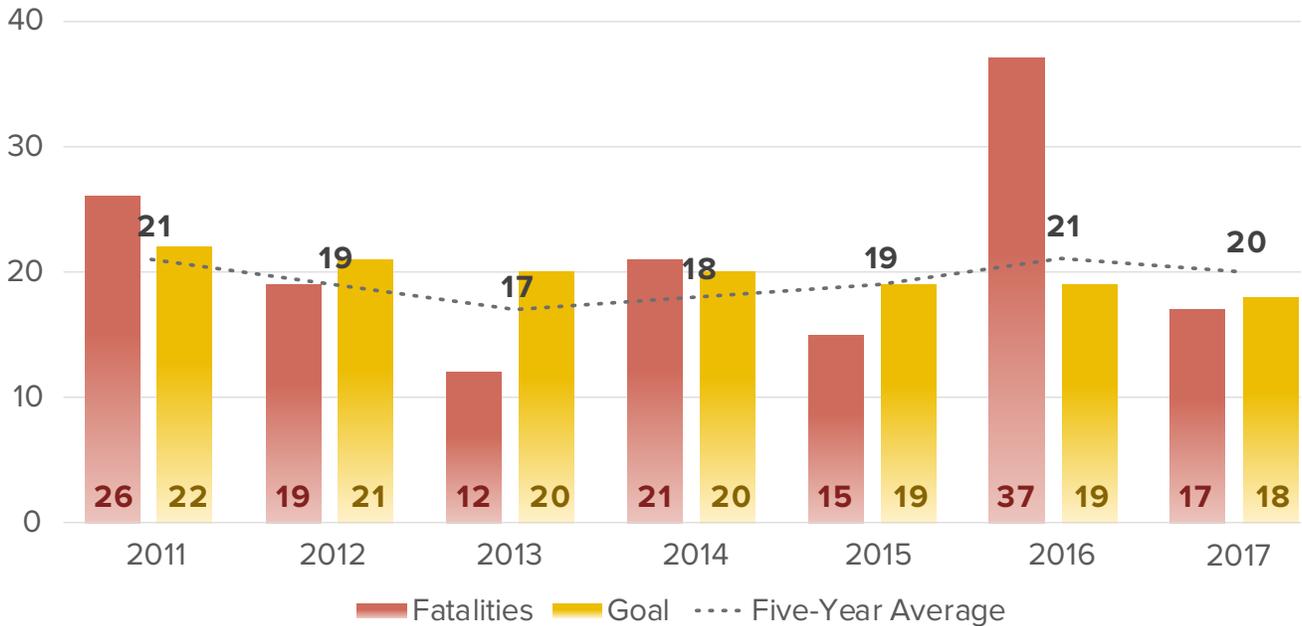


Figure 2.3 shows unrestrained fatalities decreased from 26 in 2011 to 17 in 2017 which is below the SHSP goal number of 18. Serious injuries, however, increased from 73 in 2011 to 89 in 2016 which was above the SHSP goal number of 85 as shown in Figure 2.4.

**Figure 2.3 Unrestrained Fatalities, 2011-2017**



**Figure 2.4 Unrestrained Serious Injuries, 2011-2016**

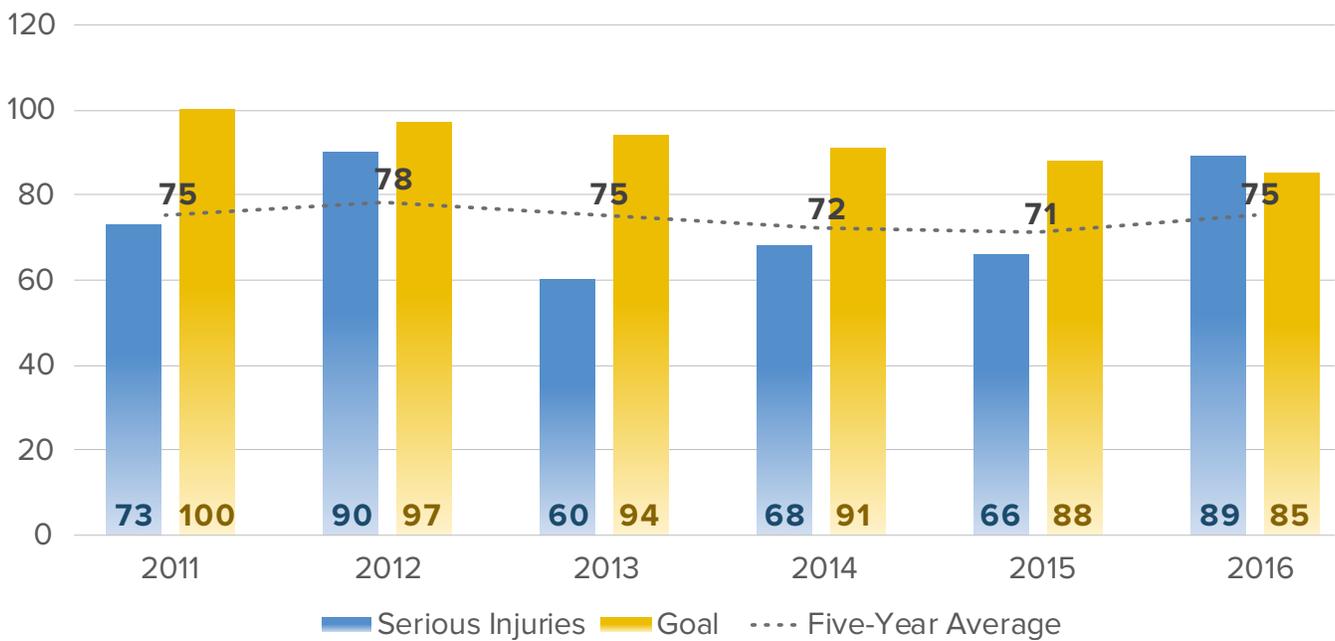
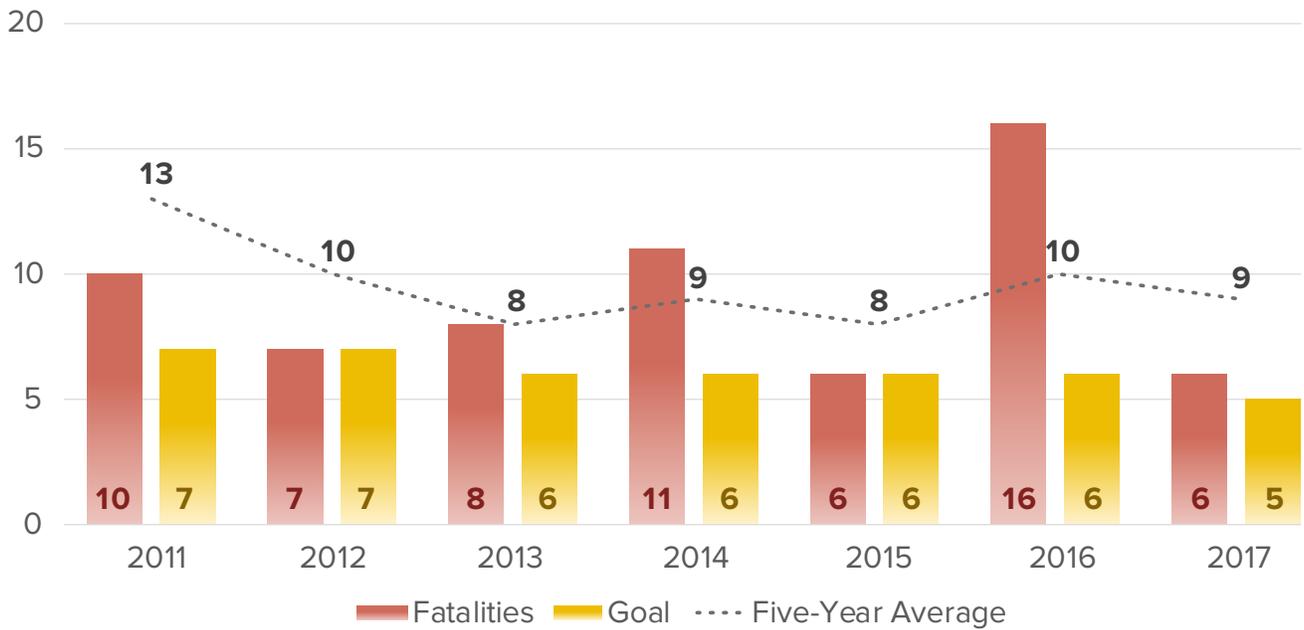
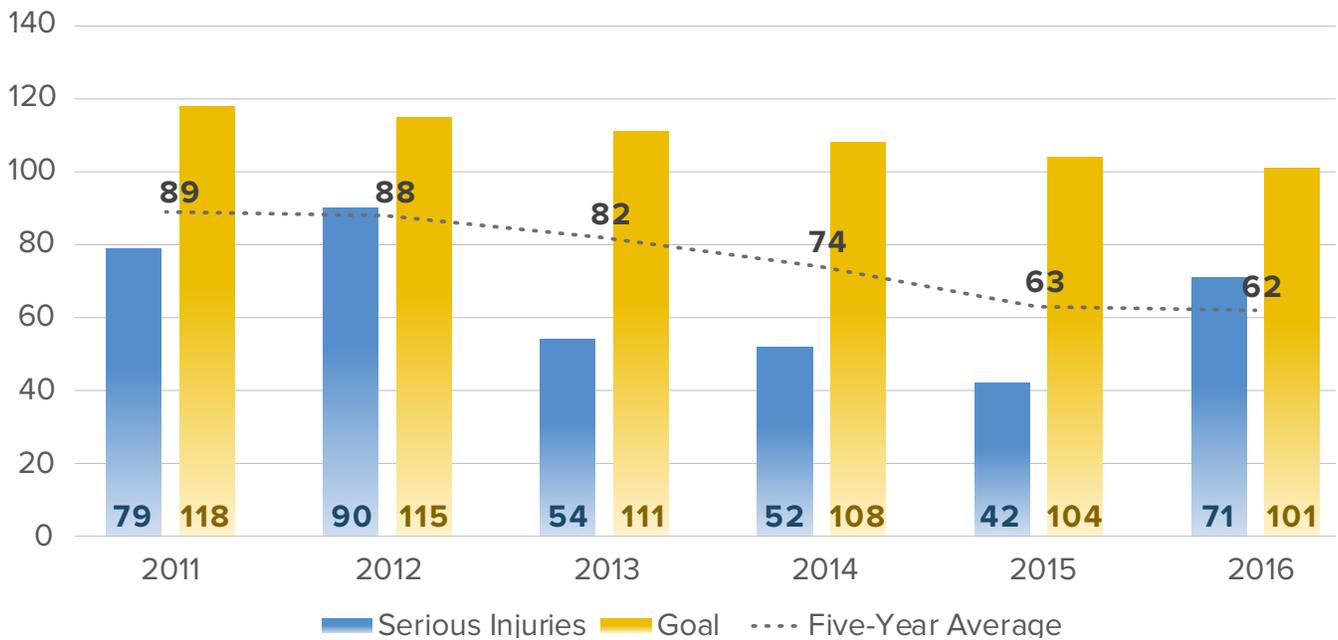


Figure 2.5 shows the fatalities for young drivers, age 20 and under, decreased from 10 in 2011 to 6 in 2017, a number slightly higher than the SHSP goal of 5. Figure 2.6 shows serious injuries declined from 79 in 2011 to 71 in 2016, which is well below the goal number of 101.

**Figure 2.5 Young Driver (Age 20 and Under) Fatalities, 2011-2017**



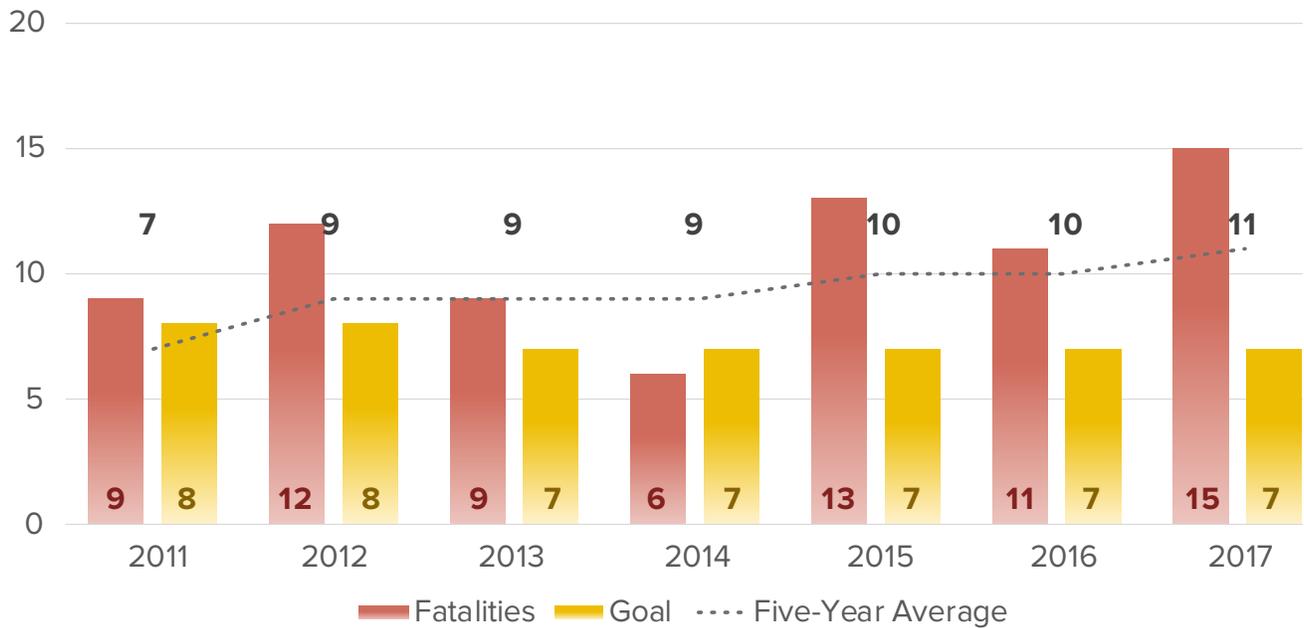
**Figure 2.6 Young Driver (Age 20 and Under) Serious Injuries, 2011-2016**



