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Executive Summary

Alcohol and drug-impaired driving continue to pose a significant and persistent threat to public safety in the United States. Despite decades of progress, impaired driving remains a leading contributor to motor vehicle fatalities, with emerging trends in poly-substance impairment presenting new and complex challenges for law enforcement agencies nationwide. In response to these challenges, Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD), through a Cooperative agreement under the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), convened the 2025 MADD National Law Enforcement Leadership Summit on Impaired Driving from November 17–19, 2025, in Hurst, Texas.

The Summit was conducted pursuant to Cooperative Agreement Project Number 693JJ92450005-0001, as modified under Mod 0002, and aligned with MADD’s Campaign to Eliminate Drunk Driving and NHTSA’s mission to save lives, prevent injuries, and reduce economic costs due to traffic crashes. The 2½-day national convening brought together approximately 90 law enforcement executives and traffic safety leaders representing 38 jurisdictions from the state, local, and federal perspective from across the country. Participants also included national traffic safety organizations, research institutions, prosecutors, and victim advocacy representatives.

The purpose of the Summit was to reengage law enforcement leadership in impaired driving enforcement by strengthening executive-level commitment, increasing awareness of emerging enforcement challenges, and facilitating the exchange of data-driven strategies and best practices. Through plenary presentations, expert panels, facilitated discussions, and structured breakout sessions, the Summit both addressed and identified critical issues including declining DUI enforcement capacity, staffing and training shortages, drug- and poly-impaired driving detection, data quality and integration, judicial and prosecutorial barriers, officer wellness, and the importance of cross-sector collaboration.

The content of the Summit emphasized the evolving nature of impaired driving, particularly the increasing prevalence of poly-substance use, and the resulting implications for roadside detection, toxicology, prosecution, and public trust.



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Presentations highlighted national and state-level data trends, data driven enforcement models, emerging technologies, and the importance of leadership driven culture in sustaining high-visibility enforcement efforts.

Key outcomes of the Summit included:

- Identification of systemic barriers impacting impaired driving enforcement nationwide;
- Increased awareness of data-driven and technology-supported enforcement strategies;
- Reinforced commitment among law enforcement leaders to proactive traffic safety enforcement;
- Strengthened partnerships between law enforcement, federal agencies, research organizations, and MADD; and
- Development of recommendations to inform future training, technical assistance, and collaborative efforts.

Participant evaluations indicated that the Summit was highly relevant to current enforcement challenges and provided actionable insights applicable to agencies of varying size and jurisdiction. The discussions and findings from the Summit underscore the continued need for national leadership, coordinated strategies, and sustained investment to address impaired driving and reduce fatalities on U.S. roadways.

This Final Report documents the planning, implementation, outcomes, and lessons learned from the 2025 National Law Enforcement Leadership Summit on Impaired Driving and provides recommendations to inform future efforts under this and future Cooperative Agreements.

Grant Background and Project Description

Substance impaired driving continues to pose a serious threat to public safety in the United States. Alcohol-impaired driving is a fully preventable crime, yet it continues to result in thousands of fatalities each year. At the same time, drug-impaired driving has emerged as an increasingly complex and evolving challenge for law enforcement agencies nationwide, particularly as poly-substance use becomes more prevalent. Addressing impaired driving requires sustained enforcement, strong leadership, effective training, and coordinated systems across the traffic safety and criminal justice landscape.



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MADD is the nation's largest nonprofit organization dedicated to ending drunk and drugged driving, supporting victims of these violent crimes, and preventing underage drinking and other drug use. Since its founding in 1980, MADD has played a central role in advancing public awareness, policy change, and enforcement strategies related to impaired driving.

In 2006, MADD launched its Campaign to Eliminate Drunk Driving, a comprehensive national initiative focused on four strategic pillars: supporting law enforcement, advancing ignition interlock use for all offenders, promoting advanced vehicle technology, and reengaging the public in the fight against impaired driving.

As part of our ongoing support for law enforcement, MADD has developed and disseminated a range of resources, including impaired driving roll call videos, expert panels, research reports, law enforcement recognition programs, and training initiatives. These efforts are designed to strengthen enforcement capacity and elevate impaired driving as a priority within the broader traffic safety environment.

In November 2018, MADD convened the first National Impaired Driving Law Enforcement Summit, which identified several barriers impacting law enforcement's ability to effectively address impaired driving. These barriers included leadership engagement, officer motivation, funding constraints, education and training gaps, and emerging enforcement challenges. Research conducted prior to that Summit indicated that impaired driving enforcement had declined by as much as 20 percent nationwide. More recent data suggests that enforcement activity has declined even further, in some jurisdictions by as much as 50 percent, despite continued high levels of impaired driving fatalities.

In response to these trends, MADD, under Cooperative Agreement Project Number 693JJ92450005-0001 with the NHTSA, proposed and executed a second national convening in November of 2025. The purpose of this Cooperative Agreement Project was to convene a 2½-day National Law Enforcement Leadership Summit on Impaired Driving to reengage law enforcement executives and traffic safety leaders in proactive impaired driving enforcement and to facilitate the development and exchange of data driven and informed strategies.



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The project was designed to achieve the following objectives:

- Reengage law enforcement leadership in traffic safety enforcement;
- Develop, support, and promote impaired driving enforcement champions at the executive and leadership levels;
- Increase leadership support for proactive traffic safety enforcement through data-driven and sustainable strategies; and
- Address both alcohol and drug-impaired driving, including emerging trends in poly-substance impairment.

Through this Summit, MADD and NHTSA sought to strengthen enforcement efforts, support leadership-driven culture change, and advance collaborative approaches to reducing impaired driving crashes, injuries, and fatalities nationwide.

Executed MADD/NHTSA Cooperative Agreement

The 2025 MADD National Law Enforcement Leadership Summit on Impaired Driving was conducted pursuant to Cooperative Agreement Project Number 693JJ92450005-0001, as modified under Modification 0002, between MADD and NHTSA. The Cooperative Agreement established the scope, objectives, performance period, and deliverables for the project, including the planning, execution, and reporting requirements associated with the National Law Enforcement Leadership Summit.

Under the terms of the Cooperative Agreement, MADD served as the Recipient and was responsible for planning and conducting a 2½-day national summit, coordinating with NHTSA throughout the project period, and producing required progress and final reports. NHTSA participated in project planning and provided technical assistance and subject matter expertise consistent with the Cooperative Agreement.

The Cooperative Agreement was modified under Mod 0002 to update the project background, performance period, and milestone schedule. The modified agreement aligned with the original project purpose of reengaging law enforcement leadership in impaired driving enforcement and facilitating the development and dissemination of data driven and research informed strategies to reduce impaired driving crashes, injuries, and fatalities.



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All Summit activities described in this report were conducted in accordance with the approved Cooperative Agreement and its modification.

Final Work Plan and Implementation

Pursuant to the approved Cooperative Agreement and subsequent modification, MADD implemented the final work plan to plan, coordinate, and conduct the 2025 National Law Enforcement Leadership Summit on Impaired Driving. All project activities were completed within the approved scope of work and performance period, and in coordination with NHTSA, consistent with the requirements of the Cooperative Agreement.

Project Planning and Coordination

MADD conducted comprehensive planning activities in advance of the Summit, including development of the Summit agenda, identification and coordination of presenters, accelerated recruitment and confirmation of participants, and logistical planning for the 2½-day national convening. NHTSA participated in planning coordination and provided technical input consistent with its role under the Cooperative Agreement.

The final agenda reflected the approved project objectives and incorporated presentations, expert panels, facilitated discussions, and structured breakout sessions focused on impaired driving enforcement challenges and solutions. NHTSA was included in the review of the final agenda and participant list prior to the event.

Summit Implementation

The Summit was successfully conducted from November 17–19, 2025, in Hurst, Texas, over a 2½-day period. The event included 80 law enforcement and traffic safety leaders representing a broad cross-section of jurisdictions and agency types from across the United States.

Summit participants included representatives from:

- State police and highway patrol agencies;
- Local and municipal police departments;
- County sheriff's offices;
- State highway safety offices and departments of transportation;
- Prosecutorial and judicial partner organizations; and
- National law enforcement and traffic safety associations.



