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# **Rural Pickup Truck Drivers and Safety Belt Use:**

## **Focus Group Report**

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15. Supplementary Notes Donna M. Taglione was the moderator for the focus groups in Detroit, Michigan; Atlanta, Georgia; and Great Falls, Montana. Jorge Cherbosque was the moderator for the focus group in Lubbock, Texas.			
16. Abstract In 1997, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) established the Buckle Up America Campaign, a national initiative to save lives and prevent injuries through the proper use of safety belts and child safety seats. One of the main goals of this campaign is to increase national safety belt use, with a current goal of 79 percent by 2004. Although safety belt use for pickup truck occupants increased from 59 percent to 69 percent from 1998 to 2003, safety belt use rates have remained well below that of occupants of other vehicle types. In comparison, from 1998 to 2003, safety belt use in passenger cars rose from 71 percent to 81 percent. Lower belt use rates for pickup truck occupants exist throughout all regions of the United States. In 2000, NHTSA determined that more information was needed to address the specific issues associated with low safety belt use among rural pickup truck occupants. This report was created as an initial step to assist NHTSA with future demonstration projects that are designed to test strategies to raise safety belt use rates among pickup truck occupants.  This report presents background information about safety belt use among rural pickup truck drivers. Specifically, an inventory of pickup truck safety belt and children in cargo area laws, as of November 2000, is presented; safety belt usage rates, fatality rates, and characteristics of pickup truck drivers and passengers, as of November 2000, are summarized; and public information campaigns intended for pickup truck drivers, as of 2000, are reviewed.  Also, qualitative data about pickup truck drivers' knowledge and attitudes about safety belt use and public information materials are summarized. To gather this information, eight focus groups were conducted with male pickup truck drivers from rural areas in Georgia, Michigan, Montana and Texas. Among the key findings are: male pickup truck drivers reported that they are generally safety conscious about work and household issues, but not about safety belt use; most believed that safety belts are important, but found them uncomfortable, restrictive and a "hassle;" some reported wearing safety belts when traveling in passenger cars but not in their pickup trucks; and they were more likely to use safety belts when family members pressured them to wear their safety belts. Regarding communication materials (TV, radio scripts, posters, brochures), most of the men preferred communication messages that are as realistic as possible. They did not appreciate the use of humor in messages, and mistrusted celebrity spokespersons and the use of statistics in messages. Based on these results, suggestions for campaign message development, intended for the male, rural pickup driver population are presented.			
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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### I. BACKGROUND

The reader is reminded that the following report presents findings based on data collected during the project period in the year 2000. The data was utilized when considering selection for the focus group sites, available material was utilized during the focus groups, and in general all the research was intended as a baseline analysis of what existed at the onset of this study. This report includes the most current NHTSA data, where applicable, as of November 2003. The reader will note these insertions in boxes below charts or figures, noted as, *Data Update*. Data updates are intended only to provide the reader with current information.

### II. INTRODUCTION

Occupants of pickup trucks consistently have lower safety belt use rates than occupants of automobiles, vans and Sport Utility Vehicles (SUVs). According to the 2003 National Occupant Protection Use Survey (NOPUS), the observed safety belt use rate among occupants of pickup trucks increased from 59 percent in 1998 to 69 percent in 2003. Despite this increase, the rate remains far below the overall national safety belt use rate of 79 percent for all vehicles. Occupants of pickup trucks are at a high risk for serious injury or death given their lower safety belt usage.

There have been a number of private and public strategies to increase safety belt use nationally. In 1997, The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) established and promoted the Buckle Up America Initiative (BUA) to increase safety belt use. Since then, the national safety belt use rate increased when coordinated plans and efforts included the enactment of strong safety belt laws; enforcement of safety belt laws; expanded information and public education campaigns; and private and public partnerships. More recently, results of the *Click It or Ticket* campaign indicate that statewide safety belt use for drivers of all vehicle types increases with intensive enforcement of a State's safety belt law that is well publicized with paid advertising. *Click It or Ticket* conveys the simple, direct message: **wear your safety belt or you will get a ticket**. The campaign works in both primary and secondary safety belt law States. Primary safety belt laws permit law enforcement personnel to stop drivers when occupants are not wearing safety belts and issue citations as they do with other traffic law violations. Primary safety belt laws may vary regarding which vehicle seating positions are covered by the law. (For example, a primary safety belt law may apply to use of belts in front seats only.) Also, some laws do not apply to all vehicles and allow exemptions. Secondary safety belt laws require law enforcement to first stop the vehicle for some other violation before issuing a citation for not wearing a safety belt.

In an effort to establish effective avenues to increase safety belt use among pickup truck drivers and occupants, an identified hard-to-reach and high-risk population, NHTSA determined that more background information was needed to design effective public information and education campaigns for this population. This project, initiated in September 2000, was an initial step to assist NHTSA with future demonstration projects that will test strategies to raise safety belt use rates among pickup truck occupants. The objectives of this project were to:

- Identify safety belt use rates and fatality rates for pickup truck drivers and passengers;
- Identify important characteristics of pickup truck drivers and passengers;
- Inventory pickup truck safety belt laws and children in cargo area laws;
- Review public information campaigns intended for pickup truck drivers;
- Gather qualitative information about pickup truck drivers' knowledge and attitudes about safety belt use, and public information and educational campaigns; and,
- Make suggestions for the development of future campaign messages intended for pickup truck drivers.

### III. DEFINING THE PROBLEM

NHTSA conducts NOPUS to gather detailed information about shoulder belt use for drivers and right front-seat passengers across America. While there have been steady increases in safety belt use rates for all types of vehicles, the belt use rate in pickup trucks lags about 12 percentage points below that of passengers cars, vans, and SUVs as shown in Table 1.

<b>Table 1</b> <b>Belt Use by Vehicle Type, 1998–2003</b>			
	<b>Passenger Cars</b>	<b>Vans &amp; SUVs</b>	<b>Pickup Trucks</b>
Fall 1998	71%	70%	59%
Fall 2000	74%	74%	59%
June 2001	76%	75%	62%
June 2002	77%	78%	64%
June 2003	81%	83%	69%
Source: NCSA, 2003.			

Also, safety belt usage is lower in secondary law enforcement States when compared with primary law enforcement States. Safety belt use rates for all vehicle types combined are 83 percent in primary law States versus 75 percent in secondary law States (NOPUS 2003). NHTSA provides a breakdown based on vehicle type and type of enforcement as shown in Table 2. As indicated, safety belt usage in pickup trucks in primary law States is 73 percent as compared to 63 percent in secondary law States. Interestingly, in two primary law States, Georgia and Indiana, the primary laws do not apply to pickup trucks. Despite the fact that the primary law in Indiana does not apply to pickup trucks, safety belt usage has increased for this group.

<b>Table 2</b> <b>Safety Belt Use in 2003</b> <b>In Primary and Secondary Law States</b> <b>By Vehicle Type</b>			
<b>Primary Enforcement Law States</b>	<u>All</u>	<u>Drivers</u>	<u>Passengers</u>
Passenger Cars	83%	85%	81%
Vans and SUVs	84%	86%	86%
Pickup Trucks	73%	74%	73%
<b>Secondary Enforcement Law States</b>	<u>All</u>	<u>Drivers</u>	<u>Passengers</u>
Passenger Cars	75%	79%	74%
Vans and SUVs	78%	79%	77%
Pickup Trucks	63%	63%	60%

Source: NCSA, 2003

Safety belt usage varies by type of vehicle and occupant category. For NOPUS 2002, NHTSA noted belt use rate for drivers of passenger cars was 78 percent whereas belt use rate for passenger car passengers was 74 percent. Further, the rate for drivers of pickup trucks was noted at 66 percent and the rate for pickup truck passengers was 63 percent. Rural pickup truck drivers, based on the most recent data from NCSA (2002), are less likely to use safety belts than pickup truck drivers in urban and suburban areas. Male pickup truck drivers are less likely to use safety belts than female pickup truck drivers. Regardless of what year is examined, how the figures are broken out, there are consistent trends regarding pickup truck occupant safety belt use: **pickup truck occupants have the lowest safety belt use rate of all vehicle types; pickup truck passengers have a slightly lower safety belt use rate than pickup truck drivers; pickup truck safety belt use rates among both driver and passengers are lower in secondary law States versus primary law States; and males have lower safety belt use rate than females regardless of vehicle type.**

As an initial step to address the specific factors associates with low safety belt use, focus groups were conducted with rural, male pickup truck drivers to determine their knowledge and attitudes about safety belt usage. Before developing public information campaigns and testing strategies to change behaviors, it is important to determine how intended audiences perceive the public information and educational materials (see Glanz and Lewis for information about social marketing).

#### **IV. SUMMARY OF STATE SAFETY BELT LAWS AS OF NOVEMBER 2000**

Before selecting the States in which the focus groups would be conducted, data about State safety belt laws was compiled. This data was useful in helping the researchers to strategically select States in which the focus groups would be conducted. The researchers, in conjunction with NHTSA, made the final selection of the States chosen for the focus groups. Information about State safety belt laws was gathered from a variety of sources. Each State's department of motor vehicle (DMV) driver manual (as of November 2000) was reviewed to determine what information is provided to drivers about each State's safety belt laws. Also, State web sites were

searched for information regarding safety belt laws. In addition, State Governors' Highway Safety Representatives were contacted.

As of November 2000, when this project was initiated, four States had laws that were different for pickup truck occupants as compared to other passenger vehicles. The States were Georgia (exempts pickup trucks altogether), Indiana (exempts trucks, including pickup trucks), Missouri (exempts trucks greater than 12,000 pounds, and occupants in cargo beds when all seats are occupied and vehicle is only means of immediate family transportation), and Oregon (trucks greater than 8,000 pounds and not considered to be a commercial vehicle). As of August 2002, a number of States such as Minnesota, Mississippi, Oklahoma, Texas, and Wisconsin exempt farm vehicles which may include pickup trucks from their laws. New Hampshire does not currently have an adult safety belt law for any type of vehicle.

Twenty States had no laws restricting occupant travel in the cargo area of a pickup truck. Twenty-five States had laws making it illegal for children to ride in the cargo area of pickup trucks, even when all seats are occupied. Seven of these States prohibited children under certain ages. A common exception to the safety belt law was to allow children to ride in the cargo area if all the seats of the pickup truck are filled with occupants. In some States, exemptions to the safety belt and cargo area laws still exist. (For more recent information about these laws, there are a number of excellent web sites including NHTSA's web site: [www.nhtsa.dot.gov](http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov).) In conclusion, States still vary in the applicability of their safety belt laws to pickup trucks.

## **V. SUMMARY OF PUBLIC INFORMATION AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

Before designing and implementing new strategies to enhance safety belt use among pickup truck drivers, researchers determined what public information and educational programs already existed that were designed for pickup truck drivers. Questionnaires about States' efforts to promote belt use in pickup trucks through public information and educational programs were sent to each Governor's Office of Highway Safety for the 50 States, District of Columbia, Guam, and Puerto Rico. Eighteen States reported that they had population specific initiatives with public information, education and/or enforcement campaigns about safety belt usage. Of these eighteen States, seven planned to develop more pickup truck campaigns in the future. Nearly half of the 50 States have never tried nor intend to specifically address the pickup truck occupant population through safety campaigns. There have been limited efforts designed specifically for the pickup truck driver population, a group with high risk for death and injury.

Five States provided samples of campaign materials that they have used. The campaign materials included radio scripts, bumper stickers, posters, television video, radio cassettes, and pamphlets. Materials from the five States were used during the focus group sessions. The existing materials were used in the focus groups to determine how the materials were perceived by a variety of groups of pickup truck drivers, and also to provide suggestions about the types of public educational appeals to use in future initiatives that are designed for pickup truck drivers. It is noted that the existing campaign materials were not identified as "best practice" types of materials. One of the main reasons for conducting the focus groups was to determine how pickup truck drivers perceived the existing materials. Based upon these focus group results, suggestions for future public information and educational campaign themes and approaches



would be made available to States to incorporate into their initiatives designed to reach pickup truck drivers.

## VI. FOCUS GROUPS

Eight focus groups were conducted with younger and older male pickup truck drivers who lived or worked in the rural areas of four States: Georgia, Michigan, Texas, and Montana. At the time of the study, Georgia, Michigan, and Texas were primary safety belt law States and Montana was a secondary law State.

There were several objectives for conducting the focus groups:

- To find out more about specific approaches and message themes that might convince male pickup truck drivers to use their safety belts;
- To determine attitudes about allowing children to travel in the cargo area of pickup trucks; and,
- To investigate any differences in these issues between Hispanic and non-Hispanic pickup truck drivers.

Focus group research is intended to gain insight about the perception of various themes and methods for public educational and information campaigns. The data are qualitative, rather than quantitative, and provide insight and understanding about particular issues. The findings are not a statistical representation of the attitudes of rural, male pickup truck drivers about safety issues and safety belt use.

The findings of the eight focus groups revealed consistency of thought, opinion, and ideas. The men gave clear reasons why they did not wear their safety belts, such as they felt protected by size of vehicle; different driving style in a pickup truck, nature of vehicle use (short, work-related trips); being “trapped” after the crash; and anger/resentment over mandatory safety belt laws. The men did indicate, however, that they are **more likely to wear their safety belts** when family or friends are with them; on interstate highways; in large cities; and in bad weather. Some of the participants indicated they were more likely to wear they safety belt in their car because of the presence of family members and less likely to wear their belt in their truck, especially when driving alone. Nearly all of the participants agreed on the best approaches and elements to use in educational and enforcement campaigns designed to encourage pickup truck drivers to wear their safety belts.

The participants pointed out inconsistencies between State safety belt laws and laws for other highway safety areas. For example, the men discussed the issue that many States lack motorcycle helmet laws and yet have laws that require safety belt use. Many of the men raised this example as a justification for ignoring safety belt laws. They also felt that governments should not be mandating safety belt use, especially if there are inconsistencies across safety areas.

Whether young or old, the men were not impressed with messages that used statistical facts about deaths and injuries as a motivator to increase safety belt use. There was a general

consensus of distrust about the use of “numbers.” It was thought that statistics could be used to prove whatever point one chooses to make.

When developing new public information and educational campaigns directed to male pickup truck drivers, there are a number of themes and issues that could be addressed in the messages. Based upon the qualitative findings of these focus groups, it is recommended that the messages address and “**counter**” the following misunderstandings and reasons given for nonuse of safety belts by male, rural pickup truck drivers:

- Safety belts are uncomfortable
- Safety belts are restrictive
- Safety belts are a “hassle” with frequent getting in and out of vehicles
- Skepticism about the benefits of safety belts
- Concerns about getting trapped in vehicle with the use of safety belts
- Freedom of choice to use/not use safety belts
- Safety belts are not needed on local roads and low speed limits
- Safety belts are not needed on short trips
- Safety belts are not needed in good weather
- Safety belt use is less critical when in a pickup truck because it is a safer vehicle due to its “sheer size”

A number of alternative messages and approaches to “counter” the reasons for non-use of safety belts could be included in new educational campaigns such as:

- Showing crash damage with low speed crashes
- Showing results of ejections and rollovers without the use of safety belts
- Emphasizing the benefits of using safety belts on short trips
- Presenting ways to make the use of safety belts a “habit”
- Presenting countermeasures to the “discomfort” issue such as adjustment of the belt for a better fit
- Countering the “mind set” of freedom to choose to wear a safety belt
- Comparing societal acceptance of DWI laws with societal benefit and acceptance to safety belt use
- Countering the Hispanic and youth “fate” approach to crashes and injuries
- Showing the increased risk of injury or death from rollovers and ejections among pickup trucks

New educational campaigns that emphasize crash fears should be carefully designed. The Hispanic men and all of the younger men were not concerned about dying in a crash. Messages for these men should not show crashes that are so severe that survival in any event would be questionable. Instead, message themes about crash fears should emphasize: paralysis and wheelchair use; loss of limb; and impact on family including feelings of sadness and leaving them behind.