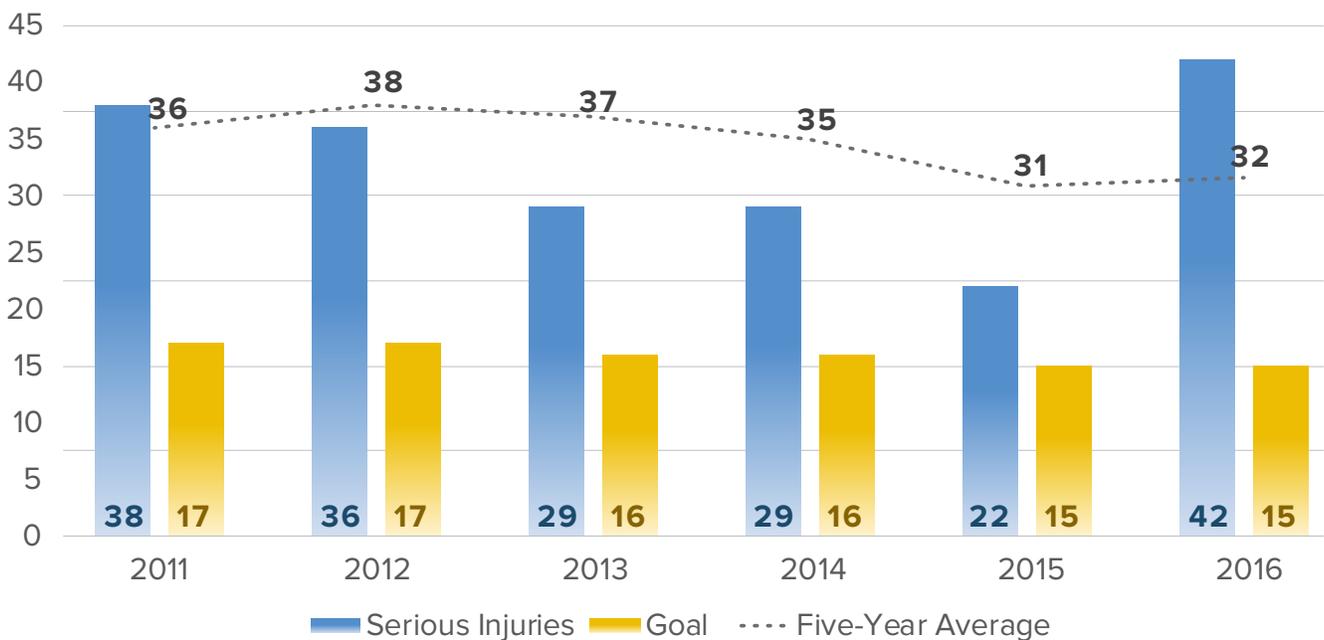
**2011-2016**

Figure 2.7 shows older driver (age 65) fatalities increased from 9 in 2011 to 15 in 2017, a figure well above the SHSP goal number of 7. Figure 2.8 shows older driver serious injuries also increased from 38 in 2011 to 42 in 2016, a number above the SHSP goal of 15.

**Figure 2.7 Older Driver (Age 65+) Fatalities, 2011-2017**



**Figure 2.8 Older Driver (Age 65+) Serious Injuries, 2011-2016**



## Driver Behavior Plan

### **STRATEGY 1: Reduce the number of impaired driving fatal and serious injury crashes.**

Action Step	Champion
Pursue increased enforcement and prioritized prosecution of drivers who crash due to impairment or distraction with increased penalties – particularly for drivers who hit special users.	Bike Anchorage Alaskan Bikers Advocating Training and Education (A.B.A.T.E. of Alaska)
Encourage the continued use of saturation patrols in urban areas when possible.	Alaska Highway Safety Office (AKHSO)
Determine the shortcomings in the current ignition interlock program and make recommendations for improvements.	AKHSO
Identify solutions to improve the collection and quality of data on distracted driving.	DOT&PF
Conduct a review of current mandatory server/seller program and work with the State and local restaurant/bar association to improve the effectiveness of the program in preventing over serving.	Alcohol and Marijuana Control Office (AMCO)
Determine the feasibility of establishing a screening and brief intervention program for individuals injured in alcohol-related crashes and/or convicted of an impaired driving offense.	Alaska Department of Health and Social Services

### **STRATEGY 2: Pursue programs to ensure enhanced occupant protection.**

Action Step	Champion
Implement high visibility enforcement of occupant safety laws including the non-use of child passenger safety.	AKHSO
Ensure child seat programs such as the booster seat program and child passenger safety are funded and continue.	AKHSO
Target low seat belt users for education programs.	AKHSO

**STRATEGY 3: Pursue programs to ensure outreach and education to young drivers.**

Action Step	Champion
Initiate the groundwork for implementation of a mandatory Alaska Driver's Education program that focuses on the state's unique driving environment and challenges facing road users.	(A.B.A.T.E. of Alaska) Bike Alaska Center for Safe Alaskans
Implement media education to curtail risky driving behavior of young males.	AKHSO
Implement programs to encourage young people to speak up if someone is drinking and driving and other risky behaviors, i.e., seat belt use, texting and driving, etc.	Center for Safe Alaskans
Promote and educate young drivers and parents on Alaska's graduated drivers licensing law and work with law enforcement and the judiciary to ensure greater compliance.	Center for Safe Alaskans Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV)

**STRATEGY 4: Reduce the number of aging road user involved fatal and serious injury crashes.**

Action Step	Champion
Work with nonprofits to educate older drivers and inform them of services and other programs, such as Car Fit, that can help them be safe and mobile.	Center for Safe Alaskans AKHSO
Expand the Car Fit program statewide and promote how it can help aging road users be safe behind the wheel.	Center for Safe Alaskans AKHSO
Promote alternative transportation options to enable aging road users to get to where they need to go.	Public Transportation Department Access Alaska
Update the procedures for assessing medical fitness to drive and designate the responsible party as medical professionals, family, DMV, and law enforcement.	DMV
Provide information to visitors, particularly those age 65+, about the differences of driving in Alaska and how to be safe on the roadway.	Walsh Sheppard AKHSO

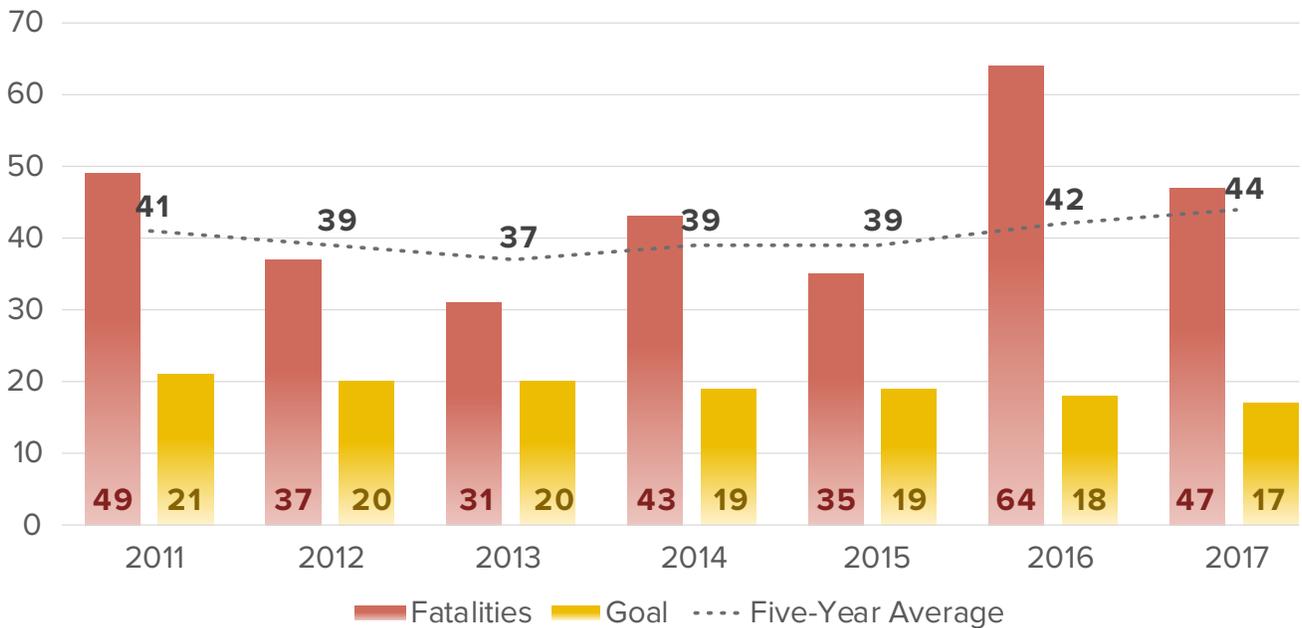
**WATCH LIST**

Work to ensure the continued operation of Therapeutic Drug Courts in Alaska.
Develop a list of ways in which legislative reforms have had a negative impact on impaired driving and how to reverse that impact.
Expand the definition of distracted driving to assist law enforcement officers in identifying and citing offenders.
Reduce DUI recidivism by expanding the Therapeutic Court program to additional communities.
Determine the feasibility of increasing the frequency of testing for a driver's license. <i>Note: Individuals age 69 and older are generally required to renew their license in person and will be asked to take a basic vision test. Source: Alaska Division of Motor Vehicles.</i>

## 2.2 Roadways

The Roadways Emphasis Area includes lane departures, intersections, and animal-vehicle collisions. Figure 2.9 shows the number of lane departure fatalities from 2011 to 2017 which decreased slightly from 49 in 2011 to 47 in 2017, a number that is above the SHSP goal of 17. Serious injuries decreased from 101 in 2011 to 67 in 2016, a figure below the goal of 73. DOT&PF defines lane departures as leaving the travel lane and crossing the centerline or shoulder.

**Figure 2.9 Lane Departure Fatalities, 2011-2017**



**Figure 2.10 Lane Departure Serious Injuries, 2011-2016**

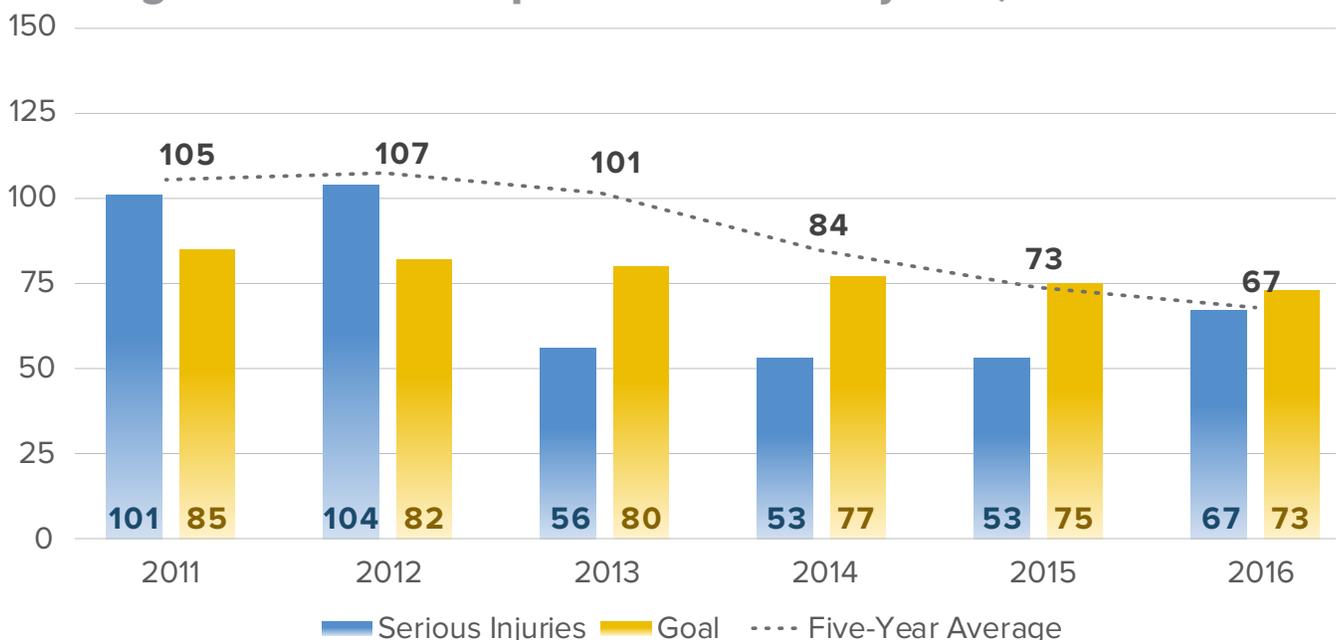
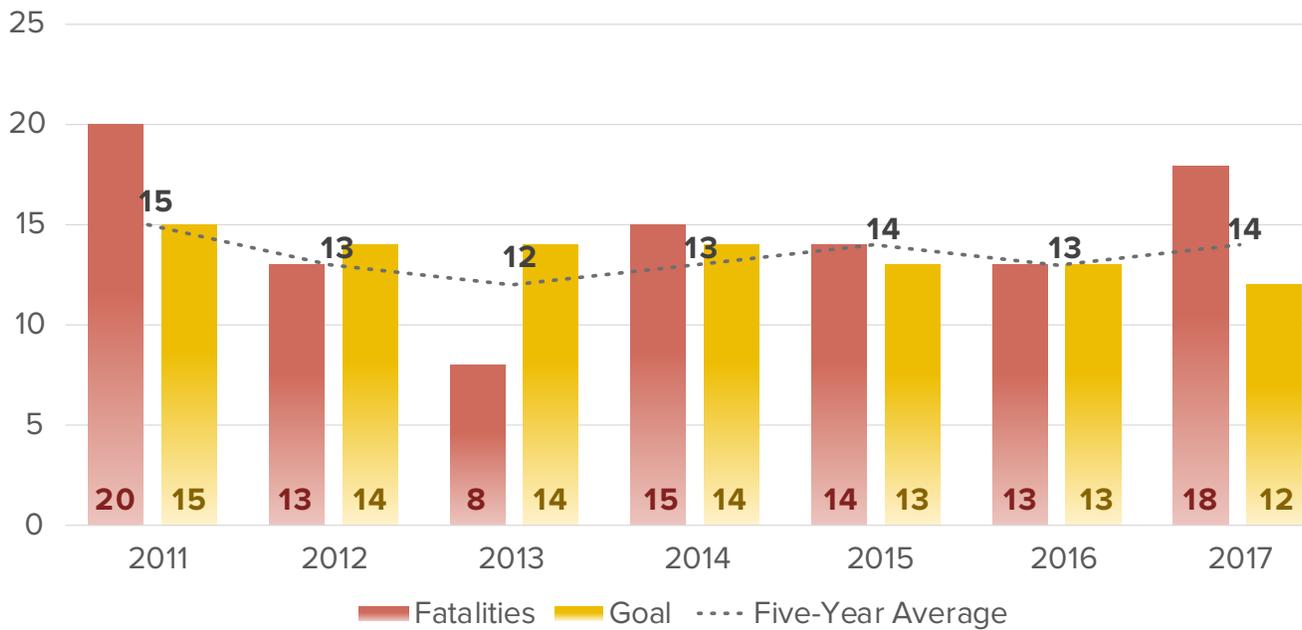


Figure 2.11 shows the number of intersection-related fatalities decreased from 20 in 2011 to 18 in 2017, a number that is higher than the goal of 12. Serious injuries, however, increased from 134 in 2011 to 141 in 2016, a number below the goal of 160. Intersections include four-way, T, Y, and L intersections, roundabouts, and five or more point intersections.