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Attendees represented agencies from 38 different U.S. jurisdictions and across all regions of the country, reflecting urban, suburban, rural, and statewide enforcement perspectives. This diversity ensured that Summit discussions incorporated the operational realities of jurisdictions of varying size, geography, governance structure, and resource capacity.

Summit content was delivered by 13 external (non-MADD) presenters/ speakers, including two representatives from NHTSA, and nine MADD staff or volunteer presenters/speakers who provided opening and closing remarks, mission moments, topical presentations, and facilitation support. Presentations addressed national impaired driving trends, enforcement challenges, leadership and culture, data-driven strategies, emerging technologies, and partnership opportunities.

Operational Support and Staffing

MADD deployed 17 staff members to support the day-to-day operational logistics of the Summit, including onsite registration, participant coordination, session management, presenter/speaker support, and overall event execution. Of these staff members, fourteen also served in presenter/speaker/breakout group facilitator or notetaking roles, contributing subject matter expertise, in depth discussion facilitator or notetaking support in addition to their operational responsibilities.

The staffing structure ensured that the Summit was executed efficiently and professionally while allowing presenters and participants to focus fully on substantive engagement and discussion. All operational activities were completed as planned and aligned with the approved work plan.

Summit Participation and Attendee Overview

The 2025 MADD National Law Enforcement Leadership Summit on Impaired Driving convened a targeted group of law enforcement and traffic safety leaders to support executive-level dialogue, peer learning, and strategic problem-solving related to impaired driving enforcement.



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Participant Overview

The Summit was attended by 80 law enforcement and traffic safety leaders representing a wide range of jurisdictions and agency structures across the United States. Participants were selected to ensure diversity in geographic location, agency type, jurisdictional size, and enforcement environment, allowing for robust discussion of impaired driving challenges and best practices applicable nationwide.

Attendees represented agencies from more than 38 states spanning across multiple NHTSA Regions, ensuring robust national representation. NHTSA divides the United States into ten regions. Based on the attendee list, the most highly represented regions included Region 5 (Midwest), Region 6 (South-Central), and Region 7 (Central Plains), reflecting strong participation from state police, highway patrol, sheriff's offices, and municipal departments in those areas. Several agencies from Region 4 (Southeast) and Region 2 (Northeast) were also represented.

Regions with relatively lower but still notable representation included Region 1 (New England), Region 8 (Mountain West), Region 9 (Southwest/Pacific), and Region 10 (Northwest). This distribution highlights broad engagement across NHTSA's regional structure and ensured Summit discussions were informed by a wide array of enforcement environments, challenges, and operational perspectives.

Agency Representation

Summit participants represented a broad spectrum of law enforcement and traffic safety entities, including:

- State police and highway patrol agencies, responsible for statewide traffic enforcement and highway safety operations;
- Local and municipal police departments, serving urban and suburban communities;
- County sheriff's offices, often responsible for large rural and mixed-jurisdiction areas;
- State highway safety offices and departments of transportation, providing policy, data, and programmatic leadership;
- National law enforcement and traffic safety organizations, contributing a national policy and research perspective; and



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- Related justice and public safety partners, supporting prosecution, adjudication, and systems-level coordination.

This diversity of agency types strengthened the Summit's ability to surface common barriers while also highlighting jurisdiction-specific challenges related to staffing, training, resources, legal frameworks, and community expectations.

Presenters, Speakers and Operational Support

Summit content was delivered by a combination of external subject matter experts and MADD representatives. The program included 13 external presenters or speakers, including two representatives from NHTSA, who provided federal context, national data and mission support for impaired driving enforcement efforts.

In addition to presenters, speakers and attendees, 17 MADD staff members and volunteers supported the day-to-day operational logistics of the 2½-day Summit, including registration, participant coordination, session management, and onsite execution. Fourteen holding dual roles throughout the Summit by serving in presenter/speaker/facilitator/notetaking roles, supporting both the logistical and substantive success of the event.

Documentation of Attendance

A complete list of Summit participants, including agency affiliation and state representation, is provided in Appendix C of this report. This documentation reflects the national reach and cross-jurisdictional nature of the Summit and supports the Cooperative Agreement objective of engaging law enforcement leadership from across the country.

Summit Agenda Overview

The 2025 Summit was structured as a 2½-day national convening, with an agenda intentionally crafted to guide participants through a progression from national context and shared challenges to action-oriented solutions and leadership-driven commitment. The agenda balanced plenary presentations, facilitated and open discussions with expert panelists, and interactive exercises to promote engagement, peer learning, and strategic dialogue among law enforcement leaders, while remaining grounded in the mission-driven impact of victim and survivor stories connected to impaired driving.



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Day One: National Context and Law Enforcement Challenges

Day One of the Summit was designed to begin at the national level, establishing a shared foundation of data, policy priorities, and system-wide challenges related to impaired driving enforcement. Opening remarks and mission moments reinforced the human cost of impaired driving and underscored the importance of leadership engagement in advancing traffic safety.

Presentations on Day One provided federal and national context, including:

- National trends in alcohol and drug-impaired driving fatalities;
- Federal priorities, resources and support related to impaired driving enforcement;
- Research and data insights informing enforcement strategies; and
- The role of partnerships, policy, and technology in addressing impaired driving.

The agenda intentionally created space for open dialogue regarding the challenges law enforcement agencies face, including staffing constraints, training capacity, administrative burden, operational priorities, and evolving public expectations. Facilitated table discussions allowed participants to share real-world experiences and identify common barriers across jurisdictions of varying size, geography, and structure. The day concluded with expert panels and facilitated discussions focused on aligning enforcement strategies and identifying shared themes across agencies.

Day Two: Action-Oriented Solutions and Collaborative Strategies

Day Two shifted the focus from challenge identification to action-oriented solutions and tangible takeaways. Sessions emphasized practical strategies that law enforcement leaders could apply within their agencies and communities, with a particular focus on collaboration and partnership as force multipliers for impaired driving enforcement.

Presentations and panels on Day Two highlighted:

- Leadership-driven approaches to sustaining proactive impaired driving enforcement;
- High-visibility and data-driven enforcement strategies;
- Training models for alcohol and drug-impaired driving detection;
- Emerging technologies and tools supporting enforcement efforts; and



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- The role of prosecutorial, judicial, and laboratory coordination in strengthening outcomes.

Throughout the day, presenters and facilitators provided visible examples of how law enforcement agencies can partner with MADD and other community organizations at the local level to enhance enforcement, prevention, and public accountability. Facilitated discussions encouraged participants to exchange best practices, lessons learned, and implementation strategies tailored to their respective jurisdictions.

Day Three: Leadership Motivation and Call to Action

The final half-day of the Summit focused on leadership motivation, organizational culture, and a call to action for participants to reaffirm their commitment to impaired driving enforcement. Sessions emphasized the critical role of executive and command-level leadership in prioritizing traffic safety, supporting officers engaged in impaired driving enforcement, and sustaining enforcement visibility over time.

Day Three presentations addressed:

- Officer safety and wellness as foundational elements of effective enforcement;
- Leadership strategies to foster an impaired driving enforcement culture within agencies;
- Personal and professional reflection on the responsibilities of law enforcement leaders; and
- Opportunities to apply Summit insights through continued collaboration and leadership engagement.

The Summit concluded with closing remarks that reinforced key themes, highlighted shared commitments, and encouraged attendees to double down on impaired driving enforcement as a core public safety responsibility within their agencies and communities.

Throughout the full 2½-day program, MADD mission moments were intentionally integrated across the agenda rather than confined to a single session. These moments were delivered through a variety of perspectives and vantage points, including victim survivor storytelling, officer safety, leadership reflection, and



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wellness considerations. This approach ensured that Summit discussions remained connected to both the professional responsibilities and personal experiences of law enforcement leaders and reinforced the shared mission to eliminate impaired driving and protect lives on U.S. roadways.

The complete Summit agenda, including session titles and presenters, is included as Appendix D of this report.