Overall, pickup truck drivers recommended that messages be short and to the point, realistic, presented in “local” context, and translated appropriately. In summary, the participants of the focus groups recommend that new messages and campaigns should:

- Use realism
- Be short and to the point
- Show consequences to family members
- Show every day events, local areas, and real people
- Film messages in rural communities
- Use spokesperson from the local community, celebrities are not recommended
- Show real people who have been in crashes
- Use First Responders who have gone to crash scenes
- Stress “medical consequences” such as paralysis (for Hispanic and younger male audiences)
- Show the possibility of survival if safety belt had been used in a violent crash
- Film and record Hispanic versions that are not just language translations
- Be careful with use of statistics. If used express as odds, not percentages-use “1 out of 3,” not 33 percent
- Refrain from using humor

This report provides useful information when designing public information and educational campaigns for rural pickup truck drivers. Based on the results of the focus groups conducted with male, rural pickup truck drivers, a number of specific suggestions regarding the development of messages and material are provided. A public information and educational campaign tailored for pickup truck drivers is only one component of a comprehensive initiative to increase the use of safety belts among pickup truck drivers. Different strategies need to be tested that incorporate messages designed specifically for pickup truck drivers with existing enforcement campaigns such as the *Click It or Ticket* campaign. For example, what are effective strategies to coordinate State *Click It or Ticket* campaigns with campaigns specifically designed for pickup truck drivers? The results of this focus group study will assist NHTSA with the development of future demonstration projects that are designed to test a variety of strategies to raise safety belt use among pickup truck occupants.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Occupants of pickup trucks consistently have lower safety belt use rates than occupants of automobiles, vans and Sport Utility Vehicles (SUVs). According to the 2002 National Occupant Protection Use Survey (NOPUS), the observed safety belt use rate among occupants of pickup trucks increased from 59 percent in 2000 to 69 percent in 2003. Yet this rate remains far below the overall national safety belt use rate of 79 percent in 2003 for all vehicles. Occupants of pickup trucks are at a higher risk for serious injury or death given their lower safety belt usage. “It has long been recognized that the proper use of occupant restraints is the simplest and most effective way of reducing injuries and saving lives available to drivers and passengers” (Solomon, Leaf, and Nissen, 2001, p.1).

There have been a number of private and public strategies to increase safety belt use nationally. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) developed and promoted the Buckle Up America Initiative (BUA) to increase safety belt use. National safety belt use has increased when coordinated plans and efforts include: enactment of strong safety belt laws; enforcement of safety belt laws; expanded information and public education campaigns; and private and public partnerships. More recently, results from the *Click It or Ticket* campaign indicate that statewide safety belt use for drivers of all vehicle types increases with intensive enforcement of a State’s safety belt law that is well publicized with paid advertising. *Click It or Ticket* conveys the simple direct message: **wear your safety belt or you will get a ticket**. The campaign works in both primary and secondary safety belt law States. Primary safety belt laws permit law enforcement personnel to stop drivers who are not wearing a safety belt just as they can with all other traffic laws. Secondary safety belt laws require law enforcement to first stop the vehicle for some other violation before issuing a citation for not wearing a safety belt.

NHTSA determined that more information was needed in order to design effective public information and education campaign messaging that would resonate with pickup truck drivers and passengers, to compliment statewide messaging efforts to reach the general population. The objectives of this report are to:

- Identify safety belt use rates, fatality, and injury rates for pickup truck drivers and passengers;
- Identify important characteristics of pickup truck drivers and passengers;
- Inventory pickup truck safety belt laws and children in cargo area laws (as of 2000);
- Review existing pickup truck public information campaigns;
- Gather qualitative information about pickup truck drivers’ knowledge and attitudes about information and educational campaigns; and
- Make suggestions for the development of future campaign messages specific to pickup truck drivers.

## II. DEFINING THE PROBLEM

### Occupant Restraint Use

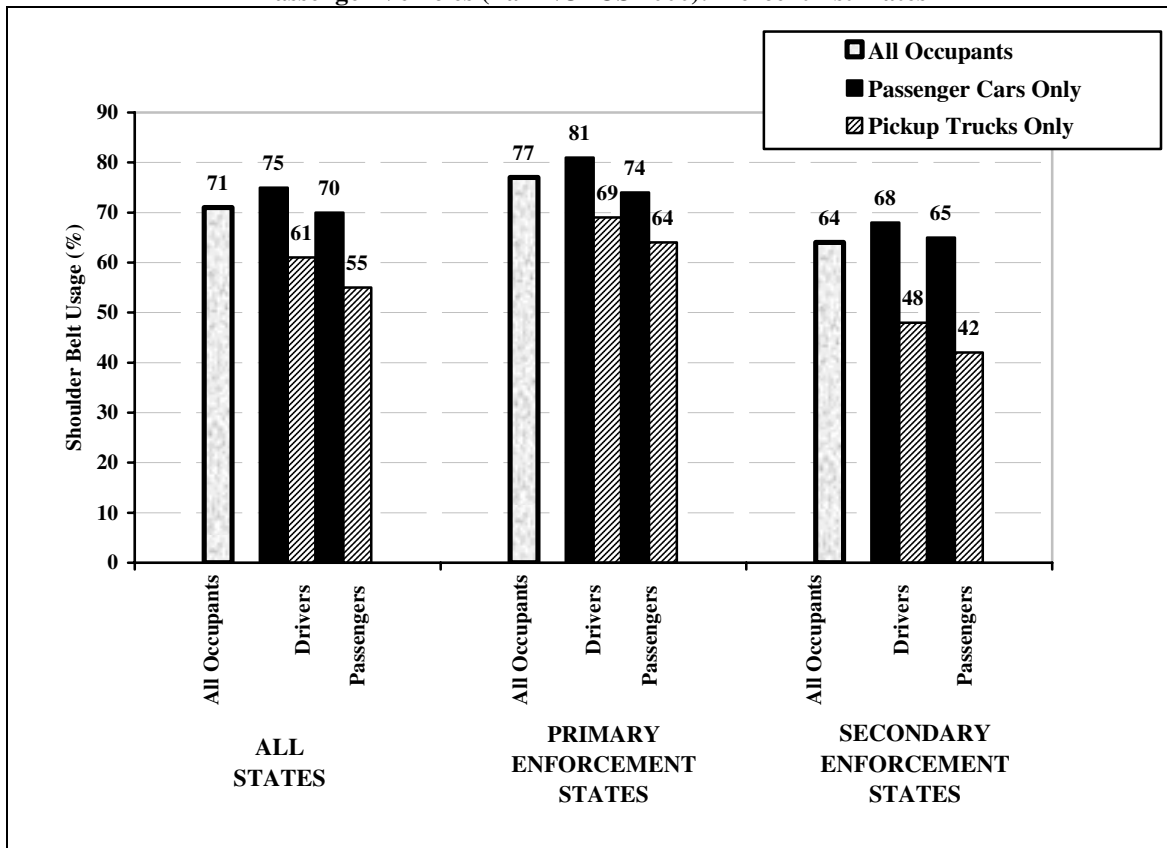
NHTSA conducts the National Occupant Protection Use Survey (NOPUS) every two years to gather detailed information on shoulder belt use for drivers and right-front seat passengers in the United States (NHTSA, 2001). While there have been steady increases in safety belt usage rates for all types of vehicles, pickup truck usage lags about 12 to 13 percentage points below that of passengers cars, vans, and SUVs as shown in Table 1 below.

<b>Table 1</b>			
<b>Belt Use by Vehicle Type, 1998–2003</b>			
	<b>Passenger Cars</b>	<b>Vans &amp; SUVs</b>	<b>Pickup Trucks</b>
Fall 1998	71%	70%	59%
Fall 2000	74%	74%	59%
June 2001	76%	75%	62%
June 2002	77%	78%	64%
June 2003	81%	83%	69%
Source: NCSA, 2003			

Safety belt usage is also lower in secondary law enforcement States when compared with primary (standard) law enforcement States. As shown in Figure 1, only 48 percent of the drivers of pickup trucks in secondary law States were observed wearing safety belts as compared with 69 percent of drivers of pickup trucks in primary law States.



**Figure 1. Shoulder Belt Use by Person Type and State Enforcement Status Pickup Trucks and Passenger Vehicles (Fall NOPUS 2000): Percent Estimates**



Source: NCSA

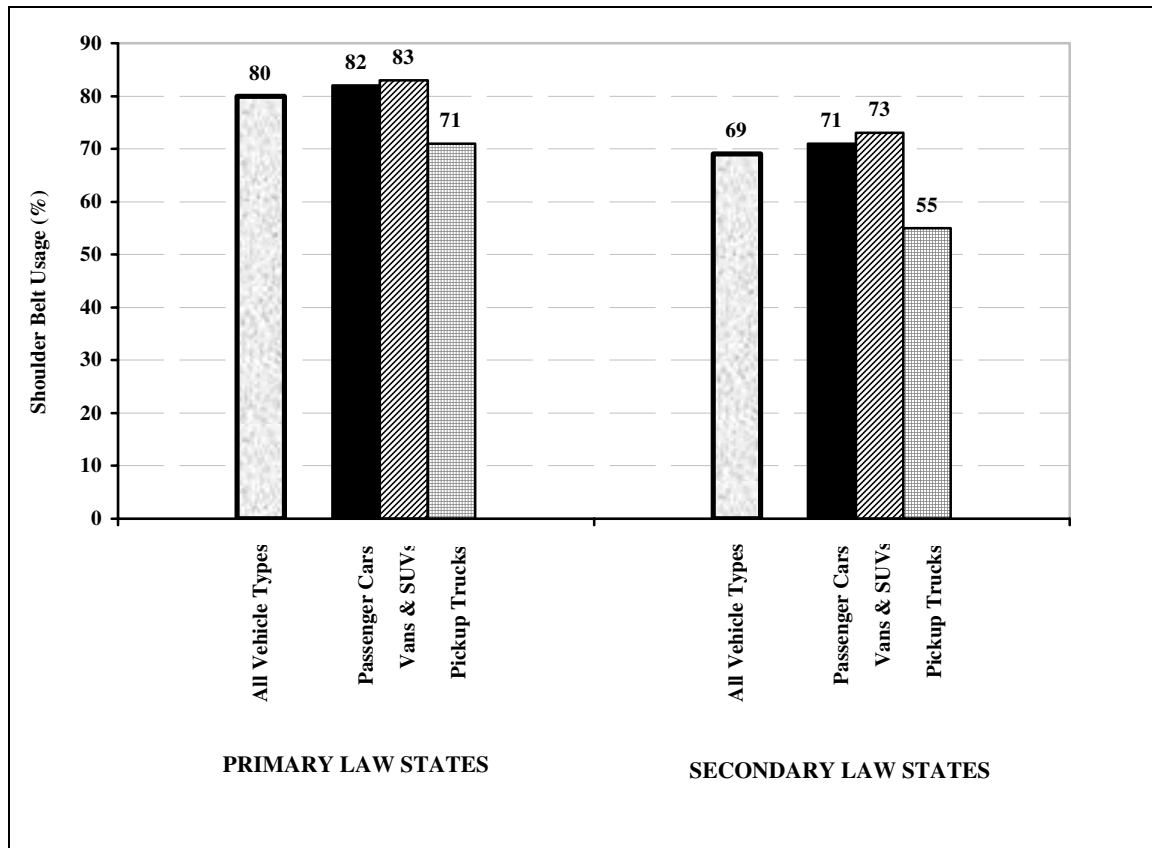
As shown in Figure 1, pickup truck safety belt use is lower for all States: among drivers - 61 percent for pickup trucks versus 75 percent for passenger cars; for passengers- 55 percent for pickup trucks versus 61 percent for passenger vehicles. The differences in safety belt use rates for both passengers and drivers in pickup trucks in primary versus secondary law States is even more significant: belt use by pickup truck drivers in secondary law States is 48 percent versus 69 percent for pickup truck drivers in primary law States; belt use by passengers in pickup trucks in secondary law States is 42 percent versus 64 percent for passengers in pickup trucks in primary law States. These lower safety belt use rates in secondary law States are consistent with the finding of lower safety belt use rates in secondary law States for both drivers and passengers of passenger vehicles (NOPUS 2000).

**Data Update:** Safety belt usage increased in both primary law States and secondary law States. However, consistent with findings shown in Table 2, safety belt use by drivers and passengers of pickup trucks in both primary law States and secondary law States remains lower than that for other vehicle types. NOPUS 2003 data reflect the safety belt use rate by pickup trucks drivers in primary law States is 74 percent versus 63 percent in secondary law States.

<b>Table 2</b> <b>Safety Belt Use in 2003</b> <b>In Primary and Secondary Law States</b> <b>By Vehicle Type</b>	
<b>Primary Enforcement Law States</b>	83%
Passenger Cars	84%
Vans and SUVs	86%
Pickup Trucks	73%
<b>Secondary Enforcement Law States</b>	75%
Passenger Cars	78%
Vans and SUVs	78%
Pickup Trucks	63%

Source: NCSA

**Figure 2. Shoulder Belt Use For Pickup Trucks, SUVs and Passenger Vehicles,  
NOPUS 2002: Percent Estimates**

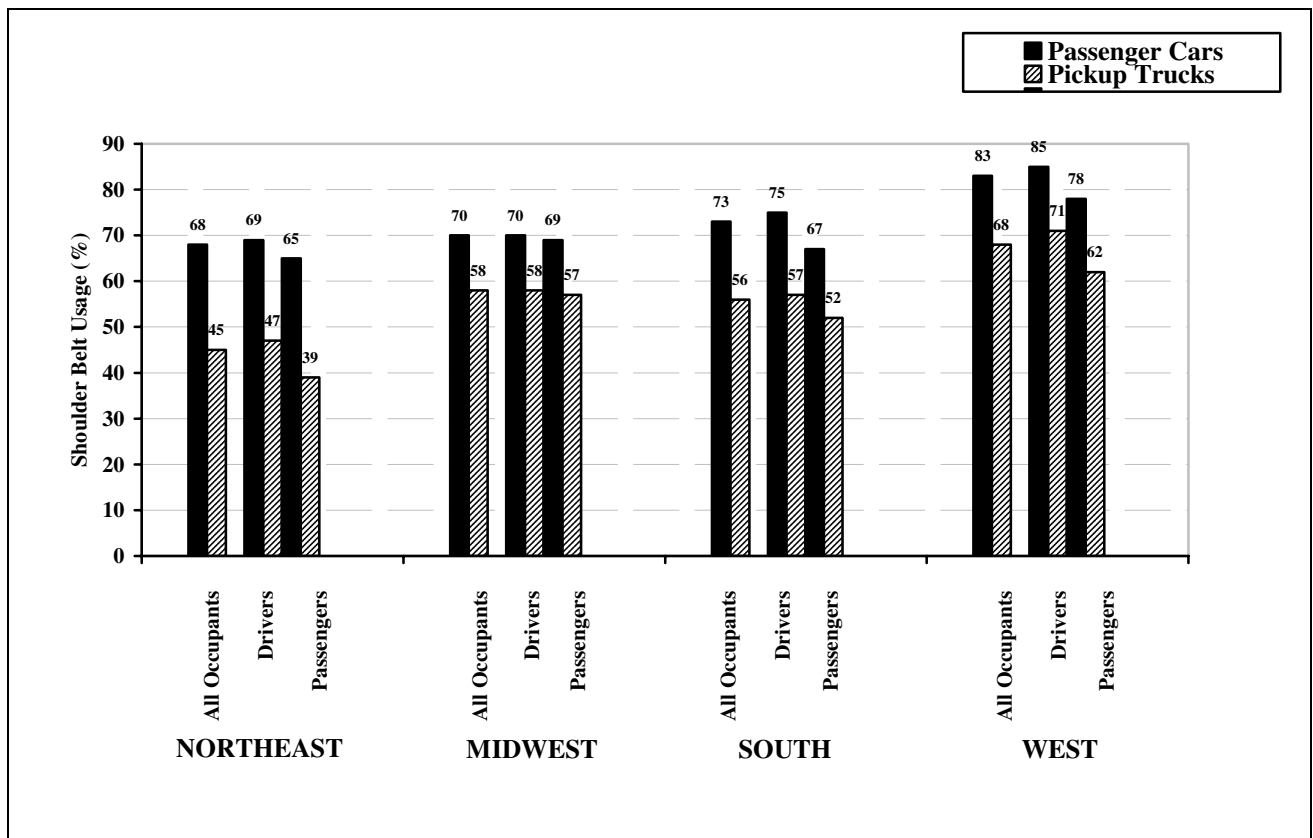


Source: NCSA

**Data Update:** NOPUS 2003 data reflect a similar trend: pickup truck drivers in primary law States is 74 percent versus 63 percent secondary law States, and 73 percent for pickup truck passengers in primary law States versus 60 percent in secondary law States.

Figure 3 shows regional safety belt use rates for both pickup truck and passenger car occupants for 2000. In all regions of the nation, occupants of pickup trucks have lower safety belt use rates when compared to occupants of passenger cars. The Northeast has the lowest regional safety belt use rate for pickup truck occupants; the West has the highest regional safety belt use rate for pickup truck occupants.