**Figure 2.11 Intersection-Related Fatalities, 2011-2017**



**Figure 2.12 Intersection-Related Serious Injuries, 2011-2016**

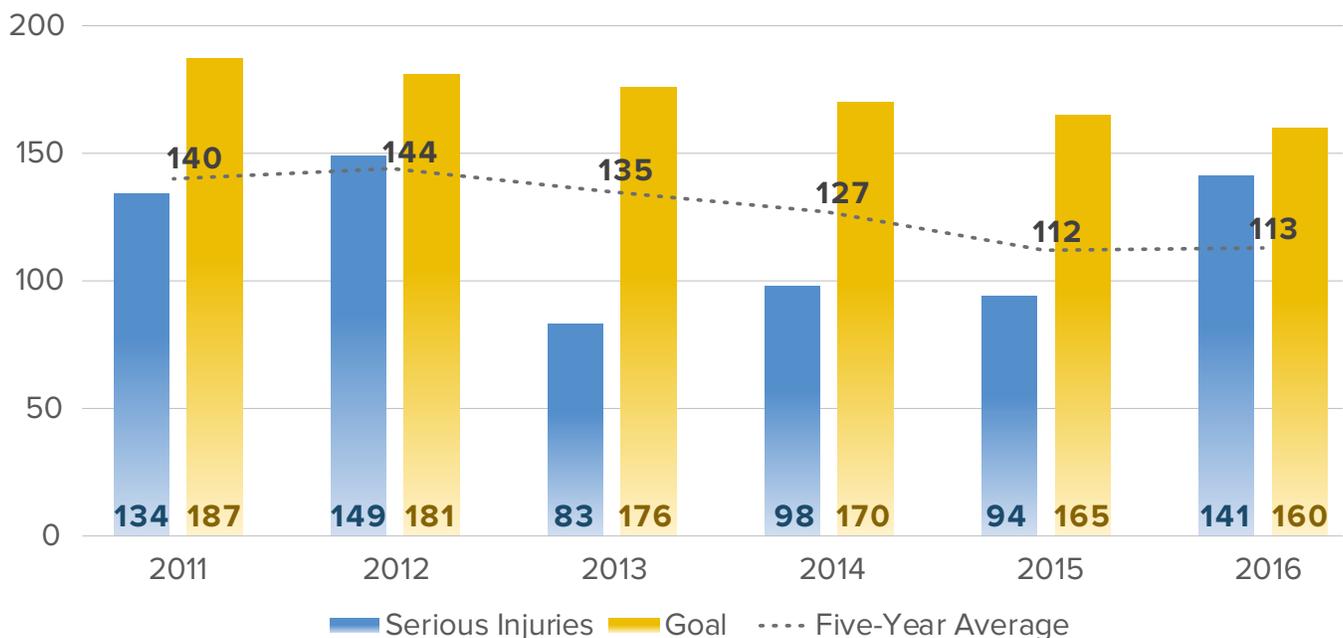
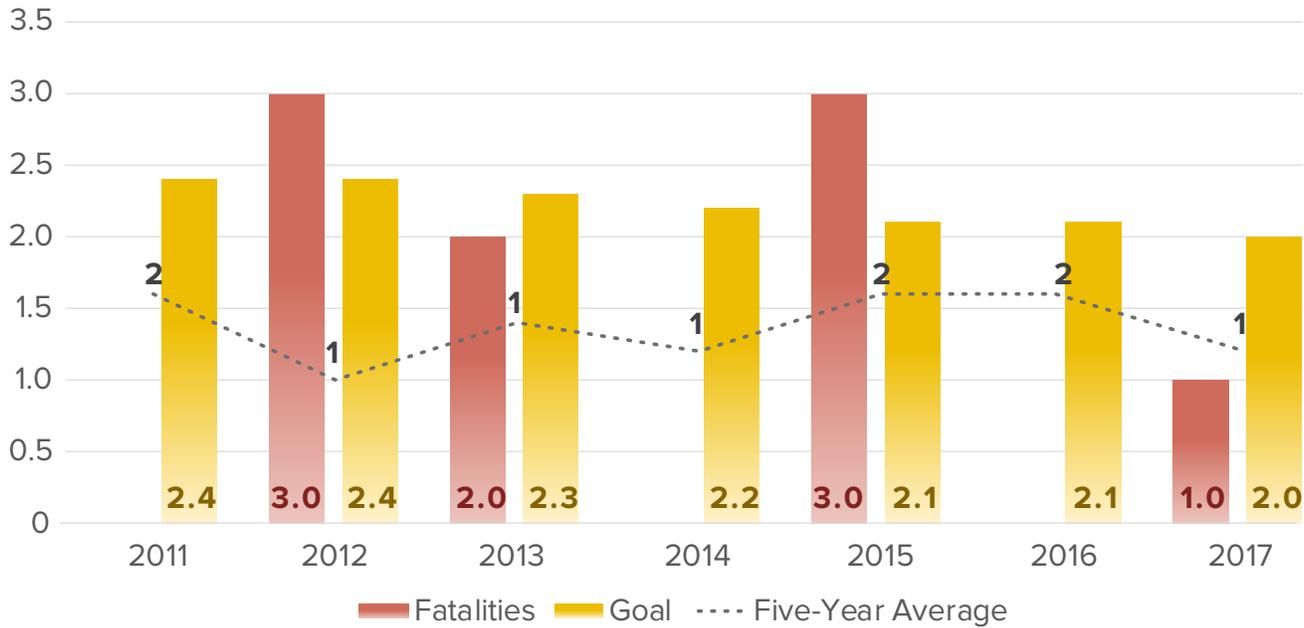
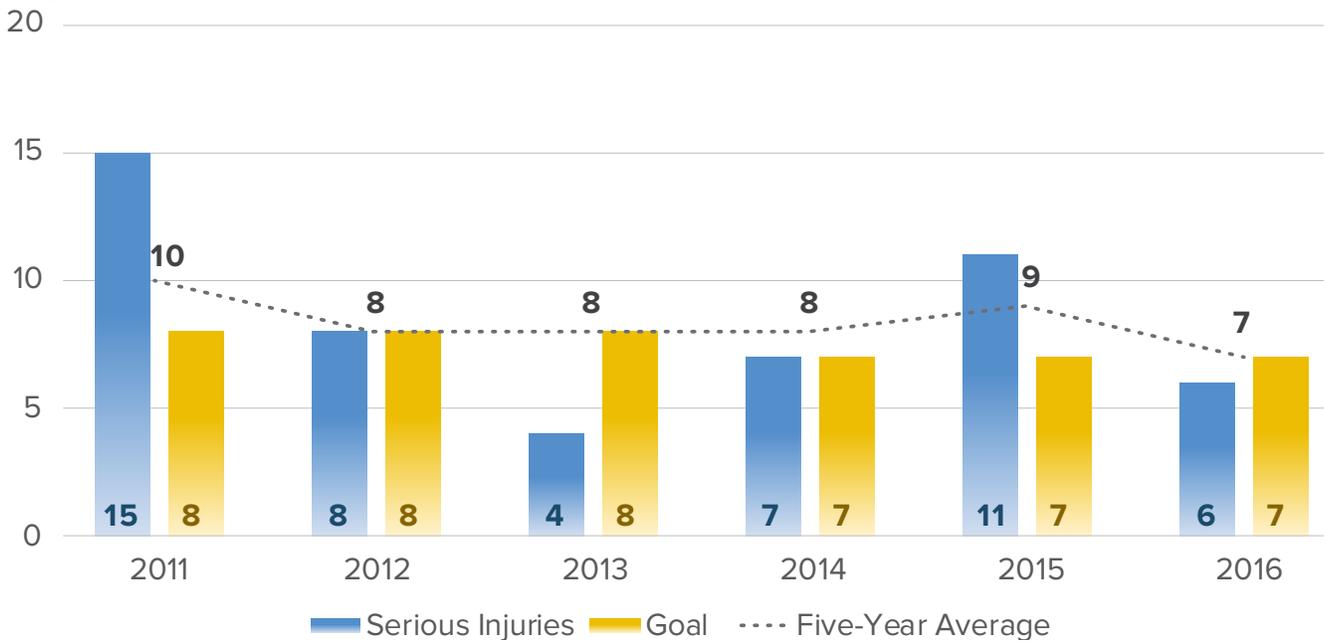


Figure 2.13 shows the number of animal-vehicle collisions which went from 0 fatalities in 2011 to 1 fatality in 2017. Figure 2.14 shows serious injuries for animal-vehicle collisions went from 15 in 2011 to 6 in 2016, a number below the previous SHSP goal of 7.

**Figure 2.13 Animal-Vehicle Collision Fatalities, 2011-2017**



**Figure 2.14 Animal-Vehicle Collision Serious Injuries, 2011-2016**



## Roadways Plan

### STRATEGY 1: Reduce the number of fatal and serious injury lane departure crashes.

Action Step	Champion
Conduct systemic safety analysis and implement projects where appropriate, i.e., surface treatment to prevent crashes, Safety Edge where feasible, upgrades to signing, delineation of roadway curves, widening of shoulders, flatten roadside slopes, passing and turn lanes, and improving clear zones.	DOT&PF
Install median barriers or buffers to protect pedestrians.	DOT&PF
Produce a coordinated statewide public communication effort on lane departure crash reduction efforts.	DOT&PF
Revise the current policy on rumble strips to expand their use including centerline and shoulder rumble strips as needed.	DOT&PF
Develop a statewide policy on the availability and construction of turnouts and improve existing turnouts to improve safety.	DOT&PF
Use 511 and traveler information systems to disseminate roadway safety messages.	DOT&PF
Review and revise state policy to determine the need to install medians and other barriers (multilane and divided highways) to provide better separation between traffic in opposing directions.	DOT&PF

### STRATEGY 2: Reduce the number of fatal and serious injury Intersection crashes.

Action Step	Champion
Continue research on improving skid resistant crosswalk paint and high friction treatments and develop a policy when appropriate.	DOT&PF
Develop a priority system/tool to forecast upgrades and other changes at signalized and unsignalized intersections and roundabouts.	DOT&PF
Complete research on red light camera feasibility and the use of other automated enforcement techniques.	DOT&PF Vision Zero, Anchorage
Review the current state of practice, determine the need to update 1190, and develop ways to manage access points particularly on heavily traveled highways.	DOT&PF

**STRATEGY 3: Reduce the number of fatal and serious injury animal-vehicle crashes.**

Action Step	Champion
Implement data-driven infrastructure projects to address the crash history of animal-vehicle collisions.	DOT&PF
Implement wildlife management and habitat manipulation techniques to address animal-vehicle collisions.	Department of Fish & Game
Review the current vegetation management program beyond routine cutting including along medians and identify appropriate wildlife crossings.	DOT&PF

**STRATEGY 4: Utilize data and information data systems to improve traffic safety.**

Action Step	Champion
Improve crash data collection procedures and methods including real-time data.	DOT&PF
Improve monitoring of and links to other transportation data including trauma registry data, prosecution, and adjudication, vehicle and driver information, etc.	DOT&PF
Implement public facing data access to improve crash data analysis and distribution of data on Alaska specific issues to users.	DOT&PF

**STRATEGY 5: Implement HSIP qualified projects.**

Action Step	Champion
Improve roadway safety through HSIP qualified activities and projects.	DOT&PF

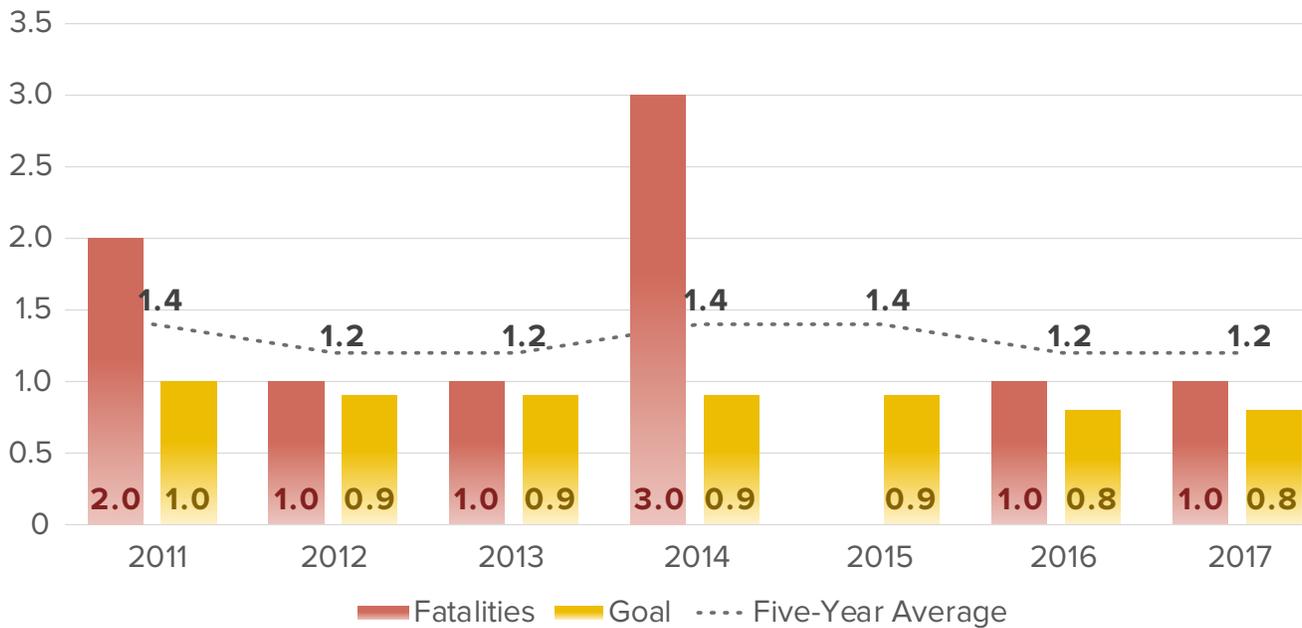
**WATCH LIST**

- Encourage the expansion of 911 service miles.
- Work with cell phone companies and others to expand the 911 service miles.
- Expand signage and call box coverage area and map coverage area.
- Develop and implement a program to educate the public on how to use roundabouts and their safety benefits.
- Develop a consistent statewide policy that will improve illumination where warranted.
- Promote the use of red light cameras and the use of other automated enforcement techniques.
- Review the current mowing and vegetation control policy and expand when and where the policy exists.
- Review and determine the feasibility of installing non-skid resistance fog lines on roadways where this is a problem.