Presentations, Panels, and Content Summary

Summit presentations, panels, and facilitated discussions were designed to advance the objectives of the Cooperative Agreement by increasing awareness of impaired driving challenges, highlighting evidence-based or data informed enforcement strategies, and reinforcing leadership-driven approaches to sustaining impaired driving enforcement. Content delivery emphasized practical relevance, peer discussion and exchange, and alignment with national traffic safety priorities.

Day One: National Context and Law Enforcement Challenges

Day One presentations established a national framework for understanding the current impaired driving landscape and the challenges facing law enforcement agencies nationwide. Federal and national partners provided data-driven insights into alcohol and drug-impaired driving trends, enforcement declines, and emerging issues related to poly-substance impairment.

Presentations highlighted national impaired driving fatality trends, emphasizing the persistent contribution of impaired driving to roadway deaths and the growing complexity of drug and poly-impaired driving detection. Federal perspectives underscored the importance of sustained high visibility enforcement, data quality, and cross-sector collaboration in addressing impaired driving.

Research-focused presentations explored the use of national and state-level data to inform smarter enforcement strategies, including the application of data-driven deployment models to identify high-risk locations and times. These sessions reinforced the value of leveraging data to maximize limited enforcement resources and improve deterrence.

The afternoon agenda featured a facilitated table discussion exercise focused on barriers to impaired driving enforcement. Participants engaged in facilitated open dialogue to identify challenges and barriers related to the work of impaired



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driving enforcement across their jurisdiction. Facilitators guided participants in surfacing common themes across jurisdictions, setting the foundation for solution-oriented discussions in subsequent sessions and helping to frame conversations and presentations based in the real world challenges that the attendees expressed.

Expert panels and facilitated discussions later in the day explored the role of partnerships in supporting enforcement, including collaboration among law enforcement agencies, traffic safety partners, researchers, and advocacy organizations. These discussions reinforced the importance of unified strategies and shared accountability in addressing impaired driving nationwide.

Day Two: Action-Oriented Solutions and Collaborative Strategies

Day Two presentations shifted the focus toward practical solutions and implementation strategies that law enforcement leaders could apply within their agencies. Sessions emphasized leadership engagement, data-driven enforcement, training frameworks, and system coordination as essential components of effective impaired driving enforcement.

Presentations addressed leadership-driven approaches to building and sustaining enforcement culture, highlighting the role of executive support in prioritizing traffic safety, allocating resources, and supporting officers engaged in complex impaired driving investigations. National law enforcement associations and traffic safety organizations shared strategies to strengthen agency commitment and cross-jurisdictional coordination.

Technical sessions explored high-visibility and data-driven enforcement models, including approaches to identifying impaired driving hotspots and deploying resources strategically. Research-based evidence was presented to demonstrate and support the impact of proactive enforcement on reducing impaired driving crashes and fatalities.

Additional presentations examined emerging tools and technologies supporting impaired driving enforcement, including roadside screening methods and innovations designed to address drug and poly-impaired driving. Speakers emphasized that technology must be accompanied by appropriate training, policy alignment, and prosecutorial collaboration to be effective.



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Legal and prosecutorial perspectives highlighted challenges and potential solutions related to evidence collection, toxicology practices, charging decisions, and adjudication. Presenters underscored the importance of collaboration among law enforcement, prosecutors, laboratories, and courts to improve case outcomes and reinforce accountability.

Facilitated panels encouraged and provided time for open dialogue among presenters and participants, allowing law enforcement leaders to ask questions, share experiences, and explore how strategies could be adapted to their specific operational environments.

Day Three: Leadership Motivation, Officer Safety, and Call to Action

The final half-day of the Summit focused on leadership motivation, organizational culture, and personal accountability. Presentations emphasized the connection between officer safety, wellness, and effective impaired driving enforcement, highlighting how leadership commitment influences officer engagement and enforcement sustainability.

Sessions addressed strategies for fostering and prioritizing an impaired driving enforcement culture within agencies, reinforcing the importance of executive leadership in setting expectations, recognizing enforcement efforts, and supporting officer development. Presenters encouraged participants to reflect on their leadership roles and the impact of their decisions on traffic safety outcomes while encouraging them to include or double down on the support and emphasis of impaired driving enforcement within their agencies.

Mission-centered presentations and reflections reinforced the human impact of impaired driving, drawing connections between enforcement efforts, officer safety, and community trust. These sessions served as a call to action for participants to recommit to the importance of impaired driving enforcement and apply Summit insights within their agencies and jurisdictions moving into the high fatality holiday season and beyond.

The Summit concluded with closing remarks that reinforced shared themes, emphasized the urgency of high visibility impaired driving enforcement, and encouraged law enforcement leaders to double down on impaired driving enforcement through sustained leadership, collaboration, and accountability.



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Key Findings, Themes, and Outcomes

Across presentations, facilitated discussions, breakout exercises, and panel dialogue, the Summit surfaced some consistent themes reflecting both the complexity of impaired driving enforcement and the shared challenges faced by law enforcement agencies nationwide. While enforcement environments vary by jurisdiction, participants identified common barriers, emerging trends, and opportunities for leadership-driven action.

Of note, Summit participants reinforced that impaired driving remains a persistent and evolving public safety threat and one of the most significant contributors to roadway fatalities and serious injuries and they also acknowledged the documented decline in proactive traffic enforcement and specifically proactive impaired driving enforcement over the past 5 years post the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020. Participants acknowledged that impaired driving enforcement was already on the decline and the aftermath and chaos of the onset of Covid-19 from a systems perspective, only exacerbated that decline. Participants shared that this reflects systemic constraints, including increased staffing shortages, competing service demands, administrative burden, and limited availability of specialized traffic units.

Law enforcement leaders expressed concern that reduced traffic enforcement visibility undermines deterrence and public accountability, contributing to continued impaired driving fatalities despite enforcement efforts. Participants highlighted the importance of leadership prioritization and resource alignment to sustain enforcement activity while acknowledging capacity constraints.

In addition, while alcohol-impaired driving continues to account for a substantial proportion of fatal crashes, participants emphasized that drug and poly-impaired driving has emerged as a growing and increasingly complex challenge. The combination of alcohol, cannabis, prescription medications, and illicit substances complicates roadside detection, evidence collection, and prosecution, requiring new tools, training, and system-wide coordination. In addition, participants noted that public perception of drug impairment, particularly related to cannabis, has shifted. This has created enforcement and deterrence challenges that differ from those historically associated with alcohol-impaired driving.

While these challenges were discussed from many angles throughout the Summit, participants consistently returned to a small number of issues that



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shaped their day-to-day realities and influenced how impaired driving enforcement shows up in practice. These were not raised as isolated problems, but as shared experiences across regions and agency types. The sections that follow take a closer look at these areas as they were described by participants, offering additional context on how staffing, training, systems, culture, and leadership intersect in the current enforcement environment.

A. Staffing Shortages, Experience Gaps, Training Erosion and Post Covid-10 Enforcement Cultural Misalignment

Staffing shortages and experience gaps were consistently identified by Summit participants across all NHTSA regions as some of the most significant barriers to effective impaired driving enforcement. Law enforcement leaders reported sustained workforce reductions, difficulty recruiting qualified candidates, and high rates of retirement and attrition among experienced officers, especially over the past 5 years since the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic. These challenges have resulted in fewer officers with the depth of experience needed to conduct complex impaired driving investigations and to mentor newer personnel.

Participants described a widening experience gap, driven in part by accelerated hiring during and within the years immediately following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Many agencies brought on large numbers of new officers during a period when proactive traffic safety enforcement was significantly reduced or paused, and training environments were constrained. As a result, a substantial portion of the current workforce entered service with limited exposure specifically to proactive traffic stops, impaired driving investigations, and the full scope of traffic safety enforcement responsibilities.

Across breakout discussions, attendees repeatedly described a dynamic characterized as “babies training babies,” in which officers with limited tenure and practical experience are tasked with training newer recruits. Leaders expressed concern that this model weakens skill development, erodes confidence, and increases inconsistency in enforcement practices. Participants noted that newer officers may technically meet certification requirements but lack the real-world repetition and mentorship necessary to carry impaired driving cases from initial stop through arrest, documentation, and court testimony.