**Figure 3. Shoulder Belt Use by Person Type and Regions**  
**Pickup Trucks and Passenger Vehicles - Fall NOPUS 2000: Percent Estimates**



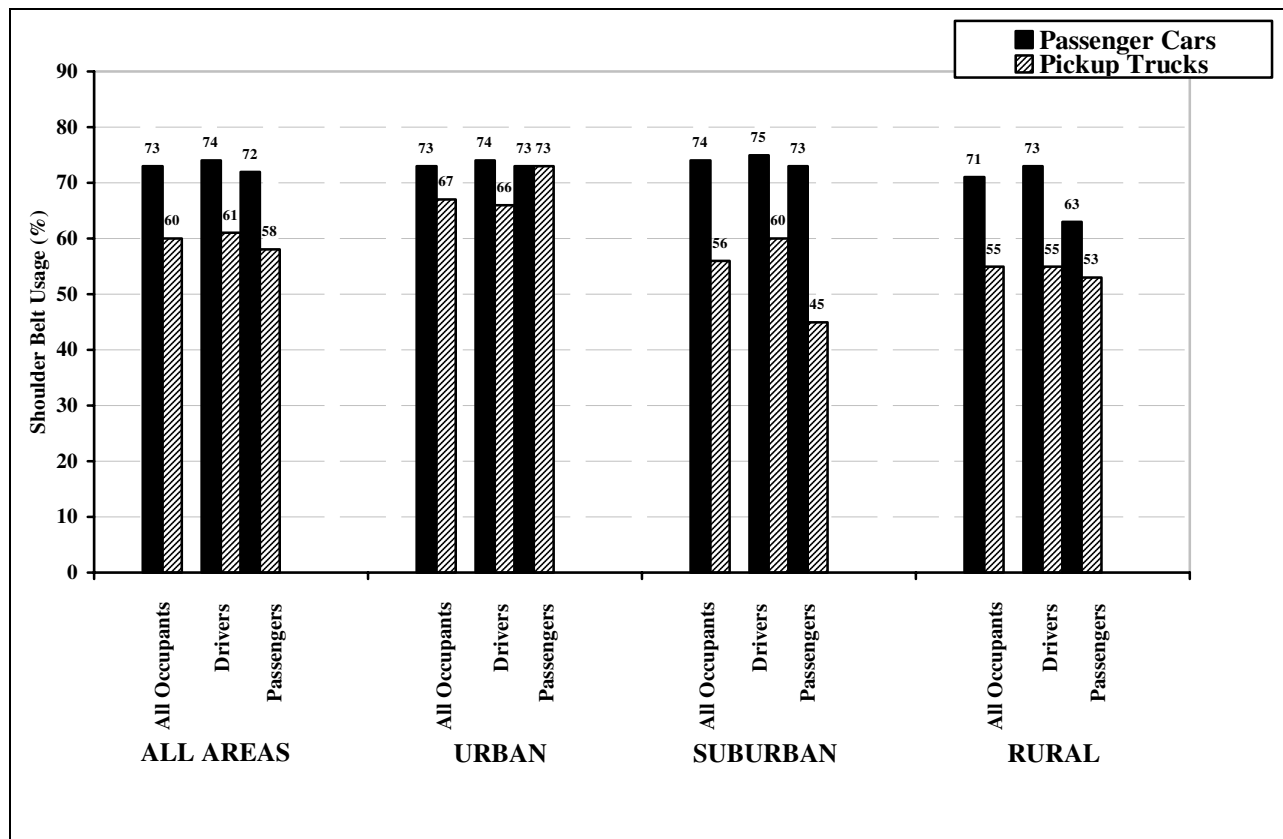
Source: NCSA

<b>Data Update:</b> For 2003:		<u>All Occupants</u>	<u>Drivers</u>	<u>Passengers</u>
Northeast:	Pickup Trucks	56%	56%	58%
	Passenger Cars	75%	76%	70%
Midwest:	Pickup Trucks	65%	65%	65%
	Passenger Cars	76%	77%	75%
South:	Pickup Trucks	68%	68%	65%
	Passenger Cars	84%	85%	80%
West:	Pickup Trucks	76%	77%	73%
	Passenger Cars	86%	88%	81%

Source: Technical Report – “Safety Belt Use in 2003 (September 2003), National Center for Statistics and Analysis, DOT HS 809 646.

Figure 4 shows that suburban and rural pickup truck occupants are less likely to use shoulder belts than are pickup truck occupants in urban areas.

**Figure 4. Shoulder Belt Use by Person Type and Urbanization**  
**Pickup Trucks and Passenger Vehicles, NOPUS 2000: Percent Estimates**



Source: NCSA

**Data Update:** The demographic characteristics noted in 2002 reflect the following changes:

<u>All Occupants:</u>	<u>Urban</u>	<u>Suburban</u>	<u>Rural</u>
Pickup Trucks	69%	69%	54%
Passenger Cars	72%	78%	79%

Source: Safety Belt Use in 2002- Demographic Characteristics, March 2003, National Center for Statistics and Analysis, DOT HS 809 557.

## Fatalities

The Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) is a census of all traffic crashes that occur within the United States that resulted in at least one death within 30 days of the crash. Detailed information about the fatal crashes such as road conditions, vehicles, and person characteristics is compiled and analyzed every year ([www.nhtsa.dot.gov](http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov)).

FARS classification system includes the following pickup truck body types:

- Compact pickup truck;
- Standard pickup truck;
- Pickup truck with camper;
- Convertible pickup truck; and
- Unknown pickup truck.

Passenger vehicles include:

- 2-5 door sedans;
- Coupes;
- Auto pickup truck (e.g., El Camino, etc.);
- Hatchback convertibles and hard tops;
- Station wagons; and
- Other auto unknown type between 1991 through 1994.

The “all other vehicles” body type category includes sport utility vehicles, vans, single unit trucks, truck tractors, combination trucks, commercial and school buses, motorcycles and all other motorized vehicles.

During 2001, there were 57,813 vehicles involved in collisions where at least one occupant died. The vehicles involved in these crashes held a total of 94,526 occupants; of the vehicles in fatal crashes, 10,961 were pickup trucks and 27,429 were passenger cars. Table 3 shows that more than half (52 percent) of pickup trucks involved in fatal crashes, had an occupant that died compared with 66 percent of passenger cars, which had an occupant that died.

<b>Table 3</b> <b>Percentage of Vehicles Involved in Fatal Crashes by Body Type and</b> <b>Injury Severity Within the Vehicle (FARS 2001)</b>				
Injury Severity	Body Type			Total N = 57,813
	Pickup Trucks N = 10,961	Passenger Cars N = 27,429	All Other Vehicles N = 19,423	
No Fatality	48.3%	34.1%	52.6%	43.0%
Fatality	51.7%	65.9%	47.4%	57.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Data Update:** FARS 2002 (ARF)\* shows: fatalities among pickup truck occupants were 52% and fatalities among passenger car occupants were 67%.

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\* The Annual Report File (ARF) from NCSA is subject to minor changes including additional fatalities, which will be reflected in the final file.

Pickup trucks represent about 19 percent of household vehicles, while 63 percent of household vehicles are passenger cars (Federal Highway Administration, Highway Statistics 2000).

Table 4 shows that pickup trucks are more likely to roll over during fatal crashes than are passenger cars and all other vehicles (25 percent versus 16 percent and 18 percent, respectively).

<b>Table 4</b> <b>Percentage of Vehicles Involved in Fatal Crashes by Rollover Occurrence and Body Type (FARS 2001)</b>				
<b>Vehicle Rollover</b>	<b>Body Type</b>			<b>Total N = 57,813</b>
	<b>Pickup Trucks N = 10,961</b>	<b>Passenger Cars N = 27,429</b>	<b>All Other Vehicles N = 19,423</b>	
No Rollover	74.9	84.3	81.5	81.6
First Event	9.2	4.6	7.6	6.5
Subsequent Event	16.0	11.1	10.9	12.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Data Update:** FARS 2002 (ARF)\* shows that, of the fatal crashes among pickup trucks, 26% experienced rollovers versus 17% among passenger cars.

Pickup trucks are also overrepresented in total and partial ejections as compared with other vehicle types. Table 5 shows that a higher proportion of pickup trucks have occupants ejected from the vehicle than other body types (19 percent for pickups versus 12 percent for passenger cars and 12 percent for all other vehicle types).

<b>Table 5</b> <b>Percentage of Occupants in Fatal Crashes by Ejection Status and Vehicle Body Type (FARS 2001)</b>				
<b>Occupant Ejection</b>	<b>Body Type</b>			<b>Total N = 94,526</b>
	<b>Pickup Trucks N = 16,693</b>	<b>Passenger Cars N = 46,003</b>	<b>All Other Vehicles N = 31,830</b>	
Not Ejected	80.9	87.5	85.7	85.7
Totally Ejected	15.0	9.8	10.7	11.0
Partially Ejected	3.6	2.3	1.6	2.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Data Update:** FARS 2002 (ARF)\* shows fatal crashes among pickup trucks included 15% of occupants totally ejected and 3% partially ejected versus 10% occupants totally ejected and 2% partially ejected in passenger cars.

Table 6 shows that 71 percent of occupants who died in pickup truck crashes were not wearing their safety belts. In comparison, 49 percent of passenger car occupants who died in crashes were not using safety belts. Nationally, 127 persons died in crashes while traveling in the cargo area of pickup trucks. Appendix B shows detailed State-by-State fatality data.

<b>Table 6</b> <b>Percentage of Occupant Fatalities in Fatal Crashes by Restraint Use and Vehicle Body Type (FARS 2001)</b>				
<b>Restraint Use</b>	<b>Body Type</b>			<b>Total</b> <b>N = 36,386</b>
	<b>Pickup Trucks</b> <b>N = 6,116</b>	<b>Passenger Cars</b> <b>N = 20,233</b>	<b>All Other Vehicles</b> <b>N = 10,037</b>	
None used or NA	70.6	48.5	54.8	53.9
Restraint Used	23.0	42.6	19.8	33.0
Other	6.5	8.9	25.5	13.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Data Update:** FARS 2002 (ARF) shows 71% of pickup truck occupants in fatal crashes were unrestrained and 6% were unknown versus 49% unrestrained and 9% unknown in passenger cars.

### Gender and Other Characteristics

Male occupants of pickup trucks between the ages of 20 and 59 years old were more likely to be involved in fatal collisions when compared with women occupants of pickup trucks. In passenger cars, with the exception of the 20 to 29 year old age group, the percent of men and women involved in fatal crashes were relatively the same. Detailed information about fatal crashes, age, and gender differences for pickup truck occupants and passenger car occupants is presented in Appendix C.

**Note:** While the above notes the latest figures for FARS data, the NOPUS (2002) figures continue to reflect that safety belt use rates among male pickup truck drivers between the ages of 16-69 remain a focal point because of their lower usage rate (63-64 percent) compared with 72 percent within the age category of 5-15 or 8-15 and 70 and older). Source: Safety Belt Use in 2002- Demographic Characteristics, March 2003, National Center for Statistics and Analysis, DOT HS 809 557.

### III. SUMMARY OF STATE SAFETY BELT LAWS AS OF NOVEMBER 2000

Information about State safety belt laws was gathered from a variety of sources. Each State's Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) driver's manual was reviewed to determine what information is provided to drivers about each State's safety belt laws (as of November 2000). Also, State web sites were searched for information regarding safety belt laws. In addition, State Governors' Highway Safety Representatives were contacted.

## **Exemptions in State Safety Belt Laws**

Many States allow legal exemptions to their occupant protection laws. Also, States vary regarding the legality of whom is responsible for passengers' use of safety belts. The following exemptions are common across States:

- A physician has certified in writing that the use of safety belts is inappropriate for the person, with the nature of the condition stated;
- The person is a rural mail carrier of the US Postal Service operating a motor vehicle in the performance of employment, usually from first stop to last stop;
- The person is a driver or passenger frequently stopping and leaving the motor vehicle or delivering property from the vehicle;
- The person is the operator of agricultural equipment;
- The person is a member of the emergency personnel of an emergency motor vehicle or a passenger in an emergency vehicle;
- The motor vehicle the person is occupying is a bus or taxi or other vehicle for hire; and
- The vehicle was not manufactured with safety belts.

As of November 2000, when this project was initiated, and this task within the project was completed, four States had laws that were different for pickup truck occupants as compared with other passenger vehicles. The States were Georgia (exempts pickup trucks altogether), Indiana (exempts trucks), Missouri (exempts trucks greater than 12,000 pounds, and occupants in cargo beds when all seats are occupied and vehicle is only means of immediate family transportation), and Oregon (exempts trucks greater than 8,000 pounds and not considered to be a commercial vehicle). Additionally, New Hampshire does not currently have an adult safety belt law. Appendix D lists details of each State's occupant protection laws and enforcement protocols as of November 2000, which is when this section of the research was completed. Again, on the basis of the laws at this time and other factors determined by the researcher and NHTSA, focus group site selection was determined in order to complete the intent of this project.



## Laws Pertaining to Children in Cargo Areas

Twenty States allowed persons, regardless of age, to travel in the cargo area of a pickup truck at any time. Twenty-five States, shown in Table 6, had laws making it illegal for children to ride in the cargo area of pickup trucks, even when all seats are occupied. Seven of these States only prohibit children under certain ages, as shown. A common exception is to allow children to ride in the cargo area if all the seats of the pickup truck are occupied.

Fifteen States had publicized the “Kids Aren’t Cargo” campaign, as of November 2000. Appendix E lists detailed information about each State’s cargo area laws and educational campaigns.

<b>Table 7</b> <b>States Which Prohibit Children Riding In Cargo Area</b> <b>(as of 2000)</b>	
California	North Carolina
Delaware	Ohio
Florida (under age 6)	Pennsylvania
Georgia	Rhode Island
Hawaii (under age 13)	South Carolina (under age 6)
Kansas	South Dakota (under age 5)
Kentucky	Tennessee
Louisiana	Texas (under age 12)
Massachusetts	Virginia
Maryland (under age 16)	Wisconsin
Missouri	Wyoming
Nevada (under age 5)	Puerto Rico
New Jersey	

## IV. SUMMARY OF PUBLIC INFORMATION AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Questions about public information and education programs targeted to pickup truck safety were sent to each Governor’s Office of Highway Safety for the 50 States, District of Columbia, Guam, and Puerto Rico. Eighteen States reported that they had targeted pickup truck occupants with public information, education, and/or enforcement campaigns about safety belt usage. Of these 18 States, seven plan to develop more pickup truck campaigns in the future. Nearly half of the 50 States have never tried nor intend to specifically target the pickup truck occupant population through safety campaigns. See Appendix B for more detailed information about the findings.

Five States provided samples of campaign materials that they have used. The campaign materials included: radio scripts, bumper stickers, posters, television video, radio cassettes, and pamphlets. Materials from the five States were used during the subsequent focus group sessions and are described in the next section of this report. The goal was to gather information that would be useful to other States in persuading pickup truck drivers and their passengers to wear their safety belts.

## V. FOCUS GROUPS: BACKGROUND

Eight focus groups were conducted with younger and older male pickup truck drivers who live and work in the rural areas of four different States. There were several objectives for conducting the focus groups: (1) to find out more about specific approaches and message themes that might convince male pickup truck drivers to use their safety belts; (2) to determine attitudes about allowing children to travel in the cargo area of pickup trucks; and (3) to investigate any differences in these issues between Hispanic and non-Hispanic pickup truck drivers.

Focus group research is intended to gain insight about the perception of various themes and methods for public educational and information campaigns. The data are qualitative, rather than quantitative, and provide insight and understanding about particular issues. The findings are not a statistical representation of how rural, male pickup truck drivers view safety issues and safety belt use.

## Site Selection

To obtain a variety of viewpoints during the focus groups, one State was chosen where safety belt laws covering pickup trucks differed from laws covering passenger cars. In some States, safety belts use is not required in pickup trucks if the driver is at least 18 years old. Both crash incidence and rates for pickup truck fatalities during the last several years were reviewed to identify States where the crash, injury, and fatality rates were high. Belt use rates were also reviewed. *The selected States were a geographically diverse representation: Georgia, Michigan, Texas, and Montana.*

Three of the States (Georgia, Michigan, and Texas) had primary safety belt laws. Montana had a secondary safety belt law. Generally, safety belt use is higher in States with primary safety belt laws than in those with secondary laws: 77 percent versus 65 percent in 2000.

**Data Update:** NOPUS 2003 shows 83% safety belt use in States with primary laws versus 75% in States with secondary laws.

Georgia: Occupant protection laws were not the same for pickup trucks and other passenger vehicles; adult pickup truck occupants were not required to wear a safety belt. Although the State had a primary enforcement law, pickup truck occupants 18 years old and older were exempt. The law prohibits persons under age 18 from riding in the cargo area of pickup trucks on interstate highways.

Michigan: Occupant protection laws were the same for pickup trucks and other passenger vehicles; all front seat occupants must wear their safety belt. Children under the age of four may not ride in the cargo area. Children between the ages of four and 15 may ride in the cargo area of a pickup truck if all other safety belts are in proper use and there are more passengers than safety belts.

Montana: Occupant protection laws were the same for all motor vehicles and Montana's law States that: "No driver may operate a motor vehicle upon a highway in the State of Montana unless each occupant of a designated seating position is wearing a properly adjusted and fastened safety belt." Children may not ride in the cargo area of pickup trucks if there is available seating inside the vehicle; otherwise it is permitted.