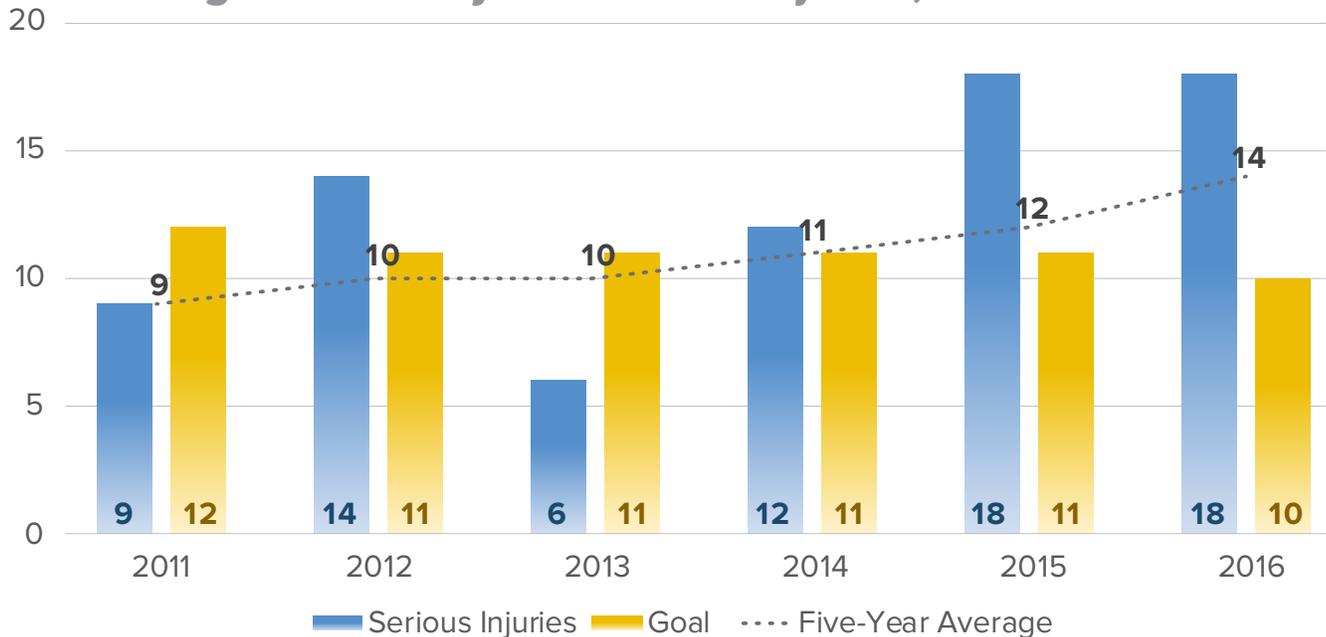
## 2.3 Special Users

The Special Users Emphasis Area Team focuses on issues involving bicyclists, pedestrians, motorcyclists, and off-road vehicles. Figure 2.15 shows bicyclist fatalities decreased from 2 in 2011 to one in 2017. Bicyclist serious injuries, however, as shown in Figure 2.16, doubled from 9 in 2011 to 18 in 2015, a number that is higher than the SHSP goal of 10.

**Figure 2.15 Bicyclist Fatalities, 2011-2017**

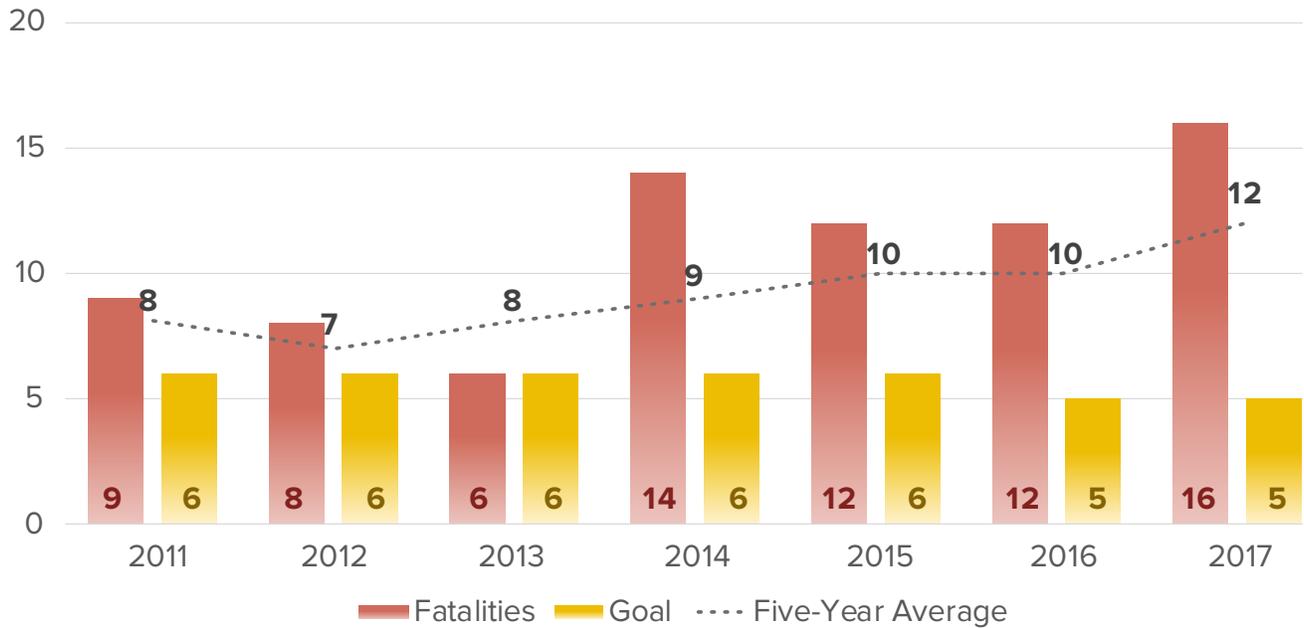


**Figure 2.16 Bicyclist Serious Injuries, 2011-2016**



Figures 2.17 and 2.18 show the dramatic increases in pedestrian fatalities and serious injuries. Figure 2.17 shows pedestrian fatalities increased from 9 in 2011 to 16 in 2017, well over the SHSP goal of 5. Figure 2.18 shows an even more significant increase in pedestrian serious injuries from 7 in 2011 to 39 in 2016, another number that is above the SHSP goal of 13.

**Figure 2.17 Pedestrian Fatalities, 2011-2017**



**Figure 2.18 Pedestrian Serious Injuries, 2011-2016**

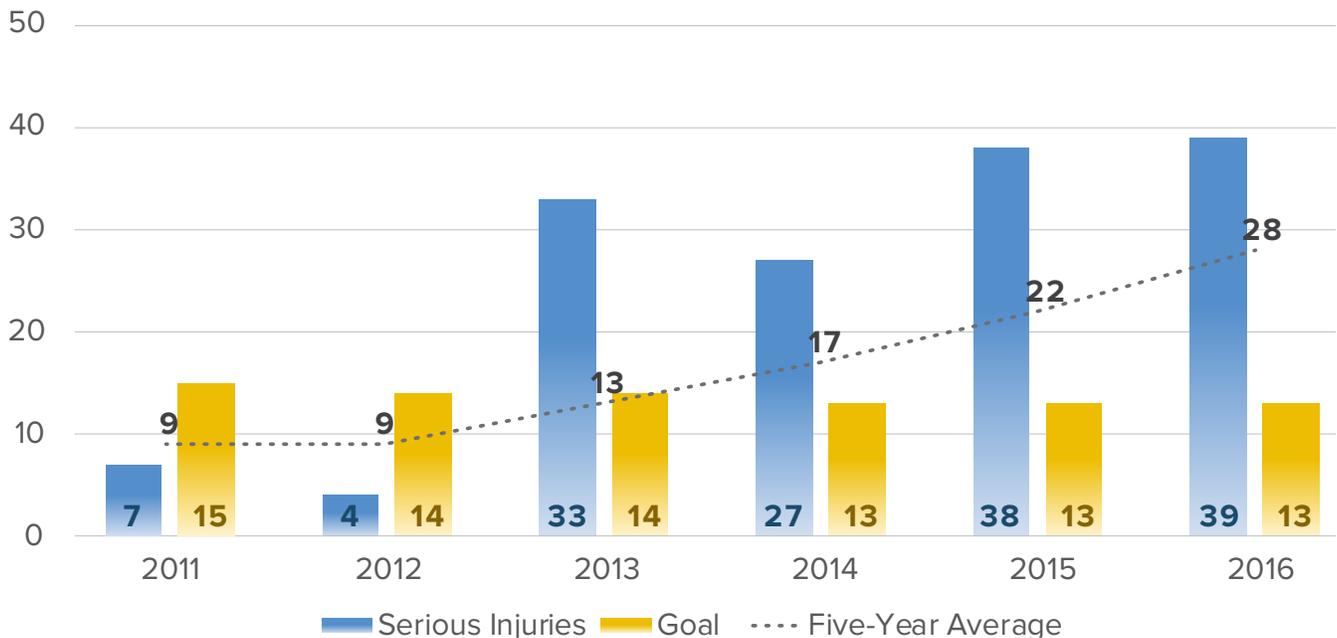
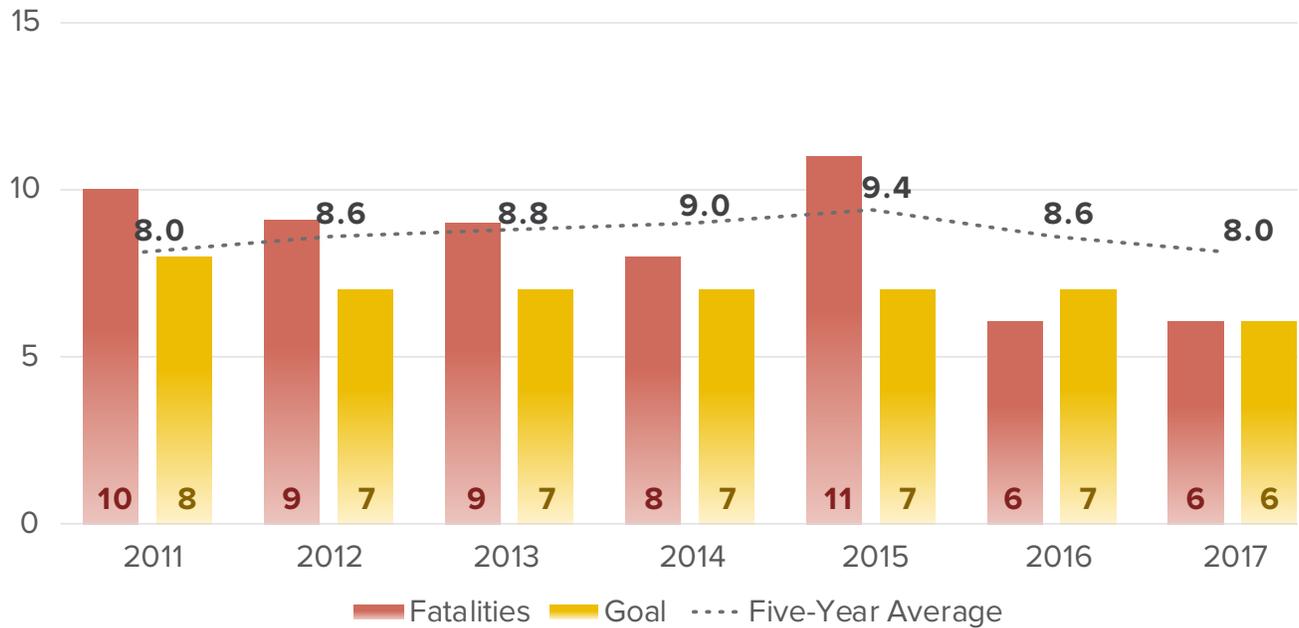


Figure 2.19 shows motorcycle fatalities decreased from 10 in 2011 to 6 in 2017 which is in line with the SHSP goal. Figure 2.20 shows motorcycle serious injuries have increased from 32 in 2011 to 39 in 2016, a number that is below the SHSP goal number of 51.