Summit participants also emphasized that this experience gap has contributed to a cultural misalignment within agencies. Tenured officers, the majority of whom



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worked through pre-COVID enforcement environments and navigated significant restrictions during the pandemic, generally understand impaired driving enforcement as a core responsibility of the job even when it is time-consuming, administratively complex, or professionally challenging. In contrast, participants shared that many newer officers, whose formative training and early service occurred during a period of reduced enforcement activity, may view proactive traffic safety enforcement as “above and beyond” their role rather than an expected component of daily patrol duties.

Attendee feedback suggested that this misalignment has created what could be perceived as generational tension within some agencies, particularly when expectations are not explicitly articulated or reinforced by leadership. Participants noted that newer officers may prioritize reactive calls for service or assignments perceived as more urgent or engaging, while viewing impaired driving enforcement as optional, burdensome, or “too risky” for them.

Training erosion further compounds these challenges. Participants across regions reported limited capacity to provide consistent refresher training for Standardized Field Sobriety Testing (SFST), Advanced Roadside Impaired Driving Enforcement (ARIDE), and Drug Recognition Expert (DRE) certification. Staffing shortages make it difficult to release officers for training, and when training does occur, agencies often struggle to maintain proficiency due to lack of follow-up, mentorship, and court reinforcement.

Several regions reported significant shortages of DREs, with some jurisdictions relying on a single expert or lacking reliable call-out systems altogether. Officers expressed reluctance to pursue advanced training due to the time commitment, court demands, and fear of being heavily challenged on the stand, particularly when cases are frequently pled down or dismissed.

Participants also highlighted that competing mandatory training requirements such as de-escalation, use-of-force policy updates, and administrative compliance topics consume limited training days, leaving insufficient time for impaired driving specific skill development. Attendee feedback reinforced a critical distinction: being certified does not necessarily mean being confident or competent in impaired driving enforcement.

Collectively, Summit discussions underscored that staffing shortages, experience gaps, training erosion, and post-COVID cultural shifts are deeply interconnected.



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Without intentional leadership action to reset and clarify expectations, reinforce the role of impaired driving enforcement, and invest in training and mentorship, these dynamics will continue to suppress proactive enforcement and weaken long-term traffic safety outcomes.

B. Challenges in Detecting and Prosecuting Drug- and Poly-Impaired Driving

Summit participants consistently identified the detection and prosecution of drug and poly-impaired driving as one of the most complex and least well-supported areas of impaired driving enforcement. Leaders from multiple NHTSA regions emphasized that while alcohol-impaired driving benefits from long-standing legal standards and established practices, drug-impaired driving has outpaced current laws, training, laboratory capacity, and system readiness.

Participants described significant variation in toxicology practices across jurisdictions, including differences in testing protocols, thresholds, and substances analyzed. In many regions, officers reported limited access to timely and comprehensive toxicology testing, with laboratory backlogs delaying results for months and in some cases more than a year. These delays were described as undermining both prosecution and officer confidence, particularly when cases are resolved or pled down before results are available.

A recurring concern raised across discussions was the use of “stop testing” practices, where testing for drugs ceases once alcohol is detected. Participants emphasized that these practices contribute to systematic underreporting of drug and poly-substance impairment, limit the ability to fully understand impairment patterns, and weaken data used to inform enforcement, policy, and prevention efforts. Leaders expressed frustration that these gaps muddy the true scope of impaired driving and reduce opportunities to address emerging trends.

Participants also highlighted legal and policy constraints that make drug-impaired driving cases more difficult to pursue. Unlike alcohol, most drugs do not have clear, universally accepted numeric thresholds, requiring officers to demonstrate impairment rather than presence. Attendees noted that this places greater demands on officer articulation, training, and courtroom testimony, while also increasing reliance on prosecutorial and judicial understanding of impairment evidence. In several regions, leaders reported reluctance among prosecutors or judges to advance drug-impaired driving cases, particularly when evidence is delayed, incomplete, or perceived as subjective.



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Training and capacity gaps further compound these challenges. Participants reported shortages of Drug Recognition Experts, inconsistent ARIDE utilization, and limited opportunities for refresher training. Officers expressed hesitation to pursue drug-impaired driving cases due to the time required, the likelihood of being heavily challenged in court, and the perception that cases may ultimately result in minimal consequences.

Emerging roadside screening tools and oral fluid testing technologies were viewed by participants as promising but not yet fully realized solutions. Leaders emphasized that technology alone cannot resolve these challenges without standardized guidance, sustained funding, judicial education, and clear policies governing use, interpretation, and evidentiary value. Without this support, participants cautioned that new tools risk adding complexity rather than reducing burden.

Collectively, Summit discussions underscored that drug and poly-impaired driving enforcement represents a system-wide challenge, not simply a training or equipment gap. Participants emphasized that meaningful progress will require coordinated action across law enforcement, laboratories, prosecutors, courts, and policymakers to ensure that detection, testing, prosecution, and accountability are aligned with the realities officers face in the field.

C. Data Quality, Integration, and Utilization Gaps

While law enforcement agencies collect significant amounts of crash, citation, and arrest data, Summit participants across multiple NHTSA regions described substantial barriers to using that data in meaningful, day-to-day enforcement planning. Participants consistently noted that inconsistent reporting practices, limited ability to connect data across systems, and insufficient staff time or expertise to analyze information make it difficult to translate data into actionable enforcement strategies.

Law enforcement leaders from several regions shared that officers are often required to complete increasingly lengthy and complex reports, yet the resulting data is not easily accessible, timely, or usable at the operational level. Participants described situations in which valuable enforcement or crash data exists across multiple systems that do not communicate with one another, requiring manual workarounds or preventing use altogether. In some regions,



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agencies reported relying on data that is two to three years old, limiting the ability to target current impaired driving trends or emerging hotspots.

Attendee feedback highlighted a recurring frustration: as data collection requirements increase, officers spend more time completing paperwork and less time on proactive enforcement, while leaders lack the analytical capacity needed to turn that data into clear guidance for patrol or traffic units. Participants emphasized that without better system integration and practical analytical support, data-driven enforcement remains aspirational rather than operational.

At the same time, participants acknowledged that when data is accessible and usable, it can be highly effective. Leaders from several regions described successful examples of using crash data, contributing factor reports, and hotspot analysis to place officers strategically. However, these examples were often dependent on individual champions or partnerships and were difficult to sustain without consistent systems, staffing, leadership support and many times funding.

D. Administrative, Judicial, and Time Burden of Impaired Driving Enforcement

Across breakout sessions and groups, law enforcement leaders from multiple NHTSA regions consistently described impaired driving enforcement as a high-time, high-administrative-burden activity, further compounded by delays and inefficiencies within judicial, prosecutorial, and laboratory systems. Participants reported that a single impaired driving case can require five to six hours or more from initial stop through processing and documentation, often removing an officer from service for most of a shift while other officers absorb additional calls for service.

In addition, Participants emphasized that the administrative demands of impaired driving cases have increased significantly over time. Officers are now routinely required to complete extensive reports, obtain search warrants, document injuries in detail, and navigate complex evidentiary requirements. Attendees shared that reports which once consisted of a few pages have expanded into lengthy, multi-part documents, increasing time spent on paperwork and reducing capacity for proactive enforcement.

These time demands are further exacerbated by judicial and prosecutorial delays and outcomes that participants described as discouraging. Law enforcement leaders from several regions expressed frustration that extensive officer effort frequently results in cases being pled down, dismissed, or resolved with minimal



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consequences. Participants noted that when impaired driving cases do not result in meaningful accountability, officers perceive the time and effort invested as disproportionate to the outcome, undermining motivation to initiate future enforcement.

Laboratory and toxicology delays were repeatedly cited as a major barrier. Participants from multiple regions reported significant backlogs, with test results taking months and in some cases more than a year, to be returned. These delays weaken prosecutions, delay case resolution, and erode officer confidence in the system. Attendees emphasized that prolonged laboratory timelines often lead to reduced charges or case dismissals, even when officers believe impairment was clearly present at the time of arrest.