Texas: Occupant protection laws were the same for pickup trucks and other passenger vehicles. The driver and front seat passengers are required to wear safety belts. Children under 12 years of age may not travel in the cargo area if the vehicle is traveling faster than 35 mph.

**Law update:** In 2002, this provision was amended to prohibit children under age 18 from riding in the cargo area.

The focus groups were conducted in 2001. Two groups each were conducted near:

- Atlanta, Georgia - two in English
- Detroit, Michigan – two in English
- Great Falls, Montana – two in English
- Lubbock, Texas – one in English, one in Spanish

All participants in the eight groups were men who either lived or worked in rural areas. Two age groups were recruited for each city: a younger group between the ages of 18 and 27 and another group ages 28 and older. The majority of men drove pickup trucks most of the time. The few men who drove another type of passenger vehicle most of the time also had a pickup truck available for use in their household.

All of the participants described themselves as wearing safety belts “sometimes,” “seldom” or “never.” About half of the drivers had children present in their households. A sample-screening tool used for recruiting can be found in Appendix F.

### **Moderator’s Guide and Topics of Discussion**

The moderator’s guide included six areas of concentration for directing the discussions (see Appendix G). A Spanish translation of the moderator’s guide was prepared for the Spanish-language group.

- Introduction
- Attitudes towards safety measures
- Safety belt utilization
- Response to motivational efforts -- reasons for not wearing safety belt with five different approaches
- Response to existing campaigns and properties --TV and radio spots, pamphlets, bumper stickers, and posters
- Development of campaign components -- participant themes and messages

There are a number of recurring reasons and excuses people give for not wearing safety belts. A 1996 NHTSA study of strategies to increase safety belt use among young males in rural areas reported cultural and psychological barriers to developing effective safety belt campaigns (Bradbard et al., 1996). Three of the most common reasons people gave for not wearing their safety belt in the 1996 study were tested in these focus groups:

- Pickup trucks are big and I ride higher up, so I am safer if there is a crash;
- I’m an excellent driver and my reflexes are great, so I’m not concerned about getting in a crash; and
- If I wear my safety belt and it jams, I will be trapped in my pickup truck if there is a crash.

## Existing Campaigns/Materials

Next, materials were gathered in response to a letter sent to the 50 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and Guam asking for copies of their public information and education campaigns specifically geared to occupant protection issues among pickup truck drivers. The type of material, message, and the State that provided the material are summarized below. More details are provided in Appendix H.

<b>Table 8</b> <b>Summary of State Pickup Truck Safety Campaigns</b>		
<b>Type of Material</b>	<b>Message</b>	<b>State</b>
Poster:	“Don’t Be Road Kill” Ted Nugent “No Excuses” “Kids Aren’t Cargo”	Michigan New Mexico Illinois
Bumper Sticker:	“The Nuge Says”	Michigan
Pamphlet:	“Stupid Pickup Line # 49” “Forgot to Tie Down One Vital Piece”	Maryland Maryland
Audio:	30 second radio safety belt spot 60 second radio stories about crashes	Illinois Oklahoma
Video:	“What’s Holding You Back Oklahoma?” Aftermath of Crash of a Pickup Truck	Oklahoma Oklahoma
Radio Script:	“I Love My Pickup” “The Bet”	Arizona Arizona

The public information and education efforts, listed above, were then categorized according to the type of approach used. The following five types of approach “styles” were identified:

1. Statistical Approach;
2. Humorous Approach;
3. Celebrity Spokesperson Approach;
4. Medical Consequences Approach; and
5. Consequences to Self and Others Approach.

Some of these tactics (e.g., Consequences to Self and Others Approach) were recommended by Bradbard et al. (1996) and others (e.g., the Statistical Approach) have a long-standing history of use in educational efforts.

Each focus group was assigned one of the three popular misconceptions identified above by pickup truck drivers, as reasons for not buckling up. The research team generated examples using each of the five approaches (statistical, humorous, celebrity spokesperson, medical consequences, consequences to self and others) to refute the misconception. The participants then discussed which approach they thought would be most effective with pickup truck drivers in increasing their safety belt use. The focus group members were asked not to concentrate on specific messages but rather the value of each of the five approaches. For example, they were not being asked about a specific celebrity spokesperson but rather if using a “famous” person to provide the information would be an effective media approach.

The next exercise was for each of the focus groups to respond to existing safety belt campaign materials designed to target pickup truck drivers. Each group evaluated at least two videos, two radio spots, two radio scripts, two posters, two bumper stickers, and one pamphlet from among the materials listed in Table 8 above.

The final exercise was designed to generate innovative and creative ideas from the participants for possible media development.

## **VI. FOCUS GROUPS: FINDINGS**

The discussion of the focus group findings are grouped into the following general topics:

- Overview of Pickup Truck Drivers' Attitudes about Safety Belts and Safety
- Focus Group Participants' Attitudes Toward Safety Measures
- Focus Group Participants' Safety belt Use
- Focus Group Participants' Response to Specific Reasons and Approaches
- Focus Group Responses to Existing Campaign Approaches – English-Speaking Group
- Focus Group Responses to Existing Campaign Approaches – Hispanic Group
- Campaign Component Development – English-Speaking Group
- Campaign Component Development – Hispanic Group
- Reasons Given for Not Wearing Their Safety Belts

### **Overview of Pickup Truck Drivers' Attitudes about Safety Belts and Safety**

- Men from Georgia, Michigan, and Montana were found to be safety conscious about most work and household issues but not in regard to safety belt usage. Age played a role in safety consciousness but not in safety belt usage. For example, an older man is as likely as a younger man not to wear a safety belt.
- Men from Georgia, Michigan, and Montana were somewhat more likely to wear a safety belt in a car than in a pickup truck primarily due to the presence of family members and children.
- The majority of the participants in this study believed that safety belts were important relative to overall safety but found safety belts uncomfortable, restrictive, and an overall "hassle."
- Focus groups participants said they typically did not wear their safety belt because they were skeptical about the benefits to them personally. Many said they feared that instead of helping them, a safety belt might cause harm by trapping them in their vehicle if they were involved in a crash.
- All of the men were least likely to wear their safety belts on local roads and short trips especially if those trips involved a lot of in and out activities.

- All of the men said they would most likely buckle up during inclement weather, when traveling on the highway or in the mountains, and when they see law enforcement.
- All of the focus group participants were aware of safety belt laws and fines in their States but the law had little, if any, affect on their decision to wear safety belts each trip. The English-speaking Texas group, in particular, believed belt use should be an individual decision, expressing values of individuality and freedom, and were angry that the law mandates the use of safety belts.
- Men in general, but young men in particular, were not afraid of dying in a crash. They were more afraid of being paralyzed or losing a limb.
- The majority of Hispanic men reported that they did not wear a safety belt. The reasons given were: “desiria” or a neglectful or lazy attitude; an external locus of control\* which was expressed, for example, as: “God will have the ultimate say about my destiny”; and a lack of history or custom because they did not wear safety belts when they were children.
- The Hispanic men said they were motivated to wear their safety belts out of fear of being caught by law enforcement and the stiff penalties that could result.
- Most of the men from the eight focus groups prefer communication efforts that are as realistic as possible. Many suggested showing a man in a wheelchair next to his crushed vehicle saying something like: *“They tell me if I had been buckled in, I’d have walked away from this. Instead, here I am. Don’t let this happen to you.”*
- Humor in the communication pieces was not appreciated and was often viewed as sarcasm. All of the men viewed safety and safety belt usage seriously – even though they don’t wear one. The crash test dummies were often cited as being a humorous attempt to get people to pay attention to the issue of safety.
- The use of numbers was questioned. Many men in each focus group were fairly cynical and believe numbers can be made to support anything anyone wants them to. They were skeptical of the quoted percentages, sometimes saying they thought they should have been higher or lower. If numbers are used, men responded more favorably to a format like *“1 out of 3”* rather than expressed as a percentage, such as 34 percent.
- All of the focus groups, with the exception of the Texas Hispanic group, did not view celebrity spokespersons as effective. They believe celebrities are paid to say whatever they are asked to say, which negates their credibility. Many of the men thought it highly unlikely that any of the celebrities used as examples in their group would actually drive themselves anywhere. The participants thought the celebrities would be chauffeured.

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\* External locus of control is a research term meaning there is an outside source, like “god” or “a higher power,” that determines the outcome or destiny.

- The Hispanic group, on the other hand, liked the celebrity spokesperson as one of their three favorite campaign approaches.
- All of the men paid the most attention to television and radio advertising resembling everyday life. Images of family and children in the ads grabbed their attention -- the image of a wife and baby or a child blowing out candles. These images seemed to tug at heartstrings and made many of the men stop and think about what they have to lose.
- The Hispanic participants were more influenced by the consequences to others for not wearing a safety belt. They said they were extremely family-oriented. Some said that when they were asked to visualize images where their children suffer because they, as parents, neglected to wear a safety belt, it caused a major shift in their attitude.
- All of the men preferred campaign messages that described local crashes that occur when pulling out of the parking lot or on the way home from getting doughnuts. Typically they thought only of getting hurt in a highway crash.
- The English-speaking men think that crashes should not be portrayed as too severe because the immediate impression is *“It wouldn’t matter if you were wearing a seat belt or not in that one. You’re dead anyway.”*
- In contrast, the Hispanic group in Texas reported that the Mexican newscasts they watch regularly depict bloody images and they do not believe they have an impact on viewers. They said that showing graphic consequences induces fear. These men thought that the “medical consequences” approach would motivate them if used to stress the importance of wearing safety belts.
- The Hispanic participants indicated that there is a great need to provide traffic safety information and advertising in Spanish. The language barrier, or simply not fully comprehending English, causes some English messages to be ignored in the Hispanic community.

### **Focus Group Participants’ Attitudes Toward Safety Measures**

Participants first discussed attitudes toward safety in general. There were several factors that influenced whether a man considered himself safety conscious. The first was age. Older participants were more likely than those in their early twenties to say they were conscientious about all issues related to safety. Men with young children were more concerned about household safety than those who were single or those whose children have grown and left home. Men who worked in more dangerous jobs were more cognizant of general safety issues and tried to avoid occupational injuries. Those who had been previously injured either in a work related mishap or an automobile crash were more likely to be safety conscious.

*“At work I’m more safety conscious because I work around a power company a lot. There’s a lot of power there.”* Detroit, Michigan - (28 and older male)

*“You’ve always got to be on the lookout or thinking that somebody doesn’t know what they’re doing or is not paying attention. If you do that, then you’re ahead of the game—especially now because the stress level has increased with everything that’s going on. You have people working a lot more hours. They’re tired. You’ve got to pay attention.”* Atlanta, Georgia - (28 and older male)

*“I think I’ve become a lot more safe or at least conscious of it after having children. I don’t really think about dying, but then once you think about leaving your children or something like that, it makes you think about the things I used to do.”* Great Falls, Montana - (28 and older male)

Men in all the age groups and focus group locations said they needed to pay more attention to safety issues such as adhering to the speed limit, not driving home after drinking a few beers, using turn signals when changing lanes to alert other drivers of their intentions, avoiding drivers talking on cell phones, not tailgating, wearing protective clothing as per OSHA restrictions, and wearing safety belts.

The Hispanic men, in contrast, said they did not consider themselves safety conscious. They indicated that safety is not a concept strongly reinforced in their socialization.

While the majority of men believed that safety belts were important relative to their safety and agreed that safety belts save lives and have a purpose, overall, participants from all groups found safety belts “uncomfortable,” “restrictive,” and in the extreme, “a violation of a first amendment right.” The general consensus among the men was that once you reach a certain age, you’re responsible for yourself. They saw the law as placing limits on their freedom of choice. One participant summed it up this way:

*“I think if you’re responsible enough to drive a car, you should be responsible enough to make the decision whether or not to wear a seat belt.”*

They held a skeptical view regarding the usefulness of safety belts and were especially worried about becoming trapped in their vehicle in case of a crash. Some participants felt that safety laws are inconsistent. For example, they did not understand why motorcycle riders were not required by law in some States to wear helmets, but motorists must wear a safety belt.

*“Personally, I didn’t like it when the law came out. As a grown person, I just about think it was unconstitutional to mandate to say you have to wear a seat belt because if you get injured or don’t get injured, it’s your own red wagon. You’re not affecting anyone else on the road.”* Atlanta, Georgia - (28 and older male)



*“Once you’re an adult, you should make your own choice. They don’t have a helmet law in Montana for a motorcycle. That’s about the most ridiculous thing I think I’ve ever heard. They make you wear a seat belt but not a helmet.”*

Great Falls, Montana - (28 and older male)

*“They’re very restrictive. It makes you feel like you’re just confined and you can’t do anything. I know in my truck, the seat belt presses in tight. You try to move it a little bit, and it locks in. You can’t even lean forward or anything.”*

Atlanta, Georgia - (18-27 year old male)

*“I think seat belts are a waste of time. I’m in agriculture. I never use it because I’m in and out all day. I’m 55 years old. I went for 40 years without using them. They’re just in the way. Every time you put it on, you have to get out and unhook it. Then you get those ones that are going automatically and wrap around your neck. They’re just basically a waste of time for me.”* Great Falls, Montana – (28 and older male)

*“I consider myself an adult. If I don’t want to wear my seat belt, then I shouldn’t have to. They shouldn’t be able to tell me: ‘You have to wear your seat belt or we’re going to fine you.’ I think it’s a money issue, just another way for them to make some money at \$50 a pop.”* Detroit, Michigan - (18-27 year old male)

## Focus Group Participants' Safety Belt Use

Many of the men indicated they wore a safety belt **when driving a car** because of the presence of other family members – children, wives, siblings, mothers, and girlfriends. Several felt they “had” to buckle up to set a good example. But, **in their pickup trucks**, few said they wore their safety belt. They believed they were safer in their truck due to its sheer size. In addition, most of the time they are alone in their pickup truck and thus did not feel they needed to answer to anyone.

*“Trucks are better vehicles. I was in a wreck...we drilled the back of his car...it totaled out his car. We had to replace our front bumper and that was that.”*

Atlanta, Georgia - (18-27 year old male)

*“Trucks are bigger. You don’t get hurt. You feel a little bit safer driving a truck.”*

Detroit, Michigan - (18-27 year old male)

*“Trucks are bigger, more sturdier vehicles. On impact, there’s more crush room.”*

Atlanta, Georgia - (18-27 year old male)

The majority of the Hispanic men also indicated they felt quite secure in the trucks they drive. They did say, however, that they wore their safety belts when they made trips away from their hometown, and on long, unfamiliar trips. They saw safety belts as an inconvenience on short local trips. They believed in a strong external locus of control about their destiny (this means the belief that consequences to something are beyond or external to themselves and out of their control):

*“Uno ariesga y Dios dira.” (“One takes a risk but it is up to God to decide...”)*

The English-speaking groups, regardless of age, said they typically wore their safety belts when the weather was icy, snowy, foggy, rainy, or when they were traveling in the mountains. They also reported that they wore their safety belts on long journeys, on interstates, in heavy traffic, and near large cities where they associate potentially hazardous situations and careless or dangerous drivers. Some of the men said that they “*grab for them if they see a cop*” and when riding as a passenger in someone else’s vehicle. Most wore safety belts when children got in their vehicle, just for practice and to teach the kids that it’s the right thing to do.

All of the participants were aware that their State had a law regarding the use of safety belts. The following reflects their understanding of the laws. Most knew the specifics of these laws as it applied to them. Some were a little sketchy on the details. There was discussion, for instance, as to the laws regarding back seat passengers, specifically who had to be buckled – under 16 years old, under 18 years old, or all passengers. In Michigan, most believed all passengers were supposed to wear a safety belt. In Georgia, they knew safety belts were mandatory in cars but not in pickup trucks. In Montana, they knew the lap belt was required and that people older than 65 did not have to be belted. In addition to requiring safety belt usage of all persons in the vehicle, passengers in Montana under 18 years old are the driver’s responsibility.

The Hispanic men from Texas also said they were well aware of the safety belt laws for cars and trucks. They thought the law was a good idea but not the “*stiff fines*.” One law that they were unclear about was whether passengers could ride in the cargo area of a pickup truck. They said they did not feel insecure or worried taking passengers in the pickup truck bed, in part because they remember traveling this way as children. They do not, however, put their own children in the cargo area and seldom see others ride this way in the United States. They say that it is a practice used only on occasion; for example, if someone required a ride because their car was not working and they urgently needed to get somewhere. Participants in Georgia believed that if you were older than 18 and not riding on the interstate it would be okay to ride in the cargo area and “*people do it all the time*.” Montana participants thought that it was legal if the passengers in the cargo area were sitting down and the driver did not go on the interstate. In Michigan, men knew riding in the back of a pickup truck was illegal, but many saw it “*all the time*.” The English-speaking Texas participants believed that it is very dangerous to ride as a passenger in the cargo area but believes it was more dangerous to do so in the city than in the fields. In any event, they thought that common sense, rather than the law, should dictate when to ride in the back of a pickup truck.