**Figure 2.19 Motorcyclist Fatalities, 2011 to 2017**



**Figure 2.20 Motorcyclist Serious Injuries, 2011-2016**

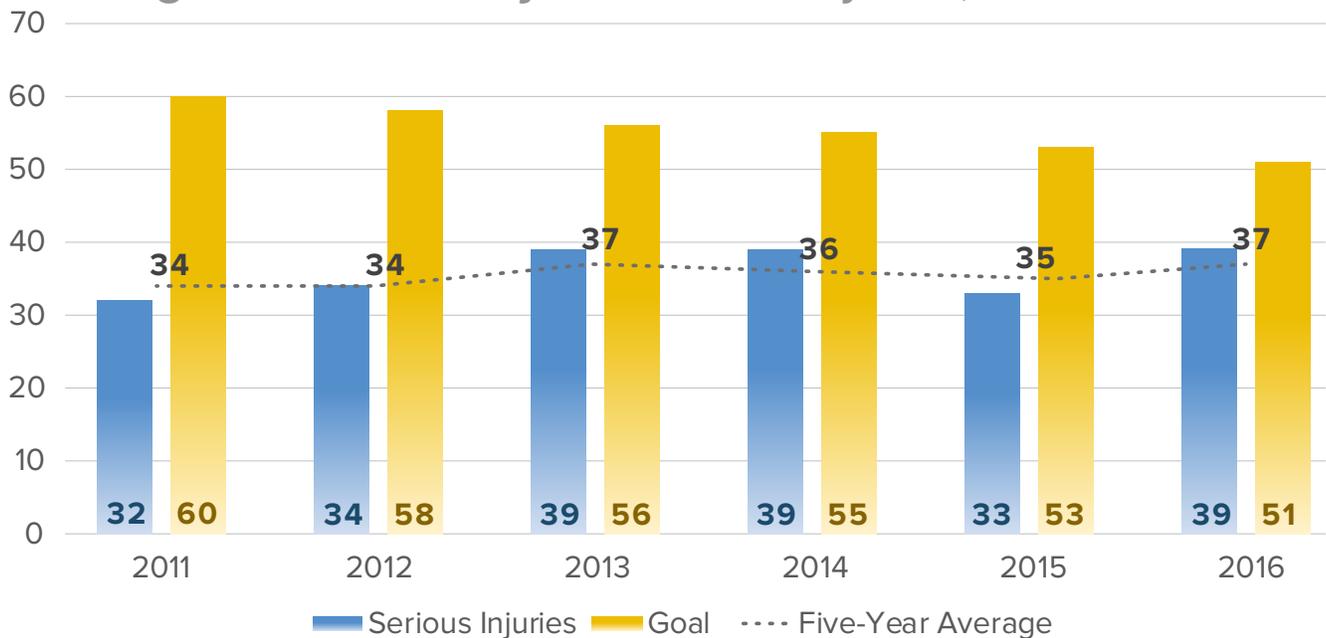
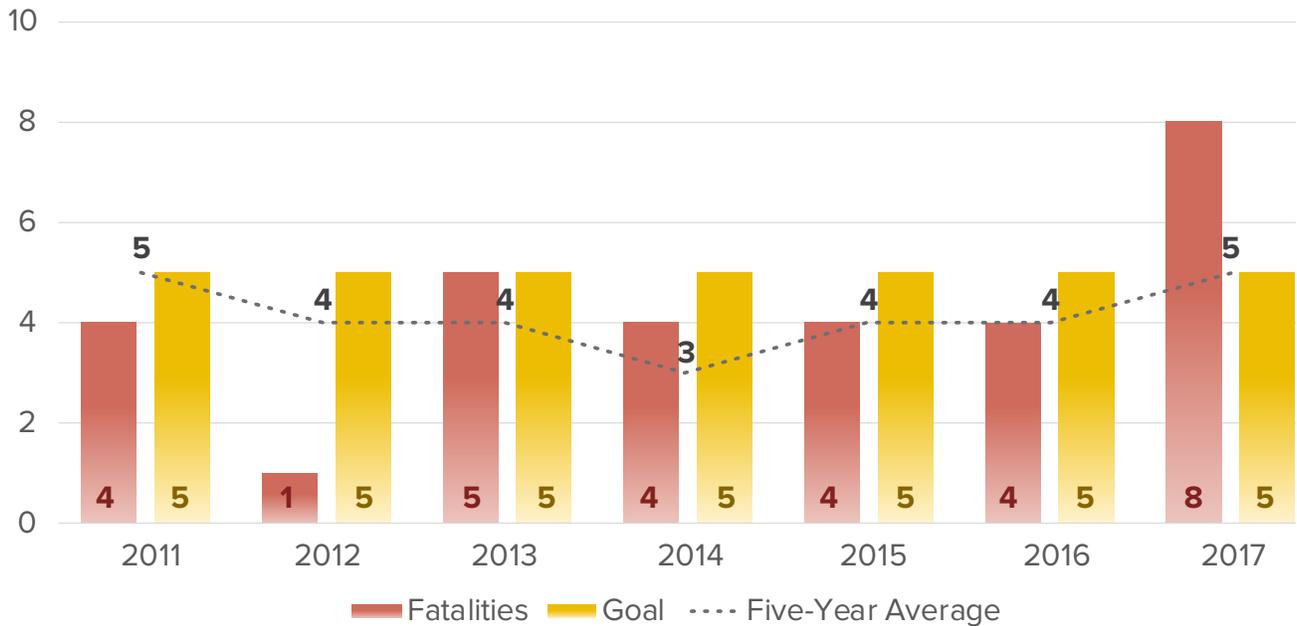
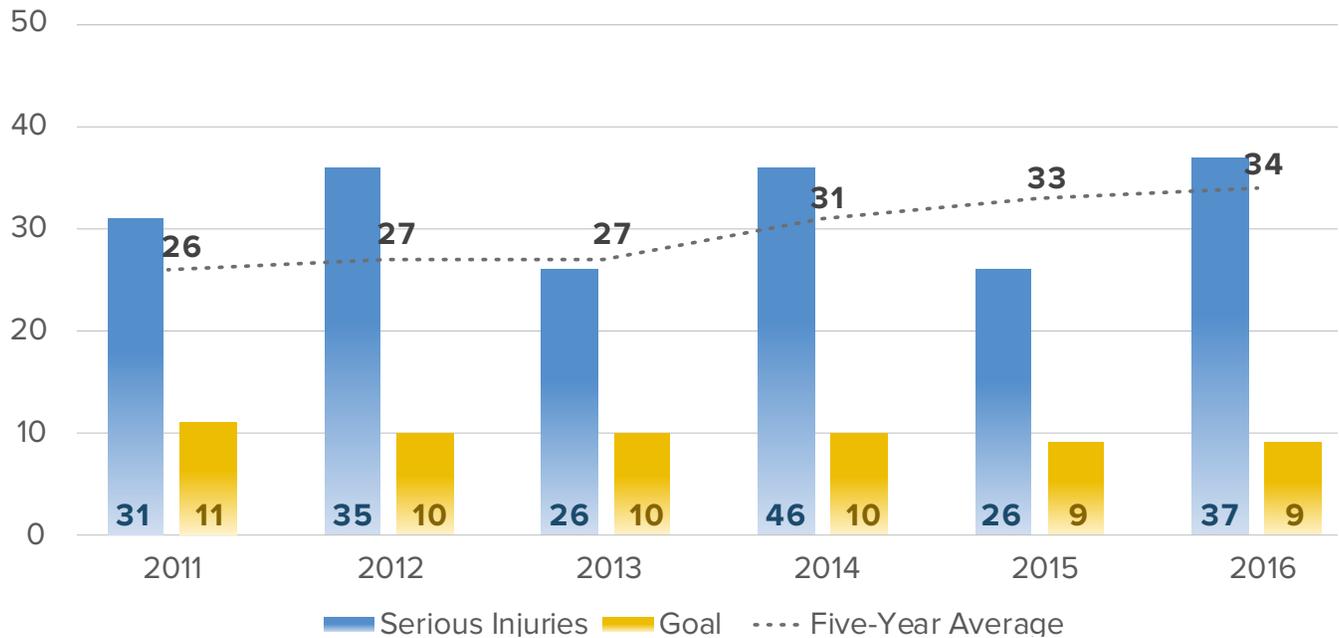


Figure 2.21 shows off-road vehicle fatalities increased from 4 in 2011 to 8 in 2017 and Figure 2.22 shows off-road vehicle serious injuries increased from 31 in 2011 to 37 in 2016. Both numbers are above the SHSP goal numbers. Off-road vehicle data only relates to crashes that occurred within the traffic way. It does not include crashes on ice roads, trails, or other areas that are outside the public road trafficway.

**Figure 2.21 Off-Road Vehicle Fatalities, 2011-2017**



**Figure 2.22 Off-Road Vehicle Serious Injuries, 2011-2016**



## Special Users Plan

### STRATEGY 1: Reduce the number of pedestrian fatalities and serious injury crashes.

Action Step	Champion
Review and revise statewide policy on snow and brush removal/ice safety, including a requirement for property owners to clear pedestrian walkways, and access to bus stops.	DOT&PF Department of Health and Social Services Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions (AMATS) Fairbanks Metropolitan Area Transportation System (FMATS)
Conduct audits in locations where there are high numbers of pedestrian and bicycle fatalities and serious injury crashes.	DOT&PF AMATS FMATS Anchorage Vision Zero
Encourage local laws or ordinances to increase the fine for distracted driving in high pedestrian and bicycle crash locations.	(A.B.A.T.E. of Alaska) Bike Anchorage
Encourage local laws, ordinances, and implementation of physical structures that decrease speeds in high crash locations.	DOT&PF Anchorage Police Department AMATS FMATS
Educate bicyclists and pedestrians to promote the use of high visibility gear to make sure motorists can see them.	Safe Alaskans Bike Anchorage Sitka Bicycle Friendly Community Coalition
Investigate the development of a statewide bicycle and pedestrian task force.	Department of Health and Social Services Sitka Bicycle Friendly Community Coalition
Clarify and strengthen language in driver's manual on sharing the road with bicycles, pedestrians, motorcycles, and trucks.	DOT&PF DMV Bike Anchorage American Trucking Association (ATA)
Promote school education and other efforts to underscore issues surrounding trucks and commercial vehicles.	ATA
Explore the inclusion, if necessary, of bicycle and pedestrian questions on the licensing exam.	DOT&PF DMV Bike Anchorage
Explore the development of a Safe Routes for Seniors Program.	Department of Health and Social Services Safe Alaskans
Update the state's policies and designs to cover all users including non-motorized.	DOT&PF
Encourage local communities to develop policies and designs that address non-motorized users.	DOT&PF
Develop a pedestrian safety campaign that is relevant to Alaska Natives.	Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium Safe Alaskans

**STRATEGY 2: Reduce the number of bicycles fatal and serious injury crashes.**

Action Step	Champion
Develop a bicycle education campaign that includes helmet use for children (<19).	Department of Health & Social Services Safe Alaskans
Implement bike safety courses taught by instructors certified by the League of American Bicyclists.	Bike Anchorage Department of Health and Social Services Safe Alaskans
Update the DOT&PF policy to build cycle tracks, and bike paths separate from traffic versus the use of sharrows (a shared lane marking indicating the area for cycling) where possible.	DOT&PF
Explore improvement in data collection of bicycle-vehicle collisions. e.g., more elaboration on “unknown” conditions, streamlining reporting, etc.	DOT&PF Safe Alaskans

**STRATEGY 3: Reduce the number of off-road vehicle (ATV/snowmobile) fatal and serious injury crashes.**

Action Step	Champion
Develop strategies to improve the collection of crash data in rural Alaska	DOT&PF
Develop an off-road vehicle education campaign that includes helmet use for children (<19).	Department of Health and Social Services
Increase the visibility of off-road vehicles operators and increase their use of protective equipment.	(A.B.A.T.E. of Alaska) All Terrain Vehicles (ATV) Vendors Alaska Motorcycle Dealers Association

**STRATEGY 4: Implement education/awareness practices to enhance motorcyclist safety.**

Action Step	Champion
Promote rider education and licensing of all motorcycle riders	(A.B.A.T.E. of Alaska)
Increase the visibility of motorcycle operators and increase their use of protective equipment.	(A.B.A.T.E. of Alaska) ATV Vendors Alaska Motorcycle Dealers Association
Identify corridors that are most heavily used by motorcycle riders as a way to focus education and enforcement efforts.	DOT&PF (A.B.A.T.E. of Alaska)
Raise awareness of motorcyclists’ safety needs among motorists.	AKHSO (A.B.A.T.E. of Alaska)
Encourage returning motorcycle riders to get refresher training and attend Beginning Riders Course II or advanced riding course.	(A.B.A.T.E. of Alaska)
Develop public safety campaigns that point out successes in special user groups such as motorcyclists who are less likely to be in drinking crashes. To learn from what’s going right.	

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## WATCH LIST

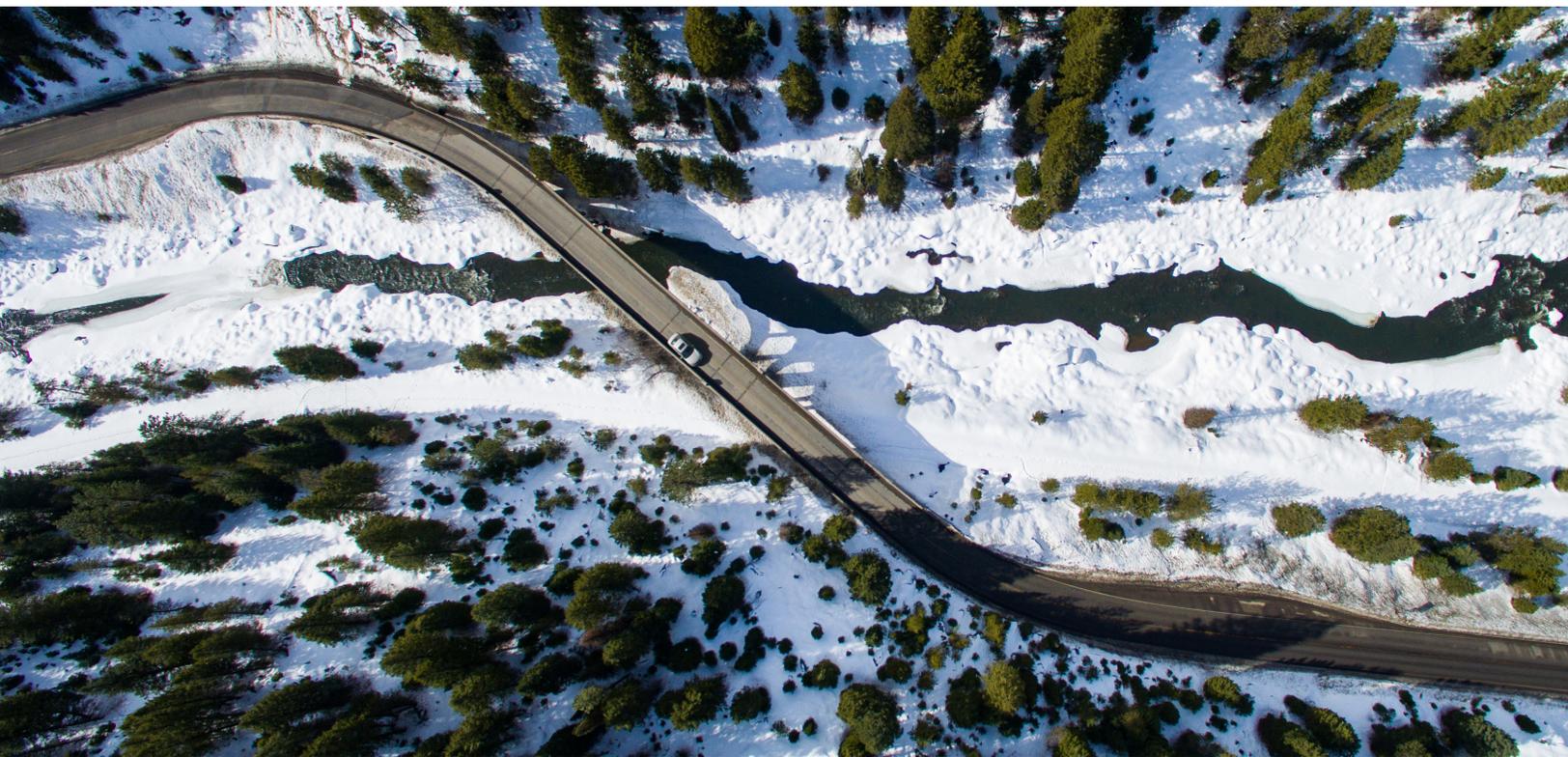
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Review the location of bus stops to ensure they do not encourage unsafe road crossings by pedestrians.  
Investigate the use of Health Impact Assessments for pedestrian safety.  
Increase funding for motorcycle safety programs and initiatives.



# Implementation and Evaluation

# 3



### 3.1 Implementation

Alaska is approaching implementation of the SHSP with an improved understanding of the traffic safety issues facing the State and the steps needed to make real progress in reducing fatalities and serious injuries. The SHSP represents how Alaska will continue moving Toward Zero Deaths. The Steering Committee and Emphasis Area teams evaluated the data and developed measurable goals, strategies, and actions for each emphasis area. As Alaska implements the plan, these safety stakeholders will participate by:

- Providing regular updates on SHSP-related campaigns, initiatives, training, and programs;
- Identifying barriers or problems to implementation;
- Providing guidance on future programs, activities;
- Tracking implementation progress in each of the emphasis areas;
- Evaluating the effectiveness of the overall plan; and
- Determining the approach to future SHSP updates.

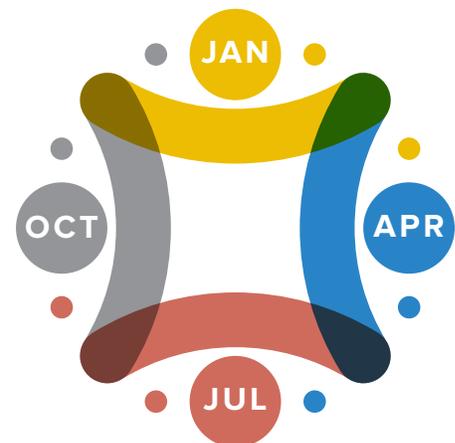
The Steering Committee will meet biannually throughout implementation to provide direction and direct assistance to the Emphasis Area Teams and any of the stakeholders who are working to implement the strategies and actions. Emphasis Area Teams also will continue to meet as needed to:

- Discuss action step implementation progress and coordinate next steps;
- Identify problems or barriers and report to the Steering Committee;
- Suggest new actions or modify existing actions as needed;
- Continually track and report progress; and
- Evaluate the effectiveness of strategies and actions to ensure they are contributing to decreases in fatalities and severe injuries.