Participants also described situations in which staffing shortages and high call volumes force officers to make difficult choices between responding to priority calls and fully pursuing impaired driving investigations. In some regions, leaders acknowledged that officers may delay or sacrifice proactive enforcement when they lack the time, staffing, or system support needed to complete a case that will require extensive follow-up with uncertain outcomes.

Collectively, attendee feedback reflected a shared concern that administrative complexity, coupled with judicial, prosecutorial, and laboratory delays, has made impaired driving enforcement one of the most resource-intensive activities with the least perceived return. Participants emphasized that without system-level improvements to reduce delays and better align enforcement effort with outcomes, these barriers will continue to suppress proactive impaired driving enforcement across jurisdictions.

E. Leadership, Culture, and Officer Wellness

Summit participants consistently emphasized that leadership and organizational culture are decisive factors in whether impaired driving enforcement is sustained or deprioritized within law enforcement agencies. Leaders from multiple NHTSA regions described a post-2020 enforcement environment in which officer morale, confidence, and willingness to engage in proactive enforcement have been significantly affected by cumulative stressors both inside and outside the law enforcement institutional landscape.

Participants described the period following 2020 as a cultural inflection point for law enforcement. Public scrutiny, widespread criticism of policing, fear of



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complaints or viral video exposure, and increased hesitancy around discretionary enforcement have fundamentally changed how many officers approach traffic stops and impaired driving investigations. Leaders reported that officers, particularly those with less experience, are increasingly reluctant to initiate enforcement actions that carry a high likelihood of administrative burden, confrontation, or second-guessing, even when impairment is clearly suspected.

Attendee feedback highlighted that impaired driving enforcement is often perceived by officers as high-risk and low-reward in the current climate. Leaders shared that officers fear being criticized for making stops, challenged aggressively in court, or subjected to internal review, all while receiving limited recognition or support when cases are pled down or dismissed. This has led to a culture in which some officers actively avoid impaired driving enforcement, viewing it as professionally risky and personally exhausting.

Leadership discussions underscored that organizational messaging matters deeply, particularly in periods of rapid workforce turnover and large-scale operational change. Participants emphasized that when agency leadership does not clearly and consistently reinforce impaired driving enforcement as a priority, officers often interpret that absence of direction as a signal that proactive traffic safety work is optional. Several leaders noted that younger officers, in particular, take cues from what is rewarded, recognized, and publicly supported by leadership.

Summit discussions also surfaced a potential broader systems-level observation: a significant number of officers entered the profession during, or the years close after the onset of COVID-19 pandemic, when proactive traffic safety enforcement was reduced, training environments were constrained, and external regulatory and cultural pressures reshaped daily policing. For many of these officers, the post-COVID enforcement environment may be the only professional context they have known. Without explicit guidance, mentorship, and clearly articulated expectations from leadership, newer officers may reasonably look to their immediate surroundings and conclude, *"this is how we do enforcement work."*

Participants and external subject matter experts observing these trends noted that, in the absence of intentional leadership direction, informal norms and limited experience can inadvertently define organizational culture. When large-scale system disruptions, such as high turnover, regulatory shifts, and extended shifts in how enforcement is carried out, occur simultaneously, culture can drift



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by default rather than design. In these conditions, impaired driving enforcement is especially vulnerable to being deprioritized unless leadership clearly defines expectations, reinforces purpose, and consistently models support for proactive traffic safety and impaired driving enforcement work.

In addition, officer wellness and safety were repeatedly cited as closely tied to enforcement behavior. Leaders described how chronic stress, fatigue, and emotional exhaustion reduce officers' capacity to engage in complex investigations such as impaired driving cases. Participants emphasized that wellness is not limited to mental health resources alone, but includes workload management, realistic expectations, supervisory support, and recognition of the cumulative toll that impaired driving enforcement can take on officers.

Participants also discussed the emotional weight of impaired driving cases, particularly those involving serious injury or fatality. Leaders noted that officers who regularly respond to impaired driving crashes or investigate fatalities experience secondary trauma that is often unaddressed. Without intentional leadership attention to wellness, these experiences contribute to burnout and disengagement.

Importantly, Summit discussions reinforced that culture is shaped and is not accidental. Leaders from several regions shared that agencies which actively prioritize officer wellness, leadership visibility, recognition, and clear expectations are better positioned to sustain impaired driving enforcement. These agencies intentionally normalize traffic safety enforcement as a core function of policing, publicly support officers who take enforcement action, and invest in leadership development that reinforces accountability and care simultaneously.

Collectively, participant feedback underscored that impaired driving enforcement cannot be sustained through policy or training alone. Without leadership commitment to shaping a supportive culture, addressing morale, and recognizing the realities officers face, enforcement efforts will continue to erode, regardless of available tools or resources.

Recommendations and Strategic Implications

Summit survey responses, facilitated discussions, and breakout sessions throughout the Summit provided insight into the conditions shaping impaired driving enforcement across regions and agency types. Rather than identifying single solutions, participant feedback reflected a desire for approaches that



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recognize current operational realities, leadership challenges, and system-level constraints. The observations outlined in this section summarize areas where participants indicated additional focus, support, or alignment could help strengthen impaired driving enforcement efforts over time. These strategic considerations reflect what law enforcement leaders described as most relevant to sustaining enforcement in the current environment.

Supporting Training That Translates to Practice

Summit survey feedback and Summit discussions reflected strong interest in training that feels practical, relevant, and applicable to real-world enforcement, rather than focused solely on certification or compliance. Participants noted that many officers technically meet training requirements but lack confidence in carrying impaired driving cases through arrest, documentation, and court proceedings.

Attendees consistently valued Summit sessions that connected training to day-to-day decision-making, courtroom realities, and leadership support. Feedback suggested that training is most effective when paired with mentorship, refresher opportunities, and clear supervisory reinforcement, particularly for officers who entered service during periods when proactive traffic enforcement was limited. Participants emphasized that building confidence and competence over time may help reduce hesitation around impaired driving enforcement.

Addressing Time, Administrative, and System-Level Barriers

Participants repeatedly described the time and administrative demands of impaired driving enforcement as a major factor influencing officer behavior. Summit survey comments and discussions reflected frustration that impaired driving cases often require significant effort, extended time away from patrol, and extensive follow-up, with uncertain outcomes.

Leaders noted that delays in court processing, toxicology results, and case resolution further compound these challenges, contributing to reduced officer motivation. Participants suggested that even modest improvements in coordination and communication across law enforcement, courts, prosecutors, and laboratories could meaningfully influence officers' willingness to initiate impaired driving investigations. Feedback highlighted that system alignment remains one of the most significant constraints on enforcement sustainability.



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Strengthening Capacity for Drug and Poly-Impaired Driving Enforcement

Summit survey responses and facilitated discussions consistently identified drug and poly-impaired driving as an area where participants felt least equipped and most uncertain. Attendees described challenges related to inconsistent testing practices, limited access to Drug Recognition Experts, and unclear prosecution standards.

Participants noted that Summit sessions addressing drug impairment, emerging tools, and system challenges were among the most relevant to their current enforcement realities. Feedback suggested that continued focus on guidance, training, and judicial education could help reduce uncertainty and support more consistent handling of drug-impaired driving cases across jurisdictions. Participants also emphasized that new technologies are most helpful when paired with clear expectations, sustained funding, and system-wide understanding.

Recognizing the Role of Wellness in Enforcement Sustainability

Participant feedback reinforced a strong connection between officer wellness, morale, and enforcement engagement. Summit survey responses reflected appreciation for Summit content that acknowledged the emotional and operational toll of impaired driving enforcement, including exposure to serious crashes, fatalities, and ongoing public scrutiny.

Leaders noted that impaired driving enforcement can be particularly draining without visible support, recognition, and realistic workload expectations. Discussions suggested that agencies that intentionally integrate wellness considerations into leadership practices, rather than treating them as separate initiatives, are better positioned to sustain proactive enforcement over time. Participants emphasized that supporting wellness does not reduce accountability but instead helps maintain long-term capacity and engagement.

Value of Continued Convening and Peer Exchange

Summit survey results indicated strong agreement that the Summit provided value through peer connection, shared experience, and exposure to diverse perspectives. Participants noted that hearing from leaders facing similar challenges helped normalize their experiences and reduced feelings of isolation.