When the men were asked to describe who they believed were **MOST** likely to wear safety belts they cited the following: kids, parents, women, the disabled, crash survivors, drunks, owners of new cars, and health or safety conscious individuals. On the other hand, they cited the following as **LEAST** likely to wear a safety belt: younger, single, men, tall, short, African Americans, delivery and construction workers, and truck drivers.

The Hispanic group of men said they knew they should wear their safety belts but they did not wear them because they:

- Forgot;
- Were neglectful (“*Tengo desiria*”);
- Have not been in a crash themselves so they did not see how safety belts would help;
- Were “*in control*,” “*I know the area in which I drive. I even know the policemen, when and where they will stand.*”

All of the Hispanic men said that the issue of masculine identity had nothing to do with why they did not wear their safety belts. They did not consider themselves more macho by not wearing a safety belt; they remained ambivalent about wearing the safety belt. For example, on the one hand, they acknowledged the value of safety belts in a rollover crash or in preventing them from being ejected from their vehicle in any kind of crash. On the other hand, they mistrusted the safety belt for fear of being trapped inside after a crash or trapped inside in the case of a fire. One participant mentioned his fear of being unable to unlatch the belt if his hands were broken as a result of the crash.

Participants from all eight groups nearly unanimously agreed on one thing: children need to wear safety belts. In fact, most thought laws for everyone under the age of 18 were justified

because young children and teenagers “*need to be protected from their own ignorance.*” Most, however, did not insist that other adults wear a safety belt in their vehicle.

*“I honestly don’t care if anybody else in the rest of the car – unless they are kids, kids get belted in period. Other than that, if someone wants to sit next to me or behind me and don’t wear it, that doesn’t bother me. It’s up to them to make their own decision. I feel that I’m not driving reckless to where I’m going to cause any of these things to happen. That still can happen but not because I’m driving crazy.”*  
Detroit, Michigan - (28 and older male)

Most of the men did not wear safety belts as a child, or if they did it was on an irregular basis.

*“My mom was strict about us being buckled, my dad, he didn’t care. I used to sit on the arm rest so I could see better when he was driving.”*  
Great Falls, Montana - (18-27 year old male)

For older participants, most of the cars that they grew up with did not have safety belts in them.

*“I think cars before 1965 didn’t have belts.”*  
*“I just never got in the habit.”* Lubbock, Texas - (28 and older male)

### **Focus Group Participants’ Responses to Specific Reasons For Not Wearing Safety Belts and Approaches**

As discussed on page 14), a previous NHTSA study (Bradbard et al., 1996) identified three common reasons that people give for not wearing their safety belts in pickup trucks. Because there is not enough time during a typical focus group to discuss each of these three reasons, it was decided that each city would be randomly assigned a reason. These assignments are shown below:

<u>City / State</u>	<u>Reason</u>
Detroit, Michigan	“Pickup trucks are big and you ride higher up so you are safer...”
Great Falls, Montana	“If I wear my seat belt and it jams, I will be trapped ....”
Atlanta, Georgia	“I’m an excellent driver and my reflexes are great ....”
Lubbock, Texas	“I’m an excellent driver and my reflexes are great ....”

Also, as discussed on page 14, five specific approaches for presenting public information and education (PI&E) materials were identified:

- Statistical Approach
- Humorous Approach
- Celebrity Approach
- Medical Consequences
- Consequences to Self and Others Approach

Each focus group discussed these five approaches for presenting PI&E materials as it related to their assigned reason for not wearing safety belts.

### **Detroit, Michigan:**

Reason – “Pickup Trucks are Big”

Discussion - The five approaches were applied to: “Pickup trucks are big and you ride higher up, so you are safer if there is a crash.”

#### **1. Statistical Approach**

The majority of the Detroit men referred to this as “*the numbers game*” and overall, did not care for this approach. The general opinion was that you could make numbers say anything you want them to say. The skeptics in both groups did not trust these, or any quoted statistics, to be truthful. Most wanted to know where the numbers came from. Some were surprised the numbers were not larger. Others thought the numbers should be smaller. Regardless, “*that’s 34 percent of other people, that’s not me*” was a common philosophy, especially among younger men. Some wanted to know how many people lived or died after being ejected. Most agreed, however, that saying “*1 out of 3 people...*” rather than 34 percent makes the number more understandable to them. A few men did not believe this approach because they thought, “*the airbag would stop them.*” Airbags seem to provide a sense of security, sometimes a false sense of security, for drivers regardless of age.

#### **2. Humorous Approach**

The Detroit participants saw this approach as being more sarcastic than funny. Most of the men do not buy this argument and found it “ridiculous” or “retarded.” For the younger men, it doesn’t provide enough information.

*“So what if he hits the concrete wall? Did he get hurt? Did he just have to hold onto his steering wheel tight? Where are you going with this?”*

Older men did not believe it either.

*“I don’t buy this whole thing we can see better any more. Before all these SUV’s started coming and before pickup trucks got trendy, yes, you could see the whole road. But now, chances are you’re behind some 30-foot Suburban!”*

### **3. Celebrity Approach**

This approach received a mixed response. “*So what*” was the typical reaction from the younger men. Another common response was, “*He got a lot of money for doing that commercial.*” The mistrust and lack of credibility associated with spokespeople, regardless of who they are, was evident here.

*They’re getting as much as we make in six months for a two-minute commercial...I’m not going to wear a seat belt because of that!”*

Older men could see the potential in this approach but only if there were a multitude of celebrities used like in the “Got Milk?” ads. Some in this age group were skeptical too.

*He’s lying. He doesn’t ALWAYS buckle up every time he goes to a game.  
He’s as big a liar as all the rest of us. We all cheat now and then.  
Let’s face it; let’s really be honest. I’ll be the first one.”*

### **4. Medical Consequences Approach**

This approach was also considered sarcastic. Older men thought:

*“This might appeal to the MTV generation because it  
kind of fits in with their mentality in a way.”*

Neither younger nor older men cared for this approach, mainly because of the terms ‘road kill’ and ‘great big windshield.’ They felt that it lacks seriousness.

### **5. Consequences to Self and Others Approach**

This approach would appeal to older men more IF the person chosen for the ad was an actual survivor of a crash.

*“Like a Christopher Reeve type. Perhaps that might make an impression  
on someone, as long as you don’t become sarcastic with it and treat  
the public like they’re only a half a year old.”*

Younger men really took offense to this approach. Some found it offensive to draw the analogy between the great big pickup truck and the not-so-big wheelchair. Others expressed disbelief that somebody could survive a crash with a tractor-trailer even when wearing a safety belt.

Detroit focus group participants preferred the statistical approach when the percentages were changed to 1 in 3 to make the presentation more understandable. They liked it because it was viewed as the most serious of the five approaches. Crashes are no laughing matter.

*“It shouldn’t be funny. If there’s fatalities involved, it’s not really a*

*funny matter. Who is going to listen to you if you're talking to them sarcastically, like half these sentences here?"*

The groups did not rule out humor altogether. Nearly all were able to recall the crash test dummies and found them to be funny and memorable. Other advertising remembered was the "Click It or Ticket" campaign on roadside signs and the billboards along the roadway that says, "Buckle Up, It's The Law."

### **Great Falls, Montana:**

Reason – "Could Be Trapped"

Discussion – The five approaches were applied to: "If I wear my seat belt and it jams, I will be trapped in my pickup truck if there is a crash."

#### **1. Statistical Approach**

About half of the participants in the two Great Falls focus groups found this reason for not buckling up to be believable. Some said that since safety belts are mechanical they could have a tendency not to work in all situations. But they were not sure whether to believe the statistical approach because several of the men had never heard of safety belts jamming and none shared that concern. A few men discredited the statement because law enforcement said it. A typical response was:

*"I have no clue so I'll believe them I guess."*

#### **2. The Humorous Approach**

The participants did not find this approach humorous, if anything they thought it was bad humor. According to two young pickup truck drivers-

*"This guy is screwed! I don't think anyone would say that."  
"Maybe you could joke about it after if you were in that position."*

#### **3. Celebrity Approach**

The men from Montana did not think using Randy Travis as a spokesperson would work there. They too were cynical and felt that he was making the statement for the money.

*"He rides around on a big tour bus. Do you think he wears a seat belt? I don't think a spokesperson in general (works). I'm not affected. Like I don't go out and buy shoes because Michael Jordan wears those. To me, that kind of stuff doesn't work."*

#### **4. Medical Consequences Approach**

Most of the men thought the excuse given for not wearing a safety belt sounded like a poor excuse. Two older participants commented that this made no sense to them because in all their years of driving and seeing bad crashes, they had never seen anyone who was buckled up and died (author's note-apparent misunderstanding with this approach because the scripted example was intended to mean that the driver was not wearing their safety belt).

#### **5. Consequences to Self and Others Approach**

Most participants believed that "reality" works best. However, several younger men in their twenties said death is not something they fear. What they do fear is becoming paralyzed or losing a leg or an arm.

#### **Atlanta, Georgia:**

Reason – "I am a Good Driver"

Discussion - The five approaches were applied to: "I'm an excellent driver and my reflexes are great, so I'm not concerned about getting in a crash."

Overall, participants felt this theme was a little too cocky. Two younger men said:

(This driver) *"Thinks more highly of himself than he ought to."*  
*"Somebody who would say that is a complete dumb\_\_\_."*

Older men took a different outlook but came to the same conclusion:

*"We could be quick but not quick enough. They always say to drive for the next person." You have to worry about everybody else on the road."*

#### **1. Statistical Approach**

Young and old alike agreed wholeheartedly with this statement, but suggested that it is other people who are misjudging their own driving abilities.

*"Who is going to rate themselves below average?"*  
*"A lot of people overrate their driving skills."*

Both age groups found this approach hard to believe. Older drivers in particular thought using statistics skewed the statement because they believe that the only statistics that are used are the ones that help "the cause." One participant thought the only way to make this statement believable would be to say:

*"... 99.8 percent of accidents are caused by the 83 percent of drivers that rate themselves well above average or above average..."*



## **2. Humorous Approach**

Young pickup truck drivers found the statement arrogant.

*“If he was such a good driver, why didn’t he see the guy coming at him and get out of the way?”*

Older drivers did not believe the statement.

*“First of all, you wouldn’t go through your windshield if you got hit from the rear. You’d go back into the bed of the truck initially, you’d go backward before you went forward.”*

Both age groups thought the driver was passing the buck, saying in effect, I’m glad it’s his fault.

## **3. Celebrity Approach**

The celebrity spokesperson approach using Sammy Sosa in Atlanta was a little more effective than Cal Ripken, Jr. was in Detroit. Older drivers could relate to Sammy Sosa. His character was untarnished and they could relate to the play on words of ‘quick behind the wheel and quick at bat’. In fact, they felt that this approach would work with any spokesperson.

*“It could be anybody who shows by their actions that they respect others and it’s not do as I say but do as I do.”*

Younger men, on the other hand, did not believe the “celebrity thing.”

*“How often do you think Sammy Sosa drives ---- You know he’s got a chauffeur!”*  
*“Most people know if he’s on TV making that statement, he’s getting some kind of gratuity for it.”*

## **4. Medical Consequences Approach**

The medical consequences approach did not make sense to either age group of pickup truck drivers. They thought it sounded too one-sided. For the younger men, the person with the smaller vehicle wants you to take his side and chances are the person driving that vehicle was probably at fault. For older men, it meant the situation got away from the driver of the smaller truck and his reaction time was not right.

## 5. *Consequences to Self and Others Approach*

Participants appreciated this approach because they were able to relate to it. They called it “real life” and said the wheelchair was very graphic. In general, the Atlanta participants remembered and criticized the “Buckle Up, It’s the Law” roadside campaign. Several men did not find the ad effective.

*“Those \_\_\_\_ you off because, it’s like, who wants to be told ‘Hey you’re 38, 39, 40 years old and you are going to do this. You’re a rational thinking adult-- you should have a choice to make your own decisions.’”*

For some, the marketing that has appealed to kids has worked because the kids become the focus rather than the adult.

*“...the seat belt police, they won’t let me drive unless I have it on.  
It’s easier to put it on than listen to them.”*

### **Lubbock, Texas:**

Reason – “I am a Good Driver”

Discussion - The five approaches were applied to: “I’m an excellent driver and my reflexes are great so I’m not concerned about getting in a crash.”

### 1. *Statistical Approach*

The men in the English-speaking group agreed that in order to strengthen the statistical approach, local rather than national statistics should be provided along with more specific information such as the speed at which the driver, not wearing the safety belt, was traveling. In general, they did not trust the statistical information.

The Hispanic men did not find the statistical approach to be particularly good primarily because of a general mistrust of statistics in general. They consider statistics to be misleading and irrelevant. One exception that could make a statistical approach viable would be if the numbers used were truly reflective their own local area.

### 2. *Humorous Approach*

The English-speaking group found the humorous approach distasteful. Participants thought the subject matter was too serious to be paired with humor. They also voiced concern regarding children who might take the humor literally, which they thought would be counterproductive.

The Spanish-speaking men liked this approach the least of all five approaches. They agreed that the theme is too serious and eliciting laughter is “completely inappropriate and immoral.” They said that humor denies the seriousness of the message.

### **3. *Celebrity Approach***

The focus group participants mistrusted celebrities as honest representatives of commercial products and concepts. They did not believe that they would convince anyone of their message. In any event, if a spokesperson were used, they felt that civil leaders rather than movie stars should deliver the message. The Hispanic pickup truck drivers, however, generally liked the celebrity spokesperson approach. They said they would feel motivated to wear their safety belt if they believed that the spokesperson were credible. Three such individuals mentioned by some in the Hispanic group were Ricardo Montalban, Vincente Fernandes, and Sammy Sosa.

### **4. *Medical Consequences Approach***

The men in this focus group said that the fear factor worked for them. They also said that the impact of such an approach would be short lived and that, if shown over and over again, the effectiveness of the messages would wear off.

The Hispanic men said that while they are accustomed to viewing gory real-life images in the Mexican media, they have not been desensitized to the power of such images and find them highly effective. They reported that images of collision victims would act as a great motivating factor and specifically recommended the approach for Latinos.

### **5. *Consequences to Self and Others Approach***

This group of Texans said that the consequences to self and others approach had the most impact on them and was their favorite theme. Their reaction to what they read and discussion for this approach illustrated for them pain and harm to their family members. This resulted in strong emotions of sadness and feelings of guilt.

The Hispanic group agreed that the consequences to self and others approach had the most impact on them too. They appreciated the effectiveness of mental images relating to family. When asked to imagine their own children hurt in a collision as a result of their neglect by not requiring the children to wear their safety belts, they felt devastated. The men said that the reason this approach is so effective is that it highlights an essential value of Hispanic culture, namely the commitment to the welfare of the family. The message, therefore, speaks to them in a very direct and emotional way.

## **Focus Group Responses to Existing Campaign Approaches – English-Speaking Group**

Four television videos, six radio transcripts, two brochures, and three posters were shown to the focus group participants for discussion. The television safety belt campaigns were developed in Oklahoma to encourage safety belt use. Three were targeted to both adults and youth. Each video showed the aftermath of a vehicle crash and the camera zoomed in on the blinking and chiming safety belt symbol on the instrument panel. The vehicles are severely damaged and

there is no sign of life. One of the campaigns shows a pickup truck. Another campaign targets children to convince them to convince their parents to wear safety belts.

The focus groups also listened to three 60-second radio spots from Oklahoma and three Ted Nugent radio campaigns from Illinois. Two brochures and three posters were shown from the State of Maryland.

The reality safety belt campaigns from Oklahoma did the best job of garnering attention and generating recall and playback. They depict everyday driving scenarios and got an emotional reaction, even among those who did not have children. All have mothers or sisters and most expressed the hope of having their own children in the future. They said that the flashback scenes were a vivid reminder that *“you can be here today and gone tomorrow.”* Because most respondents felt they could relate to these situations that strengthened their appeal. The radio scenarios involving short distances generated the most interest because men said it was in these situations that they think nothing negative will ever happen.

Participants responded favorably to Ted Nugent in one group and a few from a second group. Most think he is an *“over-the-hill rock and roller”* who has lived his life in the fast lane and, therefore, is not a credible spokesperson for safety issues. Only a couple of men in Montana truly like his radio spots because they believe they understand what he stands for. One said, *“Ted tells it like it is!”*

The Texas English-speaking group was asked to recall ads they have seen on television about safety belt use. The two that they mentioned were billboards and road signs: “Buckle Up – It’s the Law” and the Vince and Larry crash dummies’, *“Don’t be a dummy...wear your seat belt.”* They believed that these particular messages went against their philosophy of freedom of choice of whether to wear a safety belt or not. Some said that these slogans tend to cause them to rebel and ignore the law. They felt that the images of actual car crashes and what happens to people in such instances would be far more effective in promoting safety belt use than the crash dummies.