Alaska will develop and publish an SHSP Annual Report that documents progress on implementation of the actions and compare the yearly fatality and serious injury numbers to the projected goals in the updated plan. DOT&PF will continue to manage the overall effort including organizing and managing the quarterly emphasis area team meetings and the bi-annual Steering Committee meetings.

Each of these Steering Committee meetings will include an update from one of the three main emphasis areas and that team's sub-emphasis areas. Meetings will also include information from partners and include updates on other related plans including the Highway Safety Plan (HSP) and Annual Reports produced by the Alaska Highway Safety Office, the Commercial Vehicle Plan (CVSP), and the Vision Zero effort underway in Anchorage. The final meeting of the year will include the last review of accomplishments and what extra effort or assistance is needed.

#### Emphasis Area Teams will meet each year in:



### 3.2 Evaluation

Evaluation is critical to understand what is working and should continue and what is not working and should be modified or discontinued. Evaluation will ensure Alaska uses limited resources in the best, most effective way. The evaluation will involve both process and performance.

The process evaluation will examine roles, responsibilities, and process activities as well as establish a timeline for monitoring, evaluating and communicating SHSP update performance data. This process evaluation will optimize the data collection and management process to ensure decisions include an understanding of the benefits, limitations, and level of effort required. Evaluation plans are developed at the beginning of the implementation process so Alaska will know what to examine as the process moves forward.

On the performance side, the plan will ensure all aspects of the SHSP implementation can be appropriately evaluated and tracked. The measurable goals for the SHSP will remain the same throughout the five-year life of the plan but will be reviewed annually to see if they follow with the annual HSIP and HSP performance targets. Additionally, it will be essential to determine whether safety partners incorporated elements of the SHSP in their plans, including the HSIP, HSP, and CVSP. The SHSP is a five-year document which will be updated by the SHSP Steering Committee and partners in 2022 and reviewed annually.



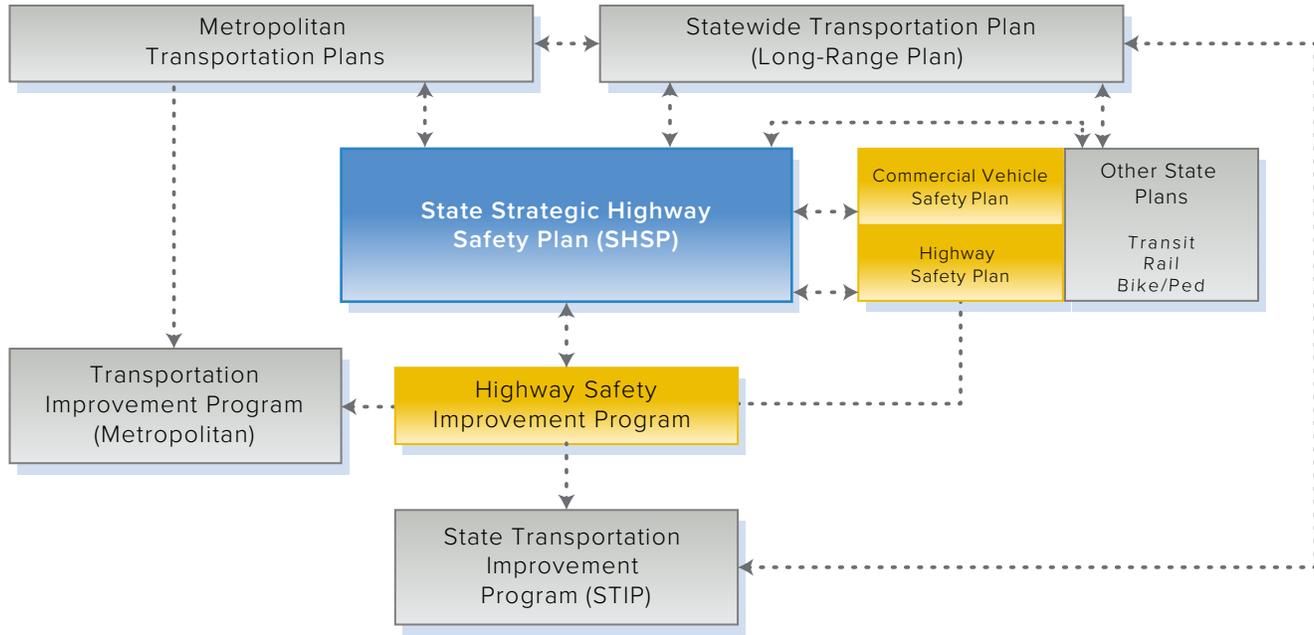
# SHSP Description and Update Process

# 4



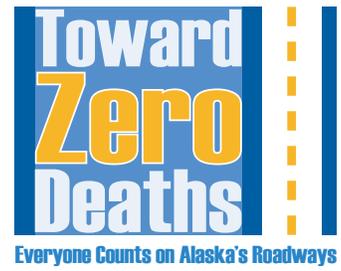
## 4.1 Relation to Other Plans

Alaska’s Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) is a comprehensive, data-driven plan that identifies the state’s most serious traffic safety problems and the effective approaches to solve them. The Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOT&PF) leads the SHSP with support from federal, State, regional, and local agencies, and private sector stakeholders.



The SHSP serves as the coordinating document for the other plans and programs that involve traffic safety. This includes the statewide long-range transportation plan, the transportation improvement programs developed by metropolitan planning organizations, and three plans that actually implement parts of the SHSP – the HSP or the HSIP, and the Commercial Vehicle Safety Plan.

The HSIP funds the various infrastructure projects such as roadway delineation, rumble strips, traffic signal upgrades or roundabouts. In fact, to qualify for funding an HSIP project must be reflected in the SHSP. The HSP funds behavioral safety programs such as Click It or Ticket. The CVSP funds efforts that target safety for the trucks and buses that travel our roads and highways. Commercial vehicle concerns are considered throughout the plan in all emphasis areas.



Alaska joined several other states and national organizations by adopting a **TOWARD ZERO DEATHS** goal for the SHSP which translated into an interim goal to reduce motor vehicle-related fatalities and serious injuries by one-half by 2030 (an average annual decrease of three percent). In 2010, Alaska updated the 2007 plan and made sure to recognize the state’s unique climate and transportation modes where crashes occur on alternative facilities such as off-highway trails and frozen waterways. In 2013 the SHSP was revised to reflect the requirements of the 2012 Transportation Act and included new strategies to strengthen enforcement initiatives and incorporate electronic information programs.

Unlike many other states, there are few major public roads in Alaska. According to the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) 2016 Highway Statistics report, there are over 15,500 miles of public roads (nearly 13,000 in rural areas and over 2,800 in urban areas) that accommodate the needs of over 530,000 licensed drivers.<sup>1</sup> For ground transportation, particularly in rural areas, many people rely on snowmobiles or other off-road vehicles to travel. Population in the state increased by 4 percent from 2010 to 2017 with more than one-quarter of the people being under age 18, and nearly 10 percent are age 65 or older.

## 4.2 Accomplishments



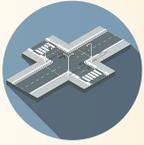
Since the development of the first SHSP, Alaska has made some critical accomplishments. On the infrastructure side, Alaska has made significant improvements in access management, the roadside, intersections, and pedestrian and bicycle safety. Infrastructure related accomplishments include the following:



### 4.2.1 Lane Departures

- **Rumble strips**, per the policy established by DOT&PF in 2010, will be installed on every rural high-speed highway project and interstates where the risk for a lane departure crash is highest.
- **DOT&PF removal of roadside objects** including trees and poles on an urban arterial;
- **Shoulders** – DOT&PF is widening shoulders on many projects in high crash areas.
- **Lighting** – DOT&PF launched designs for five major corridor lighting projects to increase light levels during fall and winter when the risk of a serious crash is higher.
- **Striping** – DOT&PF uses new striping that does not fade midwinter and remains present in the spring. Some of the best applications are lasting up to 10 years.
- **Delineation** – Delineation is now a state standard which has increased roadside retroreflectivity considerably especially along guardrails. This standard has been helpful given the difficulty in keeping pavement markings retroreflective.
- **Sign Retroreflectivity** – A DOT&PF assessment of highway signs showed strong durability for about 15 years.
- **Wildlife** – There is now area wide clearing of main highways to help with visibility and wildlife crash mitigation. DOT&PF installed additional moose fencing in two major projects and smaller wildlife grade separation installation in some rural areas.

1. FHWA 2018. Highway Statistics 2016, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Tables HM-10 and DL-22, September 2018, Washington, DC.



## 4.2.2 Intersections

- **Passing Lanes** – Passing lanes will be installed along portions of the Seward Highway given the high-risk factors for a traffic-related crash.
- **Turning** – Implementation of a left-turn lane and flashing left turn arrow.
- **Intersection monitoring** – DOT&PF monitors the congestion and number of traffic warrants on highly traveled intersections and installed signals and roundabouts to address the situation before it becomes a high crash area.
- **Driveways** – DOT&PF's Central Region is examining driveways and looking for safer geometry, locations, and secondary route collections as much as possible.
- **Advance warning signs** – These signs are being installed along principal arterials.



## 4.2.3 Pedestrians

- **Non-motorized Crossings** – Median and midblock refuge areas are being installed on several urban high crash corridors, and access management measures applied.
- **Parallel facilities** for non-motorized users now include the introduction of bike lanes in Anchorage, which is something that is also branching out to other communities.
- **Pedestrian countdown signals** are now applied statewide and a standard with each project.
- The City of Anchorage is implementing **Vision Zero** which encourages a focus on policies and the built environment.

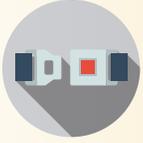


## 4.2.4 Other Infrastructure

- **Railroad** – DOT&PF continues to perform safety checks when certifying projects. A railroad grade separation at an interstate continues with two more built in recent years, leaving most of the corridors treated. This action will mean there will be a 100% grade separations on all interstates in the state.
- **Safety corridors audits** – The DOT&PF is increasing policing agreements with local law enforcement who work with engineers and planners to monitor safety to decrease traffic-related crashes.

DOT&PF was one of the recipients of the 2017 National Roadway Safety Awards given by the Roadway Safety Foundation and FHWA. The award was for Alaska's safety corridor program which is designed to address high rates of fatal and serious injury crashes, especially head-on collisions, occurring on high-speed two-lane roads with seasonal traffic reaching over 20,000 vehicles per day. DOT&PF's Central Region Office put together a multidisciplinary program involving collaboration among the 4Es of safety—engineering,

enforcement, education, and emergency medical services. In the decade since Alaska created safety zones, there has been a 45 percent reduction in fatal and serious injury crashes in those zones.



## 4.2.5 Behavioral Safety

Following are accomplishments in behavioral safety:

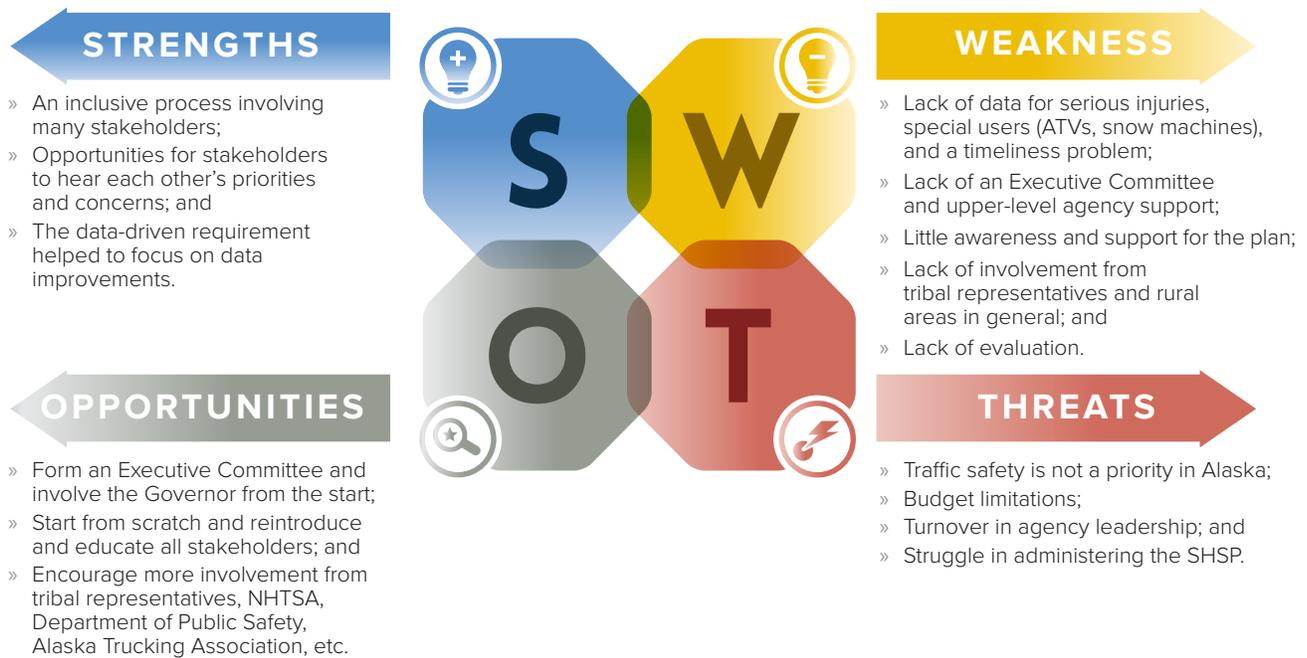
- Observed seat belt rate climbed for the fourth straight year to 90.1 percent in 2017. Source: Occupant Protection Use Survey (OPUS), 2016 & 2017.
- From 2008 through 2017, speeding-related fatalities dropped nearly 25 percent. Source: Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS).
- Motorcyclist fatalities hit a decade low of 6 in 2016 and 2017 and dropped 45 percent from 2015 to 2017. Source: FARS.
- The Alaska Highway Safety Office (AKHSO) increased the number of drug recognition experts (DRE) to 40, and all the members of the Anchorage Police Department's Impaired Driving Team are DREs.
- Alaska's Highway Safety Coordinated Media program included the production of audio, video, print, and the release of web ads to media outlets. The media campaigns were coordinated to coincide with the local and national impaired driving mobilizations and the local and national occupant protection campaign.
- Fifty-four percent of Alaska residents read, saw, or heard an advertisement or message about seat belt enforcement in 2017, and 86 percent recalled the "Click It or Ticket" message. Source: Alaska Driver Survey.
- Nearly three quarters (73 percent) of respondents to a 2017 Alaska survey had heard or read an advertisement or message about drunk driving enforcement.
- Alaska developed a new Traffic Records Strategic Plan in 2017 to continue improvements in the timeliness, accuracy, completeness, uniformity, integration, and accessibility of traffic records data used to develop and track traffic safety countermeasures.
- The FFY 2017 telephone survey indicated that well over half, 63 percent, of Alaskan drivers think they are confident or very likely to be arrested for driving after drinking. This result is an increase from 53 percent noted by respondents in the 2016 survey and has increased each year since 2014.
- The 2017 observational seat belt survey indicated the regional areas of Anchorage, Kenai, and Matanuska Susitna all have an observed seat belt rate at or above 90 percent. The Fairbanks region had an 88 percent observed seat belt rate and the Juneau region was recorded at nearly 87 percent.
- In 2015, 457 citations were written, followed by 747 in 2016 and 966 speeding citations were written during grant-funded events in 2017.