Feedback suggested that continued opportunities for national or regional convening, peer exchange, and technical assistance could help maintain



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momentum and reinforce impaired driving enforcement as a shared priority. Participants viewed these spaces as particularly valuable for leadership development, problem-solving, and learning from practical examples across jurisdictions.

Evaluation Results and Participant Feedback

Participant evaluations were collected via digital survey across all three days of the Summit to assess the relevance, quality, and applicability of the content, as well as the overall effectiveness of the convening. Survey feedback indicated that participants found the Summit to be highly relevant to their current roles and enforcement challenges. Respondents consistently noted that the content reflected the realities they are navigating within their agencies, particularly related to staffing shortages, training gaps, drug and poly-impaired driving, administrative burden, and leadership expectations.

Participants expressed appreciation for the balance between national context and practical discussion, noting that the Summit avoided abstract or theoretical discussions and instead focused on issues directly impacting day-to-day decision-making. Many respondents indicated that the Summit provided valuable perspective on how similar challenges are being experienced across jurisdictions, reinforcing that their concerns are shared nationally rather than isolated to individual agencies.

In addition, participants reported that the Summit content was applicable to their work and leadership responsibilities. Survey responses highlighted the value of sessions that addressed leadership, organizational culture, and system-level barriers, noting that these topics aligned closely with challenges participants are currently addressing within their agencies.

Attendees indicated that facilitated discussions and peer exchange were among the most valuable components of the Summit, allowing leaders to learn from one another and consider how strategies might be adapted to their own jurisdictions. Feedback suggested that participants left the Summit with a clearer understanding of both the scope of the challenges and potential approaches to addressing them.

Of particular note, the Summit Survey feedback reinforced the importance of peer connection as a key outcome of the Summit. Participants noted that engaging with leaders from diverse regions and agency types provided



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reassurance, perspective, and practical insights. Many respondents emphasized that hearing how others are navigating similar constraints helped normalize their experiences and reduce feelings of isolation.

Participants also highlighted the value of candid discussion in a trusted environment, noting that the Summit created space for honest dialogue about challenges without fear of judgment. This peer exchange was frequently cited as a strength of the convening and a meaningful contribution to the Summit's overall value.

Lastly, participants consistently rated leadership-focused sessions and discussions as valuable, particularly those addressing culture, expectation-setting, and officer wellness. Survey comments reflected appreciation for content that acknowledged the complexity of leading in the current enforcement environment and recognized the cumulative impact of recent disruptions on agencies and personnel.

Feedback also underscored the relevance of sessions addressing system-level challenges, including court processes, toxicology delays, and data limitations. Participants noted that these discussions validated their experiences and reinforced the need for alignment across enforcement, judicial, and laboratory systems.

Overall, survey responses reflected high satisfaction with the Summit's structure, content, and facilitation. Participants indicated strong interest in future convenings, or follow-up opportunities focused on impaired driving enforcement, leadership development, and system coordination.

Many respondents expressed interest in continued peer exchange, technical assistance, and opportunities to engage with national partners on emerging challenges such as drug and poly-impaired driving. Feedback suggested that the Summit filled a unique and valuable role by convening law enforcement leaders around shared challenges and solutions.

A 60 Day post summit survey was conducted to gather information regarding post summit activation from attendees. The case examples below outline a sampling of a variety of ways this summit translated into direct action and implementation post the 2025 Summit.



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Case Example 1: Captain, Oklahoma Highway Patrol

Enforcement Expansion: Immediately after the Summit, the participant contacted Lieutenants and Troop Commanders to coordinate county saturation patrols utilizing low-staffed DUI checkpoints. In addition, a victim-centered checkpoint model was developed to increase public impact and awareness.

The proposed approach includes three signs displayed in advance of the checkpoint:

1. A photo of the victim while alive
2. A photo of the crashed vehicle
3. A photo of the victim's headstone

Funding opportunities are currently being explored to produce the signage and conduct checkpoints near the locations where the featured victims lost their lives.

Training and Leadership Engagement: The participant also initiated discussions with the Chief of the Oklahoma Highway Patrol about inviting Sheriff Whetsel (guest speaker) to deliver a presentation to new highway patrol cadets prior to graduation and field training. The participant believes Sheriff Whetsel's content is something every officer should hear and that absolutely every new highway patrol trooper should hear because his message is so moving.

Partnership Development: The Summit expanded the participants' understanding of the scope and impact of Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD). Previously engaged primarily at the local level, the participant now recognizes MADD's broader involvement in prevention, victim advocacy, and law enforcement collaboration, opening the door for deeper partnership opportunities.

Proposed Innovation: Dedicated DUI Investigator Pilot: As a result of Summit discussions, the participant proposed exploring a pilot program to fund a dedicated Impaired Driving Investigator.

The investigator would:

- Continue building prosecutorial files after arrest
- Document jail intake and release signatures
- Preserve recorded jail calls made while impaired
- Conduct follow-up evidence collection in the days, weeks, and months following arrest



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The goal is to strengthen DUI case outcomes and enhance long-term accountability. The participant expressed interest in partnering with MADD to further develop this pilot initiative.

This case demonstrates how Summit participation translated into:

- Immediate enforcement coordination
- Innovative public awareness strategies
- Expanded training opportunities
- Strengthened advocacy partnerships
- Development of a forward-thinking prosecutorial support model

Case Example 2: Corporal, Alabama Law Enforcement Agency

Following the Summit, the participant prioritized recruitment efforts for the upcoming Drug Recognition Expert (DRE) course scheduled for February 2026.

Strategic Action: Building on the momentum and motivation gained at the Summit, the participant intensified outreach and recruitment efforts to increase course participation.

Measurable Results

- 2025 DRE Course Enrollment: 5 students
- 2026 DRE Course Enrollment: 14 students (maximum program capacity)
- This represents nearly a threefold increase in participation year over year.

Regional Impact: The 2026 course will also host students and instructors from Mississippi, expanding interstate collaboration and strengthening regional impaired driving enforcement capacity.

This case demonstrates how Summit participation translated into the Summit participation directly contributed to renewed focus, increased recruitment success, full course enrollment, and strengthened multi-state partnerships.

Case Example 3: Chief, Grove City Division of Police

The Summit significantly reshaped the participant's perspective on OVI enforcement data and impact. While the agency has a long-standing history of OVI enforcement, the experience created a renewed commitment to doing more. As a daily reminder, the participant displays their Mothers Against Drunk Driving



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(MADD) name tag across from their desk to reinforce that commitment. (Photo attached)

Community Storytelling & Public Messaging: The agency's social media team is collaborating with a local family who lost a loved one 21 years ago on Christmas Day. The goal is to:

- Share their story publicly
- Recognize the 21-year milestone
- Reinforce that impaired driving tragedies have lasting, generational impacts
- Prevent similar losses in the community

The participant emphasized that communities often minimize the danger of OVI, assuming "it won't happen here." Even in areas with relatively few fatal crashes, the loss is unacceptable and profound. Plans are underway to expand public education messaging beyond this story to further strengthen prevention efforts.

Prosecutorial Engagement: Recognizing challenges within the judicial process, the participant plans to meet with a prosecutor and the local safety director to discuss the importance of consistent and meaningful OVI prosecution, with the goal of strengthening accountability and deterrence.

Enforcement Strategy Adjustments: Historically, the agency has conducted one full-scale sobriety checkpoint annually. Moving forward:

- A reduced-staffing checkpoint model will be explored
- Targeted enforcement efforts will expand as staffing levels improve
- The department is currently 20 officers short, with 15 in training. Once staffing stabilizes, the agency anticipates increasing focused OVI enforcement initiatives.

Officer Recognition & Specialized Focus: Officer Brandon Judd was recently recognized as MADD's Top Cop for the region after making 95 OVI arrests in the past year while continuing to respond to regular calls for service. There is future interest in reallocating his workload to allow greater focus on traffic safety and OVI enforcement, further strengthening the agency's impaired driving prevention efforts.