They did not like the information on children riding in the bed of pickup trucks and the accompanying tagline –“kids are not cargo.” These men thought that some of the campaigns, because they ignored other dangers such as cell phones, and driving after drinking, lacked credibility, and were weak. They thought the brochures were too hard to read, contained too much information and too many words, and should be simpler.

### **Focus Group Responses to Existing Campaign Approaches – Hispanic Group**

The men from this focus group were asked about other campaigns they could recall. Some remembered information about vehicle and passenger safety, particularly a commercial featuring the crash test dummies that they had seen in automobile dealerships. Others recalled seeing posters and handouts at their children’s schools highlighting the consequences of not wearing a safety belt. Many have seen billboards located in the outskirts of towns reminding them to use

their safety belts--especially when traveling with family members. They said that the crash dummies and billboards had an impact on them.

Hispanic participants suggested that messages should be delivered in Spanish and should reflect their culture. They thought that messages developed for English-speaking audiences addressed Hispanics who are already acculturated. They also felt that an approach that would have an impact on them would be one in which a smashed car is brought to local schools for students to see the results of a severe crash directly. They suggested that seeing and touching the vehicle, and learning of the fate of the occupants, who had not been wearing safety belts while in that same car, would serve as a powerful educational tool. They thought that the brochure was powerful, specifically the picture of a woman who was grieving the death of her husband who had died in a pickup truck crash.

In general, the Hispanic group reacted favorably to the safety belt campaign material they were shown. They saw the material as a motivating tool to increase safety belt use. They did express concern, however, that all of the campaigns were in English and had to be translated by the focus group moderator. Without the translation, many said that the messages would have had little impact on them or they may have ignored them altogether.

### **Campaign Component Development – English-Speaking Groups**

After reviewing current safety belt campaigns, the men were put in charge of developing a message designed to get people like themselves to buckle up more often. A few said they were doubtful that anything except excessive fines would get them to change their habits.

*“We have superman syndrome, it will never happen to me.”*

In general, however, participants liked reality-based efforts, saying the ads should be:

*“...blunt, factual”... “not a big production” “...more like a home video”*

It is important that the scenes:

*“... look real, not fake or staged”*

*“The accidents can’t be so bad that they look like even if you were wearing your seat belt you’d be dead anyway.”*

The theme should be family oriented:

*“... something that everybody could identify with, not celebrities and stuff, just stuff everyone has in common, like the donuts one we heard.”*

Some of the pickup truck drivers want to use testimonials. They would like to see someone next to the crashed vehicle saying:

*“I wasn’t wearing my seat belt the day this happened, and look what it did to me. Here there would be a graphic and show people in a wheelchair or people missing an arm or leg. Then show another crash scene, maybe worse than the first but in this scene the driver was belted and was able to walk away.”*

One person described his most vivid crash scene memory and suggested it may not be necessary to show graphic, gory detail. He had just come upon a crash and could tell it was a bad one not by the victims but based on the look on the paramedics’ and firefighters’ faces.

*“It was a sobering experience. You knew in an instant whoever it was didn’t make it.”*

Another man suggested using the scene from the movie “Remember the Titans”

*“...where the star football player went tearing out of town after the big game and got drilled by a flatbed truck and never could walk again.”*

It was further suggested that the messages be short.

*“The radio message we heard was good but too long. I’d probably change stations. But if you made it shorter and said something like ‘two things could happen – One you live, two you die’. People will listen to that.”*

Others agreed, especially the younger men who said:

*“With video games and stuff today, kids’ attention span is like 20 seconds.”*

The actual radio message mentioned above was about a vehicle crash and the audience was on the receiving end of a phone call about the crash. It did tell the listeners that two things could happen and then went on to give two somewhat detailed scenarios where in one event the friend or loved one was not wearing their safety belt. In that scenario, the person died. In the second scenario the person was wearing their safety belt and lived, but called to say they would be late.

Several people from each focus group liked the slogan from Oklahoma, “What’s holding you back” because it got the point of safety belts across without excessive emphasis on ‘you must wear a seat belt’.

Others suggested mimicking drunk driving ads that show a regular person doing something ordinary and at the end of the clip it says “killed by a drunk driver on such and such date.” In this case the ad ends with “Kristy, age 19 killed in a car accident driving 30 miles per hour on a dry sunny day. No seat belt.” This scene is particularly powerful because no one thinks they are going to die in a 30 mph crash and people assume crashes are more likely to occur at night or in bad weather.

A few group members were impressed with the factual information contained in the Maryland brochure even though they do not like the idea of using a brochure to deliver information.

*“The fact that you are fourteen times more likely to receive paralyzing injuries if you’re thrown from a truck – I didn’t know that. People know that you’re more likely to die – but what’s a seat belt do – it keeps you in that truck and not paralyzed.”*

The young men participating in these focus groups said they do not fear dying, they fear being paralyzed or maimed.

The English-speaking Lubbock group developed several themes that they would use to create messages to support safety belt use. They would use gory details that would include real pictures of actual people in the aftermath of a truck collision. They would also use specific statistics on crashes such as speed and fatalities of those wearing versus not wearing safety belts at the time of the collision. The data would correspond to their local region. The men would use trusted community leaders and not a celebrity spokesperson to deliver the message.

Information about why children should not ride in the cargo area of pickup trucks should be included in some of the safety belt messages. They would promote the theme of safety belt use and families and use the consequences to self and others approach. A particularly effective image mentioned was a woman pushing the wheelchair of her husband as the consequence of being ejected from his pickup truck during a crash.

The men suggested using images of real, local crashes in which people could recognize the streets of their town. This would increase understanding of the crash as a real and potential threat in their everyday lives. They would also include testimonials of real people whom they know and use this kind of script:

*“I just saw a father of one of my son’s friends in a wheelchair in the ballpark. I learned that this was the consequence of an accident where he hadn’t been wearing his seat belt. It made me feel very sad. I figured that if it could happen to him, it could happen to any of us.”*

### **Campaign Component Development - Hispanic Group**

The pickup truck drivers in this group recommended several messages and themes to convince other Hispanics to use their safety belts. They suggested emphasizing the negative consequences to family member in the event of a crash to them. They would relay a story about a relative who died in a car crash due to his or her refusal to wear a safety belt, along with the sorrow it brought to the rest of the family. They felt that that scenario would be an extremely effective campaign component.

Campaigns must be conducted in Spanish and should target the teenage audience for some of the messages. The men would present raw graphic images with blood in order to motivate Hispanics

to wear their safety belts. They would use credible spokespersons and mentioned: Ricardo Montalban, Sammy Sosa, Vicente Fernandez, and local Lubbock leaders such as Ramon Agala, Carmelo Reyna, and Judge Medina. The campaigns should be shown on Spanish language television stations. They would also feature newsletters and posters in stores, supermarkets, churches, movie theatres, and schools.

### **Reasons Given for Not Wearing Their Safety Belts**

The Detroit, Atlanta and Great Falls participants were polled at the end of the sessions (both Texas groups ran long and did not provide this information). They were asked to give the main reasons they do not wear their safety belts and to describe the time and places where they do not wear them. Of the 50 anonymous responses, half (25) gave behavioral reasons for not wearing their safety belt such as not remembering, laziness, not wanting to take the time or habit related. Another 40 percent (20) gave reasons that had to do with comfort. Of the 41 responses to the second question, 31 said they did not buckle up on short drives, on local roads, and in the neighborhood.

#### Main Reason for Not Wearing Your Safety Belt

Don't think or remember to put on	13
Uncomfortable	12
Habit or bad habit	6
Confining or restrictive or too tight	5
In a hurry, no time	4
Don't like them	3
Hassle, bothersome	3
Lazy, don't care	2
Trucks are safer than cars	1
Dirty from farm use	1

#### Times or Places You Don't Wear Safety Belt

Local road, neighborhood	23
Short distances	8
Everywhere I drive	3
On way to work	3
In a hurry, in and out	2
Alone	1
Nice weather	1



## VII. CONCLUSIONS

The findings of the eight focus groups revealed consistency of thought, opinion, and ideas. The men gave clear reasons why they did not wear their safety belts. The Spanish-speaking men, more often than not, expressed similar reasons for not wearing their safety belts. Nearly all of the participants agreed on the best approaches and elements for educational and enforcement campaign development to encourage pickup truck drivers to wear their safety belts.

The findings of the current report parallel the 1996 NHTSA study of young male pickup truck drivers ages 16-26 in rural areas of Texas and Kentucky (Bradbard, et al., 1996). A number of concerns about safety belt use remain the same:

- More concerned with their actions as they affect people to whom they feel close;
- Messages should be brief and simply stated;
- Messages should show direct consequences to non-user;
- There are common misconceptions and misinformation about safety belt effectiveness;
- Messages about death should focus on family and other loved ones left behind;
- Messages about occupant injuries should focus on loss of limb or paralysis and being confined to a wheelchair;
- Appeals should be made relating to family values; and
- Multi-media approach was preferred (radio, TV, print), but not a deluge of information.

In the current study there was no doubt that male pickup trucks drivers consider the subject of safety belt use to be serious and on an intellectual level they understand that there are safety advantages. They want their children to wear them and understand why their wife, mother, girlfriend, and other loved ones wear their safety belts and are glad they do. Perhaps that is why there was nearly complete agreement about not using humor in the message. They just don't find the subject to be something to joke about and showed concern about children misinterpreting the seriousness of the issue. This was true across age and ethnic groups.

For many men, there was an element in play that had nothing to do with understanding the problem and potential consequences of not wearing a safety belt. Many did not believe that it was the government's right or responsibility to mandate safety belt usage. Two earlier NHTSA studies using focus groups had similar findings: "Program Strategies For Increasing Safety Belt Usage in Rural Areas" and "Increasing Seat Belt Use Among Part Time Users: Messages and Strategies." Both studies found that issues of personal control, independence, and freedom of choice were frequently mentioned as reasons for not wearing a safety belt.

Nearly all of the participants in the current study pointed out inconsistencies with State laws in other highway safety areas. Some States lack motorcycle helmet laws and yet have laws that require safety belt use. Many of the men raised this example as a justification for not only

ignoring the safety belt law but also as a reason why the government should not mandate safety belt use.

Whether young or old, the men were not impressed with statistical facts as a motivator to increase safety belt use. There was a general consensus that numbers can be used to prove whatever point one chooses to make, at least one individual was impressed with facts about rollover crashes and ejection.

There is an apparent lack of understanding about airbags. Some pickup truck drivers fail to see the need to wear their safety belts in the presence of an airbag. Great strides have been made with regard to informing the general motoring public about the dangers of allowing infants, babies, toddlers and children under age twelve to ride in the front seat where they could be exposed to the impact of an activated airbag. Similar campaigns should be developed that focus on male pickup truck drivers that show how an airbag can work both for and against occupants, particularly what the likely crash outcome would be if the occupants were not wearing their safety belt.

New campaign development should strongly consider the consensus opinions as to where and why male pickup truck drivers in rural areas of the U.S. do not wear their safety belts. Key elements in message development should address and/or refute the following about safety belts. Safety belts are:

- Uncomfortable;
- Restrictive;
- A “hassle” – especially when in and out of a vehicle;
- A debatable safety benefit;
- A concern; one could get trapped in a vehicle;
- An issue of personal freedom of choice - whether to wear one or not;
- Not needed on local roads and low speed limits;
- Not needed on short trips;
- Not needed in good weather; and
- Not needed in a pickup truck because they are a larger vehicle and thus safer.

New campaigns should be designed to emphasize crash fears and concerns that were repeatedly voiced by most of the participants. The Hispanic men and all of the younger men were not concerned about dying in a crash. Messages for these men should not show crashes that are so severe that survival in any event would be questionable. Crash fears to emphasize include:

- Paralysis and wheelchair use;
- Loss of limb; and
- Impact on family; feelings of sadness and leaving them behind.

New messages and campaigns should include the following:

- Use realism;
- Be short and to the point;
- Show consequences to family;
- Show every day events, local areas, real people;
- Film video messages in rural communities;
- Spokesperson from the local community, celebrities are not recommended;
- Show real people who have been in crashes;
- Use First Responders who have gone to crash scenes;
- “Medical Consequences” can be used for Hispanic and young male audiences;
- Show the possibility of survival if safety belt had been used in a violent crash;
- Film and record Hispanic versions that are not just language translations;
- If statistics are used – use “1 out of 3,” not 33 percent; and
- Humor is not recommended.

Educational efforts and campaigns should address the following subject matter:

- Low speed crashes - show crash damage and travel speed;
- Airbags - ejection and rollovers;
- Short trips;
- Hispanic and youth “fate” issues;
- Develop the “habit” of wearing a safety belt;
- Wearing a safety belt should be as automatic as putting the key in the ignition;
- Reverse the “mind set” of freedom to choose to wear a safety belt;
- Decide to wear a safety belt all the time versus deciding when to wear the safety belt;
- Get used to the feel of the belt: develop countermeasures for discomfort; and
- Evolution of DWI laws and societal acceptance compared to safety belt use acceptance.

### **Additional Issues**

1. Many participants mentioned that higher fines for noncompliance with the safety belt laws would be an effective motivation for wearing their safety belt.
2. Primary or standard enforcement of the safety belt laws in all States will continue to yield higher usage rates throughout all populations.
3. Commercial vehicle drivers are now required to wear safety belts. Now is an appropriate time to make the case to the States which do not require pickup truck occupants eighteen years and older, to change their laws. If drivers of large trucks must wear safety belts, then pickup truck drivers should as well.

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# APPENDIX A

## 1999 FARS DATA

Table A1 Vehicles in Fatal Crashes by Body Type (FARS 1999)								
Fatality in the Vehicle	Body Type						Total	
	Pickup		Auto		All Other Vehicles		Count	%
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%		
No Fatality	5323	48.0%	9468	34.0%	9657	54.6%	24448	43.1%
Fatality	5773	52.0%	18419	66.0%	8028	45.4%	32220	56.9%
Total	11096	100.0%	27887	100.0%	17685	100.0%	56668	100.0%

Table A2 Fatalities By Vehicle Body Type and Restraint Use (FARS 1999)								
Restraint Usage	Body Type						Total	
	Pickup		Auto		All Other Vehicles		Count	%
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%		
None Used or NA	4502	72.9%	10535	50.7%	5055	57.0%	20092	56.1%
Restraint Used	1269	20.6%	8281	39.9%	1706	19.2%	11256	31.4%
Other	401	6.5%	1955	9.4%	2102	23.7%	4458	12.5%
Total	6172	100.0%	20771	100.0%	8863	100.0%	35806	100.0%

Table A3 Cargo Area Occupant Fatalities (FARS 1999)								
Seating Position	Body Type						Total	
	Pickup		Auto		All Other Vehicles		Count	%
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%		
Driver	4711	76.3%	14123	68.0%	6376	71.9%	25210	70.4%
Other Passenger/ Passenger/Cargo Area	127	2.1%	12	.1%	223	2.5%	362	1.0%
All Others	1334	21.6%	6636	31.9%	2264	25.5%	10234	28.6%
Total	6172	100.0%	20771	100.0%	8863	100.0%	35806	100.0%

Table A4				
State-By-State Fatal Crashes: Restraint Used and Vehicle Body Type (FARS 1999)				
State	Body Type			
	Pickup Truck		Auto	
	Count	%	Count	%
AL	190	17.3%	575	52.4%
AK	16	19.3%	32	38.6%
AZ	257	22.3%	524	45.6%
AR	118	23.1%	215	42.2%
CA	734	15.6%	2568	54.6%
CO	135	17.7%	353	46.3%
CT	17	5.8%	198	67.1%
DC	13	13.4%	52	53.6%
DE	2	6.7%	17	56.7%
FL	506	13.3%	2185	57.5%
GA	237	13.7%	971	56.0%
HI	22	19.5%	62	54.9%
ID	64	24.4%	113	43.1%
IL	139	9.5%	837	57.4%
IN	93	9.4%	559	56.6%
IA	43	11.9%	213	59.0%
KS	72	15.8%	241	52.9%
KY	136	19.0%	402	56.2%
LA	178	21.0%	436	51.5%
ME	31	14.6%	137	64.3%
MD	99	12.2%	490	60.6%
MA	18	9.9%	118	64.8%
MI	292	17.0%	961	55.9%
MN	87	14.1%	334	54.3%
MS	122	17.0%	380	52.9%
MO	126	12.9%	558	57.0%
MT	37	26.6%	46	33.1%
NE	25	10.4%	116	48.1%
NV	92	21.0%	194	44.2%
NH	7	7.4%	75	78.9%
NJ	49	7.0%	452	64.2%
NM	121	23.1%	228	43.5%
NY	148	8.6%	1044	60.6%
NC	309	15.2%	1152	56.5%
ND	17	19.8%	39	45.3%
OH	205	13.5%	849	56.0%
OK	168	21.5%	401	51.3%
OR	120	22.1%	274	50.4%
PA	173	12.4%	744	53.1%