### 4.3 Update Process

Before moving forward on an update, Alaska determined it was essential to understand what was successful about the current plan and where there were opportunities for improvements in traffic safety. Alaska conducted a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis by interviewing key leaders in traffic safety. The SWOT analysis revealed positive results from the previous effort including the inclusiveness of the effort, opportunities for networking, and the use of data. The analysis also showed some challenges ahead chief among them the lack of timely data, particularly for serious injuries.

The interviewees also felt the effort needed more top-level support which opens up an opportunity for Alaska to form an SHSP Executive Committee. Another concern centered on a lack of awareness about the effort and how to address it in the future through increased education and outreach efforts. Other weaknesses the analysis identified included the need for greater participation from rural areas of the state, and particularly from tribal representatives. Alaska’s ongoing budget issues may be a threat to the effort. Figure 4.1 presents the most significant findings.

**Figure 4.1 SWOT Summary**



The results of the SWOT were shared with the multidisciplinary 55-member Steering Committee which oversees all of the various elements of the SHSP. The Committee determined the vision, mission, goal, and emphasis areas for the updated plan. They also decided on the final strategies and actions in each of the emphasis areas after reviewing the recommendations from stakeholders, the strategies and actions from the previous plan, and what research indicates are proven countermeasures and strategies. The work of the SHSP will be conducted by Emphasis Area Teams who will meet periodically throughout the year to determine progress on implementing each of the actions in the plan. Each action has a champion to ensure implementation of a project or program or if it is not possible to achieve, report back to the group on the

reasons why. Alaska does not currently have an Executive Committee but is working to form one. This Committee would provide general oversight of the plan and make final decisions relating to the update process and implementation. The following chart shows the interrelationship among these various groups.



### 4.3.1 SHSP Roles and Responsibilities

To ensure there clear lines of responsibility, Alaska developed the following roles and responsibilities for each organizational element.

#### Executive Committee

- Establish SHSP policies and procedures, review progress, provide advice and guidance, address challenges, and remove barriers;
- Provide organizational resources to support and assist specific SHSP strategies;
- Encourage collaboration among the agencies and stakeholders;
- Align agency with the SHSP's goals;
- Share progress on safety initiatives; and
- Promote the importance of traffic safety and the SHSP both internally and externally when possible.

#### Steering Committee

- Review implementation progress and performance in the emphasis areas;
- Provide assistance to overcome challenges and solve problems;
- Measure performance of SHSP related campaigns, training, and programs;
- Conduct strategic planning to update the SHSP when appropriate;
- Provide a report on SHSP challenges, status, and outcomes to the Executive Committee annually; and
- Provide guidance on future programs and activities.

## Emphasis Area Teams

### Team Leaders

- Ensure team membership is multidisciplinary and includes representatives from all required areas (engineering, enforcement, education, emergency response); follow up with Steering Committee if assistance is needed on the teams.
- Schedule Emphasis Area Team (EA) meetings when necessary and notify participants; prepare meeting reports including action items after each meeting.
- Track progress on implementation of the EA plan; notify the Steering Committee on accomplishments and whether there is a need for assistance on implementation.
- Revise or delete strategies and action items when completed or become obsolete.
- Seek assistance from State partners and stakeholders to help implement a task or project or overcome a barrier.
- Participate in SHSP Steering Committee meetings.
- Educate team members on specifics of their emphasis area, including countermeasures. (Not all team members will be experts or very knowledgeable about the EA. Therefore there is a need to make sure everyone is on the same page).

### Team Members

- Determine fatality and serious injury performance targets.
- Review crash data and causality for the emphasis area.
- Review the EA strategies from the previous SHSP and determine if any should be revised or deleted.
- Review research-based strategies.
- Select appropriate strategies for the SHSP.
- Develop an EA Plan that includes strategies and action steps the team will undertake to implement the strategy.
- Select strategy and action lead agencies.
- Discuss the progress of action step implementation and coordinate next steps.
- Maintain an updated tracking tool.

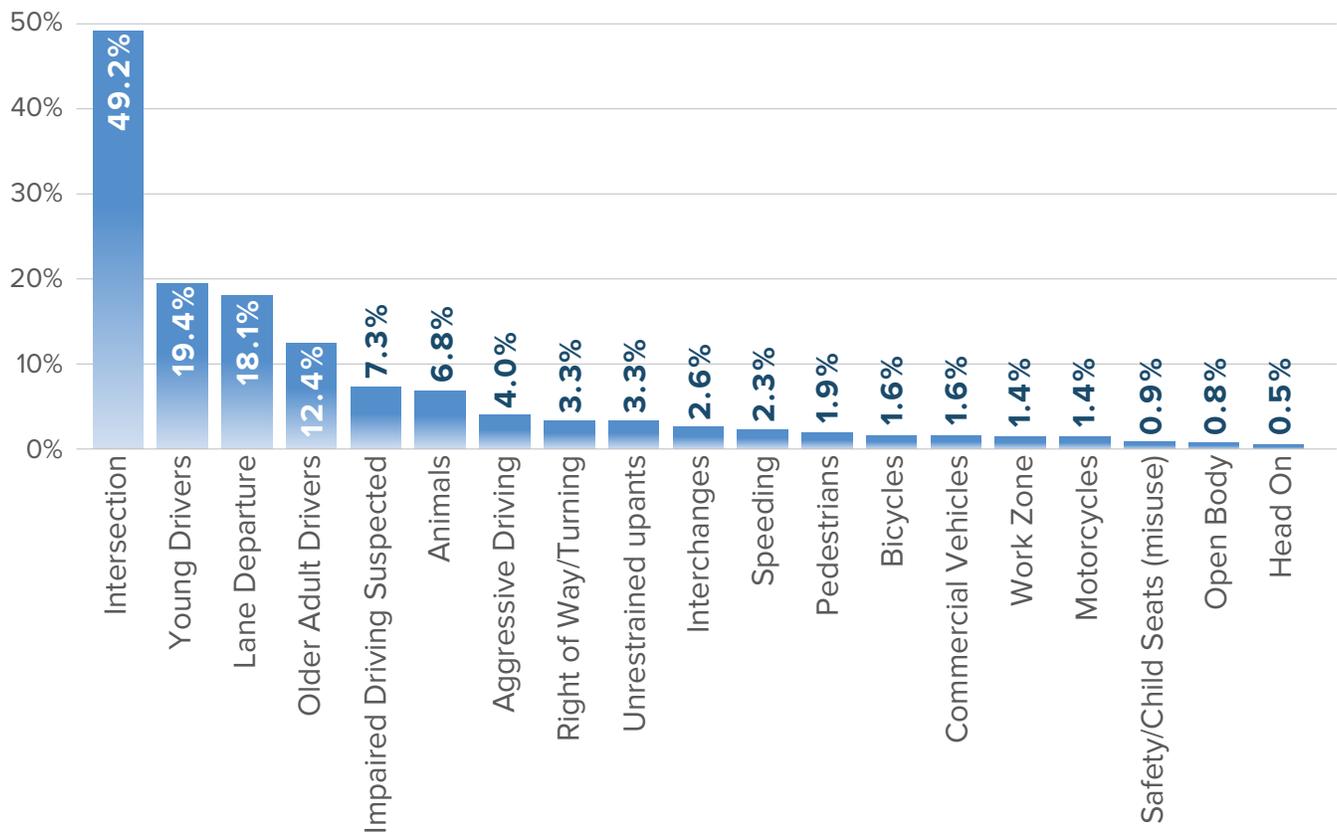
### Champion

- Work with partners to implement the action step.
- Update the EA team leader quarterly on accomplishments.
- Report progress using the tracking tool.
- Notify the EA team leader of problems or issues

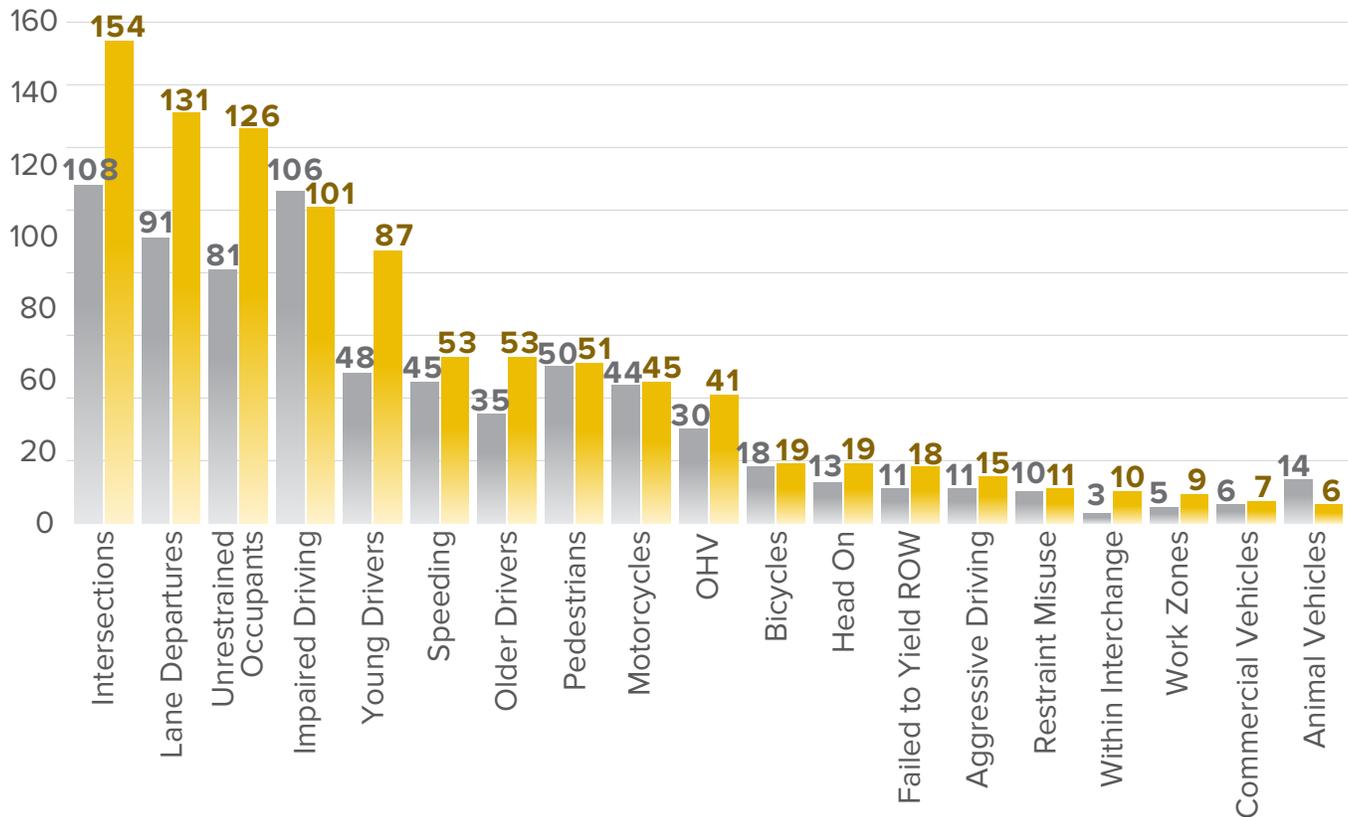
### 4.3.2 Selection of Emphasis Areas

The Steering Committee spent considerable time discussing the emphasis areas and reviewed data from 2015 to 2016 showing the percentage of all crashes for each of the various emphasis areas and sub-emphasis areas as indicated in Figure 4.2. Intersection-related crashes represent the highest percentage of overall crashes (49.2 percent), followed by crash types related to young drivers (19.4 percent), lane departures (18.1 percent), older drivers (12.4 percent), and impaired driving (7.3 percent). Figure 4.3 shows the breakdown in the number of fatalities and serious injuries for 2015 and 2016. Intersections, lane departures, unrestrained occupants, young drivers, speeding, and older drivers all saw increases. Impaired driving experienced a slight decrease from 2015 to 2016. Based on a review of this data, and discussions on what is currently happening in Alaska, the group selected the three major emphasis areas and the 11 sub-emphasis areas.

**Figure 4.2 Percentage of All Crashes, 2015-2016**



**Figure 4.3 Fatalities and Serious Injuries, 2015 versus 2016**



### 4.3.2 Stakeholder Meetings

To gain further input on the plan, the Steering Committee felt it was essential to take the plan on the road and held stakeholder meetings in March 2018 in Juneau, Anchorage, and Fairbanks. Nearly 150 stakeholders were contacted, and almost 60 attended the meetings and provided their ideas on solutions for the various emphasis areas in the plan. Participants provided 19 recommendations for strategies and actions at the Juneau meeting, 28 at the Anchorage meeting, and 37 at the Fairbanks meeting. Stakeholder meeting attendees also signed up to participate in the emphasis area team meetings where the teams considered the recommendations.

The three Emphasis Area Teams (Driver Behavior, Roadways, and Special Users) each met three times to select draft strategies and actions for the plan. The selection process involved reviewing recommendations from each of the stakeholder meetings, reviewing strategies and actions from the previous plan, and considering what the research indicates are effective countermeasures. To ensure the plan was manageable each team prioritized the actions by deciding which could be implemented in the next year, in two and three years, or years four and five.

The SHSP Steering Committee reviewed the recommendations from the teams and made decisions on what to include in the plan. Emphasis Area Teams also discussed the plans which provided opportunities for maximum input from the individuals who will be working on implementation. The Steering Committee felt it was essential to reach out to a broad group to ensure action over the next five years. Maintaining interest in the SHSP is difficult for all states, and the Alaska leaders want the effort to be as inclusive as possible.

# State of Traffic Safety

# 5



Alaska is the largest state in the U.S., encompassing 570,641 square miles. Despite its large land mass, the State ranks 48th in a population with 739,795 residents (U.S. Census Bureau) and an average person per square mile rate of 1.2 (compared to 87.4 for the continental U.S.). Despite Alaskans’ strong propensity and need to travel by air, the State experiences an average of 12,090 reportable motor vehicle-related crashes annually. As shown in Figure 5.1, crashes have been trending downward over the past seven years, falling 10 percent between 2006 and 2012. While the largest percentage of crashes in 2012 involve property damage only (72 percent), followed by minor injury (25 percent), approximately three percent of Alaska’s crashes result in a serious injury or death. A serious injury is any injury, other than a fatal injury, which prevents the injured person from walking, driving, or normally continuing the activities the person was capable of performing before the injury occurred.