This case demonstrates how Summit participation translated into:

- A renewed cultural commitment to OVI enforcement



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- Enhanced public messaging strategies
- Planned judicial engagement
- Exploration of flexible checkpoint models
- Recognition and potential specialization of high-performing enforcement personnel

Case Example 4: Patrolman, Traffic Safety/Crime Prevention Unit, Holmdel Township Police Department

Following the National Law Enforcement Leadership Summit, the Goal: Zero Campaign has been continued in New Jersey to achieve Zero Deaths, Zero Injuries, and Zero Crashes. The campaign focuses on proactive traffic enforcement, public awareness, and cross-jurisdiction collaboration, aligning with the NHTSA Safe Systems Framework and High Visibility Enforcement strategies.

Each enforcement detail is dedicated to victims of impaired driving or traffic fatalities, providing families a way to honor their loved ones and motivating officers to prioritize traffic safety.

Implementation: Enforcement details were held in November, December, January, and February, with participation varying by agency and weather conditions. The campaign also integrates officer education through the Rutgers University Traffic Enforcement and Engagement Acuity course, emphasizing targeted enforcement strategies and motivational frameworks.

Key Enforcement Details

- Nov 26, 3–7 PM – Dedicated to Officer Jason Marles
 - 96 agencies, 250 officers, 2,216 stops
 - 7 DWIs, 123 speeding, 104 seatbelt, 38 cell phone, 77 careless, 8 reckless, 10 child restraint, 9 other arrests, 979 other summonses
- Dec 23, 3–7 PM – No dedication (snow impacted participation)
 - 44 agencies, 119 officers, 739 stops
 - 2 DWIs, 47 speeding, 16 seatbelt, 27 cell phone, 55 careless, 1 child restraint, 262 other summonses, 2 arrests
- Jan 16, 3–7 PM – No dedication
 - 73 agencies, 214 officers, 1,592 stops
 - 6 DWIs (5 alcohol, 1 drug), 139 speeding, 31 seatbelt, 61 cell phone, 69 careless, 11 reckless, 6 child restraint, 828 other, 8 arrests
- Feb 23 (Rescheduled Mar 10) – Dedicated to Tim and Bridget O'Donnell



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- Partnership with Catch You Later Foundation to raise awareness of impaired driving tragedies

This case demonstrates how Summit participation translated into:

- Measurable results in DWIs, speeding, and seatbelt compliance
- Strengthened multi-agency collaboration, including planned initiatives with Pennsylvania
- Enhanced community engagement through victim dedications
- Increased officer motivation and prioritization of traffic enforcement

Case Example 5: Maryland

Following the National Law Enforcement Leadership Summit, several strategies were partially implemented to improve impaired driving enforcement and prosecutor support. Efforts are still in the early stages, with plans to collect data frequently to guide continuation and expansion of these initiatives.

Actions Taken

1. Bi-Monthly Law Enforcement Support for Prosecutors
 - Began providing regular bi-monthly support within the prosecutor's office.
 - A subject matter expert (SME) is available for questions and consults on impaired driving cases prior to trial dates and plea offers.
 - This support helps provide a broader perspective, considering more than just the enforcement aspect of cases.
2. Traffic and Impaired Driving Lunch & Learns
 - Funding was obtained through the Highway Safety Office to conduct lunch and learn sessions focused on traffic issues and impaired driving.
 - These sessions are currently being piloted in a large Maryland county. If well received, expansion to other counties is planned.
 - Monthly sessions will consist of two hours of instruction, initially delivered by law enforcement, with the goal of eventually co-teaching with a TSRP.
 - Topics include both drug- and alcohol-impaired driving as well as broader traffic-related issues.
3. DUI Warrant Enforcement Detail



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- A dedicated detail will begin serving DUI-related warrants in the coming weeks.
- Because impaired driving is not classified as a felony in the state, many cases have previously lacked consequences.
- There are nearly 400 outstanding DUI-related warrants in the county system over the past three years.
- This initiative seeks to address this enforcement gap.

Early Observations and Reflections

- Efforts are still in the early stages, but ongoing data collection will support continuation.
- Considering the bigger picture is helpful, including prosecution, enforcement, and broader safety perspectives.
- Collaborative efforts will continue, including educating new prosecutors on the complexities of impaired driving cases.

Evaluation Summary

In summary, participant evaluations indicate that the 2025 MADD National Law Enforcement Leadership Summit on Impaired Driving was viewed as relevant, timely, and responsive to current enforcement realities. Survey feedback reinforced the value of leadership-focused dialogue, peer exchange, and system-level discussion in supporting impaired driving enforcement efforts nationwide. In addition, the evaluation results support the continued use of national convenings as a mechanism for sharing insights, strengthening leadership engagement, and advancing collaborative approaches to impaired driving prevention.

A copy of each of the Survey questions and their results can be found in Appendix F & G of this report.

Conclusion and Future Considerations

The 2025 MADD National Law Enforcement Leadership Summit on Impaired Driving provided a national forum for law enforcement leaders to examine current enforcement realities, share lived experience, and reflect on the leadership, system, and cultural factors shaping impaired driving enforcement today. Participant feedback and evaluation results indicate that the Summit offered



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relevant, timely dialogue grounded in the day-to-day challenges agencies are navigating across regions.

While this report documents the planning, implementation, findings, and immediate outcomes of the Summit, participants emphasized that the value of the convening extends beyond the event itself. Many attendees described leaving the Summit with renewed perspective, practical ideas, and a clearer understanding of how impaired driving enforcement can be reinforced within their own agencies and communities.

The feedback featured in the case examples and via the remaining survey results will provide additional context on how national convenings and future efforts like the National Law Enforcement Summit on Impaired Driving can support real-world application, leadership engagement, and sustained focus on impaired driving enforcement. Insights gathered through these post-Summit feedback will inform future programming, technical assistance, and collaborative opportunities in support of shared traffic safety goals for MADD moving forward.

Appendices

Internal reporting information relative to the administration of the Summit have been removed from the public facing report

Appendix D: Summit Agenda

DAY 1: NOVEMBER 17, 2025

Registration and Networking Breakfast

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Colonel Richard Fambro, Ohio State Highway Patrol (ret), Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) Summit Facilitator

Opening Ceremony: Presentation of Colors, National Anthem, and Pledge of Allegiance

City of Hurst, Honor Guard

Pledge of Allegiance Led by Savannah Wilson, MADD Texas Teen Influencer, 2024-2025 Miss Southlake Texas

MADD's Framework for Strengthening Impaired Driving Enforcement



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Chief Scott Silverii, MADD National Law Enforcement Initiatives Manager

Mission Moment

Prisca Patrick, MADD National Ambassador

MADD's Strategic Vision: Advancing Partnerships and Enforcement to Eliminate Impaired Driving

Stacey D. Stewart, Chief Executive Officer, MADD

Federal Priorities for Advancing Traffic Safety and Impaired Driving Enforcement

Peter Simshauser, Chief Counsel, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)

MADD's Campaign to Eliminate Drunk Driving

Stephanie Manning, Chief Government Affairs Officer, MADD

Using Federal Data to Drive Smarter Enforcement Strategies Against Impaired Driving

Jennifer Conlon, Senior Highway Safety Specialist Impaired Driving Division, NHTSA

Morning Recap and Group Photo

Chief Scott Silverii, MADD National Law Enforcement Initiatives Manager

Networking Lunch

Overview of Afternoon Agenda and Mission Touchpoint

Chief Scott Silverii, MADD National Law Enforcement Initiatives Manager

Traffic Safety Enforcement: Insights from AAA Data, Challenges, and Countermeasures

Jake Nelson, Director of Traffic Safety, Advocacy, & Research, AAA

Table Discussion Exercise: Barriers to Impaired Driving Enforcement

Facilitator: Colonel Richard Fambro, MADD Summit Facilitator

Table Captains:

Ian Goldstein, Vice President of Government Affairs, MADD



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Lindsey Valdez, Senior Director Mission Operations, MADD

Heather Ayala, National Director of Victim Services & Volunteers, MADD

Chief Scott Silverii, National Law Enforcement Initiatives Manager, MADD

Michael Daley, Regional Executive Director for Texas, Louisiana, and Mississippi, MADD

Debra Marable, Regional Grant Director for Texas, Louisiana, and Mississippi, MADD

