Wisconsin Department of Transportation State Report 2016

Wisconsin Department of Transportation / Bureau of Traffic Operations

Crash Report Form and Database Improvement Project

Wisconsin is currently updating the crash report form to better capture conditions at a crash scene. The objectives of this update are to include MMUCC/MIRE attributes, streamline crash data processing and increase the accuracy of crash locations by incorporating the Incident Locator Tool (ILT). One of the biggest changes, and a way to decrease processing time, is that all reports will be completed electronically. This requires updates to the data management system as well as providing the software and training to law enforcement. The new report form will be implemented starting January 1, 2017.

Wrong Way Driving Initiative

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) has implemented a variety of wrong way driving (WWD) countermeasures throughout the Milwaukee metropolitan area due an increase of WWDs during the hours of 11 p.m. and 6 a.m. These countermeasures include: detection equipment, red reflective tape, doubling up and lowering signs, and pavement markings. Between 2012 and 2015, 336 WWDs were reported, with 123 unconfirmed and 152 confirmed.

Highway Safety Manual Implementation

Wisconsin is in the early stages of implementing the Highway Safety Manual into practice. While research is being done to develop Wisconsin-specific safety performance functions (SPFs), WisDOT recently published guidance on the use of Crash Modification Factors (CMFs) and created a WisDOT CMF table that will be the primary resource when identifying CMFs for use on WisDOT projects. Creating the table was an important step toward consistent application of CMFs. One of the initial uses of the table will be to look up CMFs used in the intersection control evaluation (ICE) process. WisDOT updated its ICE process in June 2016 to include application of CMFs when evaluating safety.
WisDOT is also developing a CMF for installing a signal head per lane. By completing this work in house, WisDOT hopes to gain experience utilizing the HSM and Empirical-Bayes method.

Creative Messaging on Dynamic Message Signs

Wisconsin implemented a creative message work group in 2016 to help increase the amount of creative safety messages on Dynamic Message Signs (DMS). The group, which consists of members from the Bureau of Traffic Operations, Office of Public Affairs and Division of State Patrol, meet on a monthly basis to determine messaging for the upcoming month based on recent statistics and driving trends in the area. Messaging is also aligned to follow national safety campaigns put forth by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). The department has received positive feedback from both internal and external stakeholders.