Table A4 (Continued)				
State-By-State Fatal Crashes: Restraint Used and Vehicle Body Type (FARS 1999)				
State	Body Type			
	Pickup Truck		Auto	
	Count	%	Count	%
RI	5	8.3%	40	66.7%
SC	180	15.2%	638	53.8%
SD	19	20.9%	43	47.3%
TN	207	16.3%	669	52.6%
TX	1219	25.5%	2304	48.2%
UT	55	16.8%	133	40.5%
VT	10	13.5%	33	44.6%
VA	84	13.3%	360	57.1%
WA	120	16.8%	373	52.2%
WV	77	20.1%	188	49.0%
WI	121	15.7%	378	49.1%
WY	31	23.8%	35	26.9%
Total	7346	16.2%	24339	53.7%

Table A5				
State-By-State Fatal Crashes: No Restraint Used and Vehicle Body Type (FARS 1999)				
State	Body Type			
	Pickup Truck		Auto	
	Count	%	Count	%
AL	301	24.6%	654	53.5%
AK	30	33.7%	27	30.3%
AZ	271	25.7%	382	36.3%
AR	204	32.4%	253	40.2%
CA	320	16.3%	880	44.9%
CO	167	24.8%	243	36.1%
CT	23	9.1%	155	61.5%
DC	18	18.9%	58	61.1%
DE	1	2.9%	17	50.0%
FL	498	17.6%	1424	50.2%
GA	307	25.0%	570	46.3%
HI	17	18.9%	37	41.1%
ID	126	31.6%	136	34.1%
IL	164	14.6%	601	53.3%
IN	198	22.7%	429	49.2%
IA	97	25.3%	154	40.2%
KS	184	33.5%	209	38.0%
KY	219	25.1%	485	55.5%
LA	276	32.2%	382	44.6%

<b>Table A5 (Continued)</b>				
<b>State-By-State Fatal Crashes: No Restraint Used and Vehicle Body Type (FARS 1999)</b>				
<b>State</b>	<b>Body Type</b>			
	<b>Pickup Truck</b>		<b>Auto</b>	
	<b>Count</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>ME</b>	29	17.9%	87	53.7%
<b>MD</b>	56	15.6%	220	61.3%
<b>MA</b>	31	10.3%	207	68.5%
<b>MI</b>	196	20.1%	520	53.3%
<b>MN</b>	115	22.2%	249	48.1%
<b>MS</b>	281	23.3%	693	57.6%
<b>MO</b>	326	27.4%	576	48.4%
<b>MT</b>	101	31.2%	99	30.6%
<b>NE</b>	73	20.6%	159	44.9%
<b>NV</b>	66	24.6%	132	49.3%
<b>NH</b>	28	20.1%	63	45.3%
<b>NJ</b>	34	5.7%	364	61.3%
<b>NM</b>	142	26.1%	157	28.9%
<b>NY</b>	113	10.7%	609	57.9%
<b>NC</b>	205	19.5%	515	49.1%
<b>ND</b>	49	35.8%	63	46.0%
<b>OH</b>	218	15.2%	725	50.5%
<b>OK</b>	292	35.1%	347	41.8%
<b>OR</b>	72	27.5%	121	46.2%
<b>PA</b>	172	12.7%	734	54.2%
<b>RI</b>	4	4.8%	51	61.4%
<b>SC</b>	169	16.3%	587	56.8%
<b>SD</b>	51	25.0%	108	52.9%
<b>TN</b>	339	23.3%	772	53.1%
<b>TX</b>	973	30.0%	1292	39.9%
<b>UT</b>	96	23.9%	144	35.1%
<b>VT</b>	16	17.4%	44	47.8%
<b>VA</b>	151	18.9%	421	52.6%
<b>WA</b>	129	23.2%	272	48.8%
<b>WV</b>	94	23.9%	207	52.5%
<b>WI</b>	123	18.4%	319	47.6%
<b>WY</b>	70	32.0%	67	30.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>8237</b>	<b>22.0%</b>	<b>18020</b>	<b>48.1%</b>

Note: The FARS numbers for restrained and unrestrained in Tables A6 and A7 do not equal 100 percent because FARS distinguishes the presence of unknown data.



## APPENDIX B

### STATE-BY-STATE FATALITY AND EDUCATIONAL CAMPAIGN DATA (as of 2000)

Table B1 Statewide Pickup Truck Summary											
State	Number of Pickup Truck Occupant Fatalities Statewide 1999	Pickup Truck Fatalities as a Percentage of Statewide Fatalities	State Pickup Truck Occupant Fatalities – as a Percentage of the Total National Pickup Truck Fatalities	Safety belt Law for Pickup Trucks Same as Passenger Vehicles	Separate Pickup Truck Crash, Injury, Fatality Data Available			Separate Pickup Truck Belt Use Data Available	Previous Pickup Truck Oriented PIE Campaigns	Future Pickup Truck PIE Planned	Expressed Interest in Participating
					Driver	Passenger	Cargo Area				
AL	207	22.5%	3.4%	T	T	T	T	T	0	0	N
AK	14	17.9%	.2%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	T
AZ	157	18.4%	2.8%	T	T	T	T	0	0	0	T
AR	149	26.2%	2.4%	T	T	T	T	T	T	0	N
CA	412	13.2%	6.7%	T	T	T	T	T	0	0	0
CO	109	16.4%	1.8%	T	T	T	T	T	T	0	T
CT	16	5.8%	.3%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
DC	4	7.3%	.1%	T	0	0	0	0	0	0	T
DE	9	7.8%	.1%	T	T	P	P	0	0	0	T
FL	326	13.6%	5.3%	T	T	0	0	0	T	0	T
GA	267	18.5%	4.4%	N	P	T	T	T	0	T	T
HI	9	8.7%	.1%	T	P	0	0	T	T	0	T
IA	79	18.6%	1.3%	T	T	0	0	0	T	T	T
ID	56	26.9%	1.1%	T	T	T	T	T	0	0	T
IL	142	11.8%	2.3%	T	T	T	T	T	T	0	N
IN	127	15.2%	2.1%	N	T	P	0	T	0	0	T
KS	100	21.5%	1.6%	T	T	T	T	T	0	T	N
KY	156	19.9%	2.6%	T	0	0	0	T	0	0	T
LA	208	25.0%	3.4%	T	T	T	0	T	T	T	T
MA	35	9.0%	.6%	T	0	0	0	0	0	0	N
MD	50	9.1%	.8%	T	T	T	0	T	T	T	T
ME	30	17.2%	.5%	T	0	0	0	0	0	0	T
MI	163	14.4%	2.7%	T	P	P	P	T	T	T	T
MN	92	17.9%	1.5%	T	T	T	T	0	0	0	T
MO	215	21.3%	3.5%	N	T	T	T	T	T	0	T
MS	177	24.7%	2.9%	T	0	0	0	T	0	0	0

**Table B1 (Continued)**  
**Statewide Pickup Truck Summary**

State	Number of Pickup Truck Occupant Fatalities Statewide (1999)	Pickup Truck Fatalities as a Percentage of Statewide Fatalities	State Pickup Truck Occupant Fatalities – as a Percentage of the Total National Pickup Truck Fatalities	Safety belt Law for Pickup Trucks Same as Passenger Vehicles	Separate Pickup Truck Crash, Injury, Fatality Data Available			Separate Pickup Truck Belt Use Data Available	Previous Pickup Truck Oriented PIE Campaigns	Future Pickup Truck PIE Planned	Expressed Interest in Participating
					Driver	Passenger	Cargo Area				
MT	59	26.8%	1.0%	T	P	P	P	T	0	0	N
NE	38	16.7%	.6%	T	T	T	0	0	0	T	T
NV	48	18.3%	.8%	T	T	T	P	0	0	0	T
NH	13	9.9%	2.0%	N	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
NJ	27	4.6%	4.0%	T	T	T	T	0	0	0	N
NM	87	1.4%	22.7%	T	T	T	T	0	T	0	T
NY	86	1.4%	7.4%	T	T	T	P	T	0	0	N
NC	199	3.3%	14.7%	T	T	T	T	T	0	0	T
ND	28	.5%	27.5%	T	T	T	T	T	0	0	T
OH	165	2.7%	13.1%	T	T	T	T	T	0	T	T
OK	160	2.6%	25.8%	T	T	T	T	T	T	0	T
OR	82	1.3%	19.8%	N	T	T	0	0	0	0	T
PA	110	1.8%	8.3%	T	T	T	T	0	T	0	T
RI	6	.1%	8.7%	T	0	0	0	0	0	0	N
SC	150	2.5%	16.2%	T	T	T	T	0	0	0	T
SD	30	.5%	19.5%	T	T	0	0	0	0	0	T
TN	236	3.9%	20.4%	T	T	0	0	?	0	0	N
TX	781	12.8%	24.3%	T	P	P	P	T	0	0	0
UT	44	.7%	17.2%	T	T	T	0	0	0	0	T
VT	6	.1%	6.9%	T	P	P	P	0	0	0	T
VA	123	2.0%	15.0%	T	T	T	T	0	T	T	N
WA	84	1.4%	14.8%	T	P	P	P	T	0	T	T
WV	61	1.0%	17.7%	T	0	0	0	T	0	T	T
WI	118	1.9%	16.6%	T	T	T	T	T	0	T	T
WY	54	.9%	30.0%	T	T	T	T	0	T	T	0
PR	?	?	?	?	T	T	0	T	T	T	T
GU	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	0

☐ = Yes  
 P = Partial  
 T = Tentative  
 N = No  
 0 = No response  
 ? = Outstanding data

Table B2: Governor's Offices of Highway Safety Information Tally				
Question	State Responses *			
	Yes	No	Yes With Exceptions	No Response
Pickup truck occupant protection laws compared to other passenger vehicles	44	6	0	0
Illegal for children to ride in cargo area	19	20	10	1
Publicizing Kids Aren't Cargo campaign	15	33	0	2
Pickup truck safety belt data collected separately from other passenger vehicles	28	22	0	0
Observational data on cargo area passengers	3	47	0	0
Pickup truck public Information, education or Enforcement				
campaign tried	16	30	0	2
campaign planned in future	14	31	2	6
Willingness to serve as pilot test location	28	11	7	4
Crash Data				
pickup truck drivers	38	8	0	4
pickup truck front seat passengers	33	12	0	5
cargo area occupants	25	16	0	9
Fatality Data				
pickup truck drivers	41	5	0	4
pickup truck front seat passengers	31	9	0	5
cargo area occupants	29	13	0	8
Injury Data				
pickup truck drivers	37	8	0	5
pickup truck front seat passengers	31	12	0	7
cargo area occupants	24	15	0	11

## APPENDIX C

### AGE AND GENDER IN FATAL CRASHES

<b>Table C1</b> <b>Pickup Truck Occupants Involved in Fatal Crashes</b> <b>By Age and Gender (FARS 2001)</b>								
Age Group	Male		Female		Unknown		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
<b>0-9</b>	371	2.8%	300	8.7%	2	1.5%	673	4.0%
<b>10-19</b>	1971	15.0%	712	20.7%			2683	16.1%
<b>20-29</b>	3152	24.0%	607	17.7%			3759	22.5%
<b>30-39</b>	2452	18.7%	605	17.6%			3057	18.3%
<b>40-49</b>	2178	16.6%	499	14.5%	1	.7%	2678	16.0%
<b>50-59</b>	1388	10.6%	307	8.9%			1695	10.2%
<b>60-69</b>	781	6.0%	185	5.4%			966	5.8%
<b>70-79</b>	520	4.0%	128	3.7%			648	3.9%
<b>80-89</b>	198	1.5%	51	1.5%			249	1.5%
<b>90+</b>	22	.2%	3	.1%			25	.1%
<b>Unknown</b>	92	.7%	35	1.0%	133	97.8%	260	1.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>13125</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>3432</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>16693</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

<b>Table C2: Pickup Truck Occupants Involved in Fatal Crashes</b> <b>By Age and Gender (FARS 1999)</b>								
Age Group	Male		Female		Unknown		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
<b>0-9</b>	372	2.8%	311	8.9%	1	.7%	684	4.1%
<b>10-19</b>	2048	15.5%	730	20.9%	1	.7%	2779	16.5%
<b>20-29</b>	3213	24.2%	662	18.9%	1	.7%	3876	23.0%
<b>30-39</b>	2677	20.2%	614	17.6%	0	---	3291	19.5%
<b>40-49</b>	2054	15.5%	470	13.4%	0	---	2524	14.9%
<b>50-59</b>	1331	10.0%	311	8.9%	1	.7%	1643	9.7%
<b>60-69</b>	719	5.4%	189	5.4%	0	---	908	5.4%
<b>70-79</b>	504	3.8%	128	3.7%	0	---	632	3.7%
<b>80-89</b>	198	1.5%	54	1.5%	0	---	252	1.5%
<b>90+</b>	26	.2%	5	.1%	0	---	31	.2%
<b>Unknown</b>	111	.8%	22	.6%	134	97.1%	267	1.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>13253</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>3496</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>16887</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

<b>Table C3</b> <b>Automobile Occupants Involved in Fatal Crashes</b> <b>By Age and Gender (FARS 2001)</b>								
Age Group	Male		Female		Unknown		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
<b>0-9</b>	1253	4.7%	1268	6.7%	2	.5%	2523	5.5%
<b>10-19</b>	5832	21.8%	3950	21.0%	4	1.0%	9786	21.3%
<b>20-29</b>	7914	29.6%	3706	19.7%	4	1.0%	11624	25.3%
<b>30-39</b>	3545	13.2%	2325	12.3%			5870	12.8%
<b>40-49</b>	2682	10.0%	2084	11.1%	2	.5%	4768	10.4%
<b>50-59</b>	1727	6.5%	1542	8.2%			3269	7.1%
<b>60-69</b>	1132	4.2%	1243	6.6%			2375	5.2%
<b>70-79</b>	1405	5.3%	1512	8.0%			2917	6.3%
<b>80-89</b>	912	3.4%	932	4.9%	1	.2%	1845	4.0%
<b>90+</b>	115	.4%	131	.7%			246	.5%
<b>Unknown</b>	240	.9%	138	.7%	402	96.9%	780	1.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>26757</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>18831</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>415</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>46003</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

<b>Table C4</b> <b>Automobile Occupants Involved in Fatal Crashes</b> <b>By Age and Gender (FARS 1999)</b>								
Age Group	Male		Female		Unknown		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
<b>0-9</b>	1464	5.4%	1356	6.8%	3	.7%	2823	6.0%
<b>10-19</b>	6140	22.8%	4258	21.4%	2	.5%	10400	22.0%
<b>20-29</b>	7453	27.6%	3729	18.8%	1	.2%	11183	23.6%
<b>30-39</b>	3573	13.2%	2616	13.2%	2	.5%	6191	13.1%
<b>40-49</b>	2594	9.6%	2094	10.5%	2	.5%	4690	9.9%
<b>50-59</b>	1671	6.2%	1615	8.1%	1	.2%	3287	6.9%
<b>60-69</b>	1214	4.5%	1339	6.7%	1	.2%	2554	5.4%
<b>70-79</b>	1484	5.5%	1616	8.1%	0	---	3100	6.6%
<b>80-89</b>	1048	3.9%	1022	5.1%	0	---	2070	4.4%
<b>90+</b>	125	.5%	101	.5%	0	---	226	.5%
<b>Unknown</b>	210	.8%	140	.7%	429	97.3%	779	1.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>26976</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>19886</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>441</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>47303</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

## APPENDIX D

### STATE-BY-STATE OCCUPANT PROTECTION LAWS AND ENFORCEMENT PROTOCOLS

<b>Table D1</b> <b>State Safety Belt Laws (Current to November 2000)</b>			
State	Enforcement	Coverage	
		Seat	Age
AL	Primary	Front	6+
AK	Secondary	All	16+
AZ	Secondary	Front	5+
AR	Secondary	Front	5+
CA	Primary	All	16+
CO	Secondary	Front *	17+
CT	Primary	Front	4+
DE	Secondary	Front	All
DC	Primary	All	16+
FL	Secondary	Front	6+; 6-17 in rear
GA	Primary	Front	4+; 4-17 in rear
HI	Primary	Front	4+
ID	Secondary	Front	4+
IL	Secondary	Front *	6+
IN	Primary	Front	4+; 4-11 in rear
IA	Primary	Front	6+
KS	Secondary	Front	14+
KY	Secondary	All	Over 40 in. tall
LA	Primary	Front	13+
ME	Secondary	All	4+
MD	Primary	Front	16+
MA	Secondary	All	12+
MI	Primary	Front	4+; 4-15 in rear
MN	Secondary	Front	All; 3-10 in rear
MS	Secondary	Front	4+; 4-7 in rear

**Table D1 (Continued)**  
**Safety Belt Laws (Current to November 2000)**

State	Enforcement	Coverage	
		Seat	Age
MO	Secondary	Front	4+; 4-15 in rear
MT	Secondary	All	4+
NE	Secondary	Front	5+
NV	Secondary	All	6+
NH	Secondary	All	Under 18 only
NJ	Primary	Front	5+
NM	Primary	Front	11+
NY	Primary	Front	16+
NC	Primary	Front	16+
ND	Secondary	Front	18+
OH	Secondary	Front	4+
OK	Primary	Front	All
OR	Primary	All	16+
PA	Secondary	Front	4+
RI	Secondary	All	6+
SC	Secondary	Front	6+
SD	Secondary	Front	5+
TN	Secondary	Front	13+
TX	Primary	Front	4+; 4-14 in rear
UT	Secondary	All	19+
VT	Secondary	All	13+
VA	Secondary	Front	16+
WA	Secondary	All	All
WV	Secondary	Front	9+; 9-17 in rear
WI	Secondary	All	4+; 4-15 in rear
WY	Secondary	All	5+
PU	Primary	front	5+
* Law applies to all seating positions if driver is under 18 years old.			