**Figure 5.1 Statewide Crashes by Severity, 2006-2016**

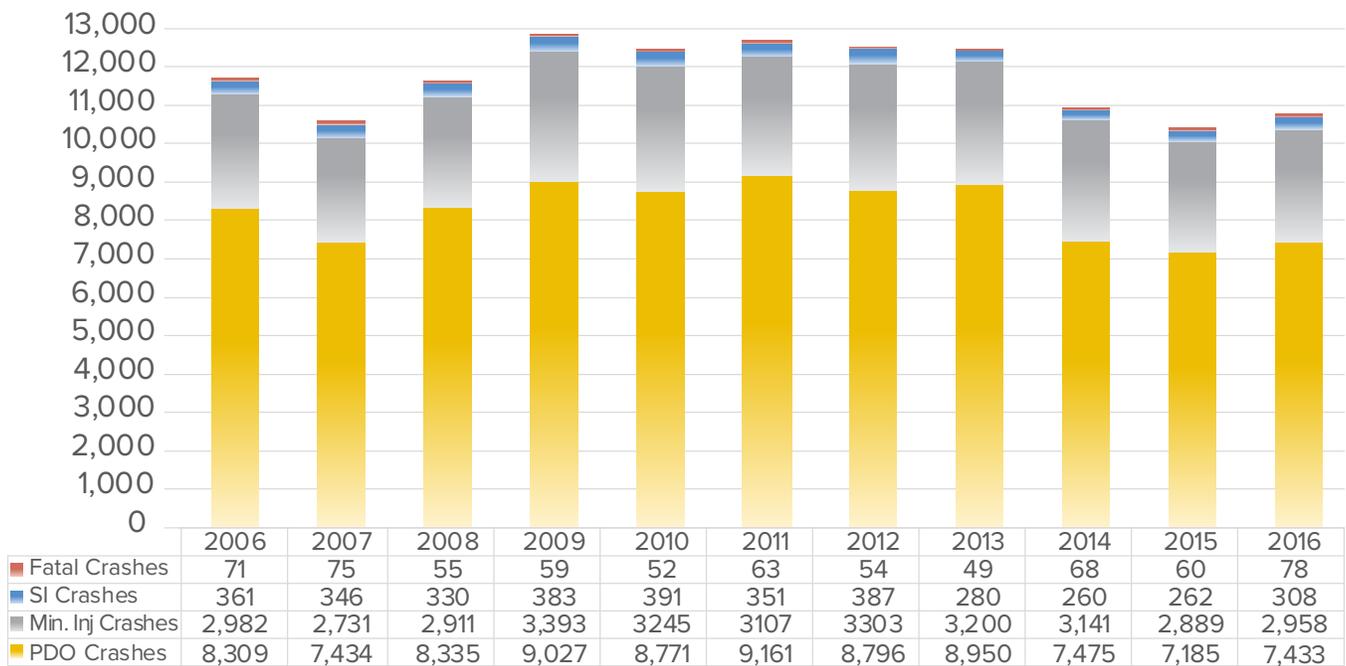
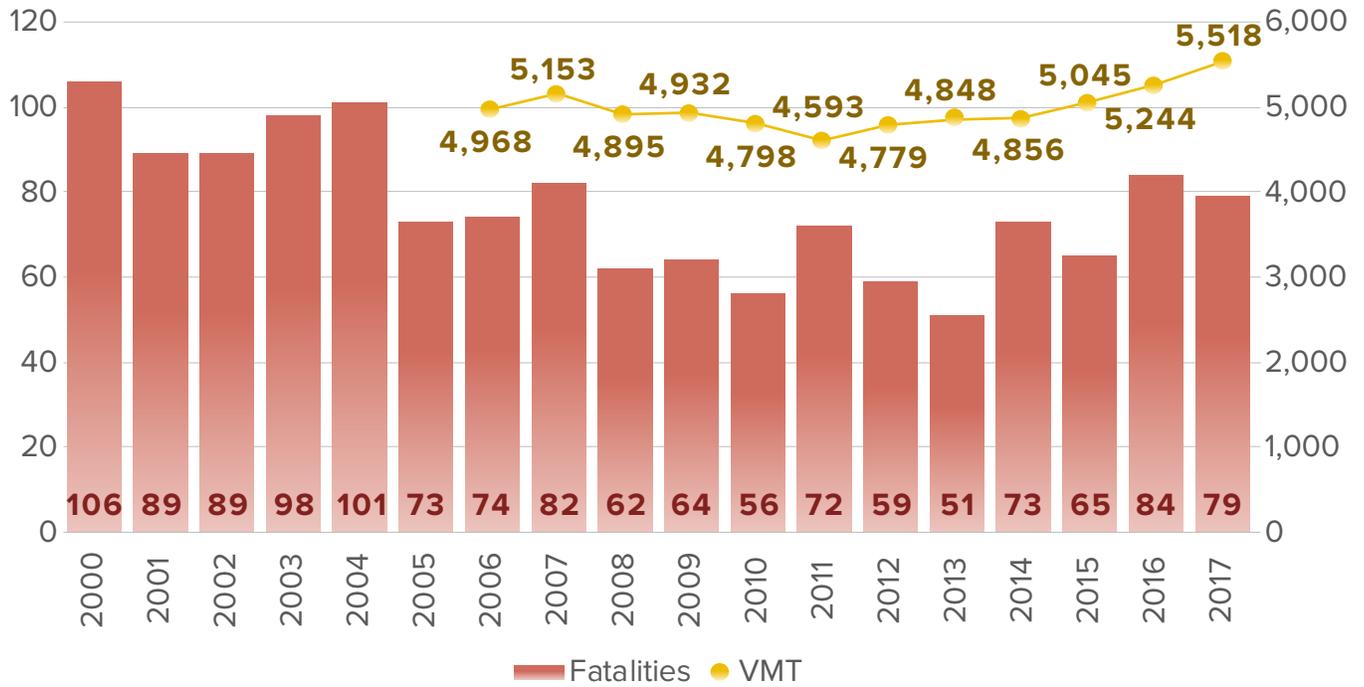
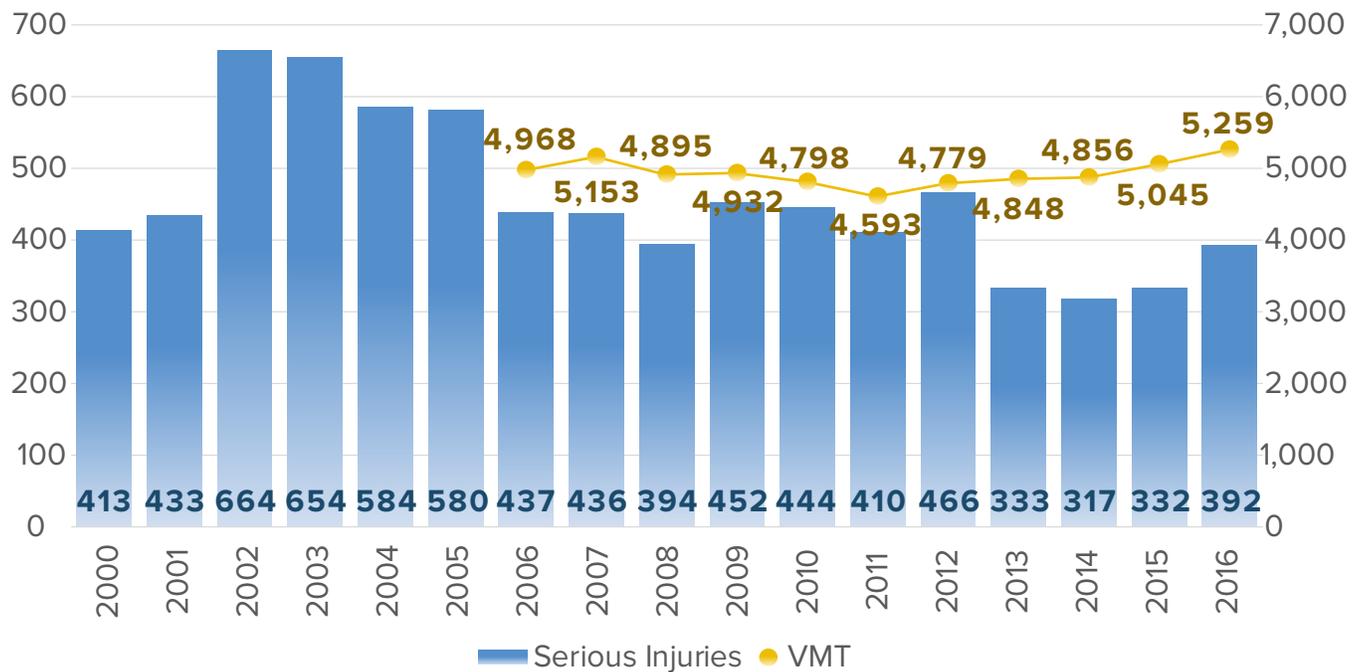


Figure 5.2 shows fatalities have increased from a low of 51 in 2013 to 79 in 2017. In 2016 Alaska experienced the highest number of fatalities in 10 years. Serious injuries have declined as shown in Figure 5.3 going from a high of 664 in 2002 to a low of 317 in 2014. The number of serious injuries, however, are increasing and are up to 392 in 2016. One of the reasons for the increase is higher traffic volume or vehicle miles traveled (VMT), which is shown as the yellow line on Figures 5.2 and 5.3.

**Figure 5.2 Number of Fatalities, 2000-2017**



**Figure 5.3 Number of Serious Injuries, 2000-2016**



While the majority of crashes occur in urban areas of the state, there are also crashes in rural areas. Under federal requirements, states must obligate a certain amount of funds on High-Risk Rural Roads (HRRR) if the fatality rate on rural roads increases over the most recent two year period for which data is available. Alaska defines an HRRR as “Rural segments of roads and highways functionally classified as major collector, minor collector, and local roads with significant safety risks as evaluated by frequency and/or rates of fatal and major injury crashes.”



# Appendix

# 6



## 6.1 SHSP Stakeholders

The following individuals participated in the update of the SHSP either as a member of the Steering Committee, one of the Emphasis Area Teams, a participant at one of the stakeholder outreach meetings, or as a reviewer of the draft plan.

### **A.B.A.T.E. of Alaska**

David Monroe  
John Rutledge

### **Alaska Association of Chiefs of Police**

John Papisodora

### **Alaska Court System**

Helen Sharratt

### **Alaska Emergency Medical Services**

Todd McDowell

### **Alaska Injury Prevention Center**

Marcia Howell  
LuLu Jensen  
Mandi Seethaler

### **Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium**

Ingrid Stevens  
Hillary Strayer

### **Alaska Railroads Corporation**

Dwight West

### **Alaska Statewide Violence and Injury Prevention Partnership**

Jared Parrish

### **Alaska Trails**

Steve Cleary  
Emily Ferry

### **Alaska Trucking Association**

Troy Montiere  
Aves Thompson

### **Alyeska Pipeline Service Company**

Adam Owen

### **Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions (AMATS)**

Jon Cecil  
Craig Lyon

### **Anchorage Police Department**

Duanne Fujimoto  
Linn McCabe  
Sgt. Rick Steiding

### **Bike Anchorage**

Pierce Schwalb  
Chelsea Ward-Waller

### **Bicycle & Pedestrian Advocate**

Bob Laurie

### **Center for Safe Alaskans**

Beth Schuerman

### **Citizen**

Donna Gardino

### **City of Fairbanks**

Jennifer Meyer

### **Colville Transport**

Robbie Baker

### **Crowley Fuels LLC**

Mike Harrod

### **CRW Engineering Group, LLC**

Matt Edge

## **Department of Administration, Division of Motor Vehicles**

Nichole Tham

## **Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Public Health**

Dawn Groth

Annette Marley

Ambrosia Romig

## **Department of Public Safety, Alaska State Troopers**

Col. Hans Brinke

Mary Engdahl

Lt. Kat Shuey

## **Department of Transportation & Public Facilities**

Jim Amundsen

John Bender

Anna Bosin

Maren Brantner

Miles Brookes

Dan Byrd

Margaret Carpenter

Judy Chapman

Tom Dougherty

Desiree Downey

David Epstein

Kenneth Fisher

Pamela Golden

Marie Heidemann

Paul Khera

Jon Knowles

Tammy Kramer

D. Lance Mearig

Carolyn Morehouse

Randi Motsko

Marcheta Moulton

Dan Smith

James Starzec

Jill Sullivan

Eric Taylor

Scott Thomas

Todd Vanhoven

Matt Walker

## **Fairbanks Memorial Hospital**

Angela Adams

## **Fairbanks Metropolitan Area Transportation System**

Jackson Fox

Alicia Stevens

## **Fairbanks North Star Borough**

Donald Galligan

## **Fairbanks Police Department**

Ron Dupee

Kurt Lockwood

## **Federal Highway Administration, Alaska Division**

Al Fletcher

Sandra Garcia-Aline

Kathleen Graber

Simons Latunde-Addey

Tracey Lewellyn

John Lohrey

## **Government Wide Travel Advisory Committee**

Will Ware

## **Horst Expediting and Remote Operation**

Jason Avery

## **Juneau Police Department**

Officer Frank Dolan

## **Kittelson & Associates**

Andrew Ooms

## **Laborers' International Union of North America Local 942**

Mindy O'Neall

### **Mat-Su Borough**

Ben Coleman  
Jessica Smith

### **Mat-Su Services for Children and Adults**

Gwen Teutsch

### **MGTech Writing**

Michia Casebier

### **Municipality of Anchorage**

Kris Langley  
Stephanie Mormilo  
Bart Rudolph

### **National Highway Traffic Safety Administration**

Shirley Wise

### **R&M Consultants, Inc.**

Marc Frutiger

### **Sitka Bicycle Friendly Community Coalition and Walk Sitka**

Charles Bingham  
Sitka Police Department  
Lance Ewers

### **SPAN Alaska Transportation**

Lauren Fleming

### **Sourdough Express**

Josh Norum

### **Tanana Chiefs Conference**

Jason Johnson

### **United Freight and Transport**

Samantha Brown

### **Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation, Injury Control & EMS**

Teresa Markham

## **6.2 Acronyms**

A.B.A.T.E.	Alaskan Bikers Advocating Training and Education
AMCO	Alcohol and Marijuana Control Office
DOT&PF	Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
AKHSO	Alaska Highway Safety Office
AMATS	Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions
ATV	All-Terrain Vehicles
DMV	Division of Motor Vehicles
DRE	Drug Recognition Expert
FARS	Fatality Analysis Reporting System
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FMATS	Fairbanks Metropolitan Area Transportation System
OPUS	Occupant Protection Use Survey
SHSP	Strategic Highway Safety Plan
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats
TZD	Toward Zero Deaths
VMT	Vehicle Miles Traveled