**APPENDIX E**

**STATE-BY-STATE**

**PICKUP TRUCK CARGO LAWS**

**AND**

**EDUCATIONAL CAMPAIGNS (as of 2000)**

Table E1: “Kids Aren’t Cargo” Summary Data							
State	Law Prohibits			Public Information Campaign Yes	Occupants in Cargo Area Observations Yes	Cargo Area Data	
	Y	N	Under “X” Age			Injury	Fatalities
AL	---	U	---	NO	U	YES	YES
AK	---	U	---	?	?	?	?
AZ	---	U	---	U	NO	YES	YES
AR	---	U	---	U	NO	YES	YES
CA	U	---	---	NO	NO	YES	YES
CO	---	U	---	NO	NO	YES	YES
CT	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
DC	---	U	---	NO	NO	NO	NO
DE	U	---	---	NO	NO	YES	YES
FL	---	---	6	U	NO	NO	NO
GA	U	---	---	NO	U	YES	YES
HI	---	---	13	NO	NO	NO	NO
IA	---	U	---	U	NO	NO	NO
ID	---	U	---	U	NO	YES	YES
IL	---	U	---	U	NO	YES	YES
IN	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
KS	U	---	---	NO	NO	YES	YES
KY	U	---	---	NO	NO	NO	NO
LA	U	---	---	U	NO	NO	NO
MA	U	---	---	NO	NO	NO	NO
MD	U	---	16	U	NO	0	0
ME	---	U	---	0	0	0	0
MI	---	---	4 t	NO	NO	NO	YES
MN	---	U	---	NO	NO	YES	YES
MO	U	---	---	NO	NO	YES	YES
MS	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
MT	?	?	t	?	?	?	?
NE	---	U	---	U	NO	NO	NO
NV	---	---	5	NO	NO	NO	YES



Table E1: “Kids Aren’t Cargo” Summary Data (Continued)							
State	Law Prohibits			Public Information Campaign Yes	Occupants in Cargo Area Observations Yes	Cargo Area Data	
	Y	N	Under “X” Age			Injury	Fatalities
NH	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
NJ	U	---	---	NO	NO	YES	YES
NM	---	U	---	NO	NO	YES	YES
NY	---	U	---	NO	NO	YES	YES
NC	U	---	---	NO	NO	YES	YES
ND	---	U	---	NO	NO	YES	YES
OH	U	---	---	NO	NO	YES	YES
OK	---	U	---	NO	NO	YES	YES
OR	---	---	t	U	NO	NO	NO
PA	U	---	---	NO	NO	YES	YES
RI	U	---	---	NO	NO	NO	NO
SC	---	---	6	NO	NO	YES	YES
SD	---	---	5	0	0	0	0
TN	U	---	---	NO	NO	NO	NO
TX	---	---	12	U	NO	0	0
UT	---	---	t	U	NO	0	0
VT	---	U	---	NO	NO	NO	YES
VA	U	---	---	U	NO	YES	YES
WA	---	U	---	NO	NO	NO	YES
WV	---	U	---	NO	NO	NO	NO
WI	U	---	---	U	NO	YES	YES
WY	U	---	---	U	NO	YES	YES
PR	U	---	NO	U	U	NO	NO
GU	?	?	?	?	?	?	?

U = Yes  
 t = Any age can ride in cargo area if all belts are in use  
 ? = Outstanding data  
 0 = No response

## APPENDIX F

### PARTICIPANT SCREENING TOOLS

Participant Screener For Georgia, Michigan, Montana, and Texas (and Spanish translation)

Hello, my name is ( ) with ( ), a market research firm located here in ( ). We are currently conducting a study on people's attitudes towards automotive related issues. We will be conducting focus group discussions on ( ). We will be offering ( ) to compensate you for your time. Will you be available?

Let me ask you a few questions.

\*\*\*\*\*All Respondents Must Be MALE\*\*\*\*\*

1. Do you or anyone in your household work in any of the following fields?  
(if yes to any, TERMINATE)

Advertising, public relations or lobbying \_\_\_\_\_  
Radio, TV or other media related fields \_\_\_\_\_  
Opinion or market research \_\_\_\_\_  
A business that sells, services or rents  
automobile vehicles \_\_\_\_\_

2. Have you ever been in an interview or a group discussion  
for a marketing research company before?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ (Go to #3)  
No \_\_\_\_\_ (Go to #4)

3. How long ago and what was the topic?

If less than 6 month \_\_\_\_\_ (TERMINATE)  
If topic was related to automotive vehicles \_\_\_\_\_ (TERMINATE)

4. What do you consider to be your race?

African American \_\_\_\_\_  
Caucasian \_\_\_\_\_  
Hispanic \_\_\_\_\_  
Other \_\_\_\_\_

5. Which of the following vehicles do you own and drive on a regular basis?

- a. Automobile \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Mini van \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Full-size Van \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Sport Utility Vehicle \_\_\_\_\_
- e. Pick-up Truck \_\_\_\_\_ (if NOT indicated, TERMINATE)

6. Is the area in which you live considered to be an urban, suburban or rural area?

- a. Urban \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Suburban \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Rural \_\_\_\_\_ (If indicated, Go To #8)

7. Is the area in which you work considered to be an urban, suburban or rural areas?

- a. Urban \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Suburban \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Rural \_\_\_\_\_ (If NOT indicated, TERMINATE)

8. Which of the following statements best describes how you are?

- a. I never use seat belts when driving my pick-up truck \_\_\_\_\_
- b. I seldom use seat belts when driving my pick-up truck \_\_\_\_\_
- c. I use seat belts some times when driving my pick-up truck \_\_\_\_\_
- d. I use my seat belts most times when driving my pick-up truck \_\_\_\_\_
- e. I always use seat belts when driving my pick-up truck \_\_\_\_\_

If "d" or "e" indicated, TERMINATE

9. In which of the following ranges is your household income?

- |                    |       |           |  |
|--------------------|-------|-----------|--|
| Under \$20,000     | _____ | (want     |  |
| \$20,000-29,999    | _____ | a mixture |  |
| \$30,000-49,999    | _____ | of        |  |
| \$50,000 and above | _____ | incomes)  |  |

10. Could you please tell me your occupation? (RECORD JOB TITLE AND COMPANY NAME) \_\_\_\_\_

If employed by local, State, or federal government, TERMINATE

No more than 2 per group can be students or unemployed.

11. Which of the following best reflects your marital status:

- a. Single \_\_\_\_\_ (want  
b. Married \_\_\_\_\_ a mixture  
c. Divorced \_\_\_\_\_ of  
d. Separated \_\_\_\_\_ marital status)

12. Are you a parent with children who live at home with you?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ (At least half of group must indicate "YES")  
No \_\_\_\_\_

13. In which of the following ranges is your age?

- Under 18 \_\_\_\_\_ (TERMINATE)  
18-22 \_\_\_\_\_ (Recruit for "YOUNGER GROUP")  
23-27 \_\_\_\_\_ (Recruit for "YOUNGER GROUP")  
28-35 \_\_\_\_\_ (Recruit for "OLDER GROUP")  
36-54 \_\_\_\_\_ (Recruit for "OLDER GROUP")  
55 and older \_\_\_\_\_ (Recruit for "OLDER GROUP")

Want a mixture of ages.

\*\*\*\*\*RECRUITMENT ROUTINE\*\*\*\*\*

\*\*\*\*\*Articulation Drill\*\*\*\*\*

If you could start your own business, what would it be, and how would it be different from its competition? \_\_\_\_\_

Only recruit respondents who are able to formulate and articulate ideas clearly and in detail.  
Otherwise, TERMINATE

\*\*\*\*\*Respondent Information\*\*\*\*\*

Record:

Younger Male Group (Age 18-27) \_\_\_\_\_  
Older Male Group (Age 28 & up) \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone numbers: \_\_\_\_\_ (home)  
\_\_\_\_\_ (work)

## **APPENDIX G**

### **MODERATOR'S GUIDE FOR FOCUS GROUPS CONDUCTED WITH RURAL, MALE PICKUP TRUCK DRIVERS**

#### **I. INTRODUCTION (10 Min.)**

- ★ Explain the purpose and process of the focus groups.
- ★ Respondents introduce themselves by providing:
  - Name
  - Age
  - Occupation
  - Household composition

#### **II. ATTITUDES TOWARDS SAFETY MEASURES (20 Minutes)**

- ★ To what extent do you consider yourselves to be generally safety conscious?
- ★ What are the things about which you are most conscientious relative to safety? Why?
  - What are examples of things you do to promote safety in these areas?
  - How did you learn about these things?
- ★ Generally speaking, are there any things relative to safety you know you should be doing, but you're not? What/Why not?
- ★ How do you feel about seat belts?  
(Stress that this part of conversation has nothing to do with whether they use seat belts or not, just attitudes)
  - Do you feel seat belts are important to safety? Why/Why not?
  - Who needs them?
  - Are attitudes any different for pick-up trucks versus cars?
- ★ What are the laws regarding seat belts? (PROBE: Cars versus pick-up trucks)
- ★ How do you feel about these laws? (PROBE: Cars versus pick-up trucks)
  - What should the laws be? Why?
- ★ What are the laws regarding passengers in the bed of a pick-up truck?

- ★ How do you feel about these laws?
- ★ What do you think about the safety of riding in the cargo area of a pick-up truck?
  - How often do you see passengers in pick-up beds?
  - Do you ever ride there?
  - Describe the most likely occasions?

### III. SAFETY BELT UTILIZATION (15 Minutes)

- ★ How often do you use seat belts?
  - How often in the last week did you NOT wear the seat belt?
- ★ What kind of things impact whether or not you use seat belts?  
(PROBE: children, other passengers, distance, highway, city, policemen, State laws, fines, and likelihood of being stopped)
- ★ Are you any more or less likely to use seat belts if you are in a car or pick-up truck?
- ★ What are some of the specific things that keep you from wearing seat belts more often?
  - Did you wear seat belts as a child?
- ★ What are some of the reasons why you use seat belts?  
(Safer if in a crash, reminder of passenger, set good example for children, don't want a ticket, it's the law)
- ★ How would the imagery you associate with the person(s) who typically use seat belts compare to that of people who typically do not use seat belts?

### IV. RESPONSE TO MOTIVATIONAL EFFORTS (30 Minutes)

- ★ What kind of things need to be, or could be, done to get you to wear seat belts more often?

INTRODUCE EACH CONCEPT STATEMENT/THEME and obtain responses to:

- ★ How do you feel about this theme?
- ★ How effective do you feel this theme could be?
  - What specifically impacts the potential effectiveness of this approach/theme?
- ★ Could anything be done to make it more effective?

- ★ For whom might this theme work?

AFTER ALL HAVE BEEN DISCUSSED:

- ★ Which of these themes work best/least?

#### V. RESPONSES TO EXISTING CAMPAIGNS AND PROPERTIES (15 Minutes)

- ★ Are there any efforts you remember that were directed at getting people to wear safety belt more often?
  - Describe the efforts?
  - What did you think about them?
  - To what extent were they effective?
  - What is it that made them memorable?

SHOW SEVERAL CAMPAIGNS AND PROPERTIES, after all have been shown:

- ★ Were there any aspects of any of these efforts you felt had potential for motivating you or your family and friends to use seat belts? Which ones/Why?
- ★ Were there any aspects that really turned you off, or should be avoided, in an effort to get you to use seat belts more often?
- ★ Is there anything about any of these efforts that could be changed to make them more effective?
- ★ Is there any one campaign or property you consider to be the most or least effective? Why?

#### VI. DEVELOPMENT OF CAMPAIGN COMPONENTS (30 Minutes)

- ★ If you were responsible for the development of an effort to get people like you to use seat belts more often when driving their trucks, what would you do?
  - What should be the theme, message, motivation?
  - How should it be disseminated? (i.e. TV, print, radio, schools, church, special events)
  - If a spokesperson were used, who should it be? Why?
    - \*\* What would be the important characteristics this person should have?
- ★ Should the effort be any different if it is specifically for pick-up trucks instead of cars?

## **Moderator's Guide for Handout of Reasons and Approaches-1**

### **Reasons for not wearing a safety belt:**

**Pickup trucks are big and you ride higher up, so you are safer if there is a crash.**

#### **Approach A – Statistical Argument**

In 34% of pickup truck crashes, the driver or the passenger of the pickup truck is thrown out of the vehicle, usually through the front windshield.

#### **Approach B – Humorous Argument**

A pickup truck is so high above the roadway that the driver will have a great view as he and his truck hit the concrete wall.

#### **Approach C – Celebrity Spokesperson Argument**

Cal Ripkin drives his pickup truck to all his home games and says: "I always buckle up for safety; I don't want to miss a single game."

#### **Approach D – Medical Consequences Argument**

When you get into a crash, you'll probably fit through the great big windshield of your pickup truck, just before you become road kill!

#### **Approach E – Consequences to Self and Others - Argument**

No matter how large a pickup truck you drive, it's no match for a crash with a tractor-trailer. If you survive, your family and friends can wheel you around in a - not so big - wheelchair.



## **Moderator's Guide for Handout of Reasons and Approaches-2**

### **Reason for not wearing a safety belt:**

**I'm an excellent driver and my reflexes are great, so I'm not concerned about getting in a crash.**

#### **Approach A – Statistical Argument**

In surveys, 83% of drivers rated themselves as well above average or above average drivers.

#### **Approach B – Humorous Argument**

My driving skills are great but that other guy took forever to find his brake pedal. He rear ended me and sent me right through my front windshield.

#### **Approach C – Celebrity Spokesperson Argument**

Sammy Sosa says: "Most of my friends say they're as quick behind the wheel as I am at bat, but I don't take chances in my pickup truck; I buckle up for safety."

#### **Approach D – Medical Consequences Argument**

I was quick with the wheel and fast on the brakes but the tractor -trailer jackknifed and as I was thrown from my truck he jackknifed me too.

#### **Approach E – Consequences to Self and Others – Argument**

My son was proud of how I avoided the pileup, but when we got rear-ended and I fell out my door, he grabbed my arm and tried hard to hold on to me. The look in our eyes when he couldn't hold on and I fell out of my pickup truck is a sight neither of us can ever forget. If only I had been wearing my seat belt, I wouldn't be in this wheelchair today; and my son wouldn't have that sad and guilty look in his eyes, every time he sees me.

### **Moderator's Guide for Handout of Reasons and Approaches-3**

#### **Reason for not wearing a safety belt:**

**If I wear my seat belt and it jams, I will be trapped in my pickup truck if there is a crash.**

#### **Approach A – Statistical Argument**

Crash data and law enforcement crash reports show that belts jam in crashes fewer than one percent of the time.

#### **Approach B – Humorous Argument**

I didn't wear my seat belt because I thought it might jam and trap me in my pickup truck. Now I'm stuck between the roof of my cab and my steering wheel. That's what I call JAMMED!

#### **Approach C – Celebrity Spokesperson Argument**

Randy Travis says, "Don't get trapped between that old tree and your pickup – wear your seat belt every time you head down the road."

#### **Approach D – Medical Consequences Argument**

I didn't want to get stuck in my pickup truck; just didn't want the safety belt to bruise my chest. Now I'm stuck but good-between my pickup and that mini van!

#### **Approach E – Consequences to Self and Others – Argument**

When I'd get into my pickup the kids would always remind me to put my seat belt on. I told them I'd take my chances. Now they're visiting me at the cemetery. Guess I didn't place a very good bet!



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