Emma Dugas, State Program Manager for Texas, MADD

Technology on the Front Lines: Innovations to Detect and Deter Impaired Driving

Stephanie Manning, Chief Government Affairs Officer, MADD

Expert Panel and Facilitated Discussion: Law Enforcement Partnerships Shaping Operational Support for Impaired Driving Enforcement

Moderator: Chief Scott Silverii, National Law Enforcement Initiatives Manager, MADD

Facilitator: Colonel Richard Fambro, MADD Summit Facilitator

Panel:

Jake Nelson, Director of Traffic Safety, Advocacy, and Research, AAA

Stephanie Manning, Chief Government Affairs Officer, MADD

Top Themes and Takeaways for Unified Enforcement Strategy

Chief Scott Silverii, MADD National Law Enforcement Initiatives Manager

Colonel Richard Fambro, MADD Summit Facilitator

MADD Summit Scholarship Reimbursement Process and Deadlines

Catrina Clemens, Vice President of Mission and Strategic Initiatives, MADD

Day 1 Closing Remarks and Day 2 Outlook

Chief Scott Silverii, National Law Enforcement Initiatives Manager, MADD



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DAY 2: NOVEMBER 18, 2025

Breakfast and Networking

Agenda Overview and Mission Moment

Chief Scott Silverii, National Law Enforcement Initiatives Manager, MADD

Building Enforcement Culture to Combat Impaired Driving

Darrin Grondel, Senior Vice President of Traffic Safety, Responsibility.org & National Alliance to Stop Impaired Driving (NASID)

National Sheriff's Association Strategies to Combat Impaired Driving

Sheriff Chris West, President, National Sheriff's Association (NSA)

Sheriff Chair Brad Cole, Chair, NSA Traffic Safety Committee

Open Q&A Interactive Discussion

Moderator: Chief Scott Silverii, National Law Enforcement Initiatives Manager, MADD

Facilitator: Colonel Richard Fambro, MADD Summit Facilitator

Governors Highway Safety Association Support for DUI Enforcement

Mike Hanson, Chair, Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA)

MADD's Support and Resources for Law Enforcement Partners

Heather Ayala, National Director of Victim Services & Volunteers, MADD

Catrina Clemens, Vice President of Mission and Strategic Initiatives, MADD

Facilitated Discussion: MADD and Law Enforcement Across the Nation

Moderator: Chief Scott Silverii, National Law Enforcement Initiatives Manager, MADD

Facilitator: Colonel Richard Fambro, MADD Summit Facilitator

Panel:

Lindsey Valdez, Senior Director Mission Operations, MADD

Emma Dugas, State Program Manager for Texas, MADD

Prisca Patrick, MADD National Ambassador

Morning Recap

Chief Scott Silverii, National Law Enforcement Initiatives Manager, MADD

Networking Lunch

Overview of Afternoon Agenda and Mission Touchpoint

Chief Scott Silverii, National Law Enforcement Initiatives Manager, MADD

High-Visibility Strategies for Impaired Driving Hotspot Reduction

Commander Dan Howard (ret.), Project Manager, International Association of Directors of Law Enforcement Standards and Training (IADLEST)

Data Driven DUI Enforcement Reduces Impaired Driving

Jim C. Fell, Principal Research Scientist, NORC at the University of Chicago

Cutting-Edge Enforcement: Oral Fluid Testing and Roadside Innovations to Address Poly-Impairment

Rob Duckworth, Regional Manager, Intoximeters

Legal Strategies to Strengthen Enforcement Outcomes

Clay Abbott, Traffic Safety Resource Prosecutor for Texas District and County Attorneys Association

Expert Panel: Law Enforcement Perspectives & Open Dialogue

Moderator: Chief Scott Silverii, National Law Enforcement Initiatives Manager, MADD

Facilitator: Colonel Richard Fambro, MADD Summit Facilitator

Panel:

Darrin Grondel, Senior Vice President of Traffic Safety, Responsibility.org

Commander Dan Howard (ret.), Project Manager, IADLEST

Jim C. Fell, Principal Research Scientist, NORC at the University of Chicago

Rob Duckworth, Regional Manager, Intoximeters

Clay Abbott, Traffic Safety Resource Prosecutor

Key Themes Recap: Insights and Emerging Areas of Discussion

Chief Scott Silverii, National Law Enforcement Initiatives Manager, MADD

Colonel Richard Fambro, MADD Summit Facilitator

Day 2 Closing Remarks and Day 3 Outlook

Chief Scott Silverii, National Law Enforcement Initiatives Manager, MADD

DAY 3: NOVEMBER 19, 2025*Continental Breakfast and Networking***Welcome, Review of Key Themes and Mission Moment**

Chief Scott Silverii, National Law Enforcement Initiatives Manager, MADD

Officer Safety as Enforcement Catalyst: Below 100's Role in Reducing DUI Fatalities

Katie Alexander, Law Enforcement Liaison, Texas Municipal Police Association

Creating an Anti-DUI Culture: Executive Leadership Strategies for Enforcement Buy-In

Lieutenant Colonel Daven Byrd, Assistant Director, Arizona Highway Patrol Division

Traffic Safety: A Matter of Life and Death

Sheriff John Whetsel (ret), Oklahoma County Sheriff's Office

Administrative Reminders and Closing Remarks

Colonel Richard Fambro, MADD Summit Facilitator

Chief Scott Silverii, National Law Enforcement Initiatives Manager, MADD

Appendix E: Supplemental Breakout Group Summaries

At the overarching theme level, the most common themes referenced included:

1. Staffing & experience gaps: large workforce reductions, difficulty recruiting, and "babies training babies" leave agencies without the experienced officers needed for high-quality DUI enforcement.
2. DUI enforcement is a high-time, high-paperwork, low-reward activity: Officers spend up to six hours or more on a case, with complex forms, warrants, and lab processes, only to see minimal consequences.
3. Laws, policies, and judicial/prosecutorial practices often weaken DUI enforcement: No-chase rules, refusal-friendly structures, limited PC for stops, lab backlogs, and plea culture all reduce the impact of officer efforts.
4. Morale and culture are fragile post-2020: Public criticism, fear of being filmed, perceived lack of support, and competing "more exciting" units

undermine motivation for proactive DUI enforcement, especially among younger officers.

5. Drug-impaired driving has outpaced training, law, and lab systems: new substances, high-potency products, and classification gaps make it harder to investigate and prosecute non-alcohol impairment.

Staffing & Manpower Shortages / Experience Gaps

Across groups, agencies reported severe drops in staffing, difficulty recruiting, and a huge experience gap that directly impacts impaired driving enforcement.

- One group noted a 67,000-officer shortfall nationally compared to 2024.
- Ohio State Highway Patrol alone down 250+ personnel. Recruitment has become the department's overall priority, and even when overtime is available, officers often choose better-paying or lower-stress overtime in the private sector instead of departmental overtime.
- Multiple agencies reported 25–40% workforce reductions, which either prevent officers from attending needed training or, when officers are in training, create such a strain on operations that enforcement of "lower-priority" areas like traffic and DUI gets deprioritized in favor of violent crime and other high-priority calls.
- A few different departments described "babies training babies". So many new officers and such high turnover that individuals with very limited tenure are being placed in leadership roles or tasked with training others, without having very much tangible experience themselves to model effective DUI enforcement or traffic stops.
 - As a contributing item: Several tables emphasized that younger officers (19–20 years old) have limited life experience and confidence, particularly around testifying in DUI cases and fully carrying an investigation from stop, to SFSTs, to arrest, to court.
- A Kansas example: the department has 100 officers in patrol, with 60 hired since 2020, and they struggle even to get officers to leave the parking lot to initiate traffic stops. These officers are described as not knowing how to do

basic traffic stops and not wanting to take the “extra step” into proactive enforcement.

- In North Carolina, of 430 field operations staff, only 30 officers have been there at least six years (the minimum for promotion or leadership). They are 150 officers short, forcing leadership to constantly weigh whether they can afford to lose an officer for up to six hours to a DWI investigation while others “pick up the slack.”

Administrative & Time Burden of DUI Enforcement

A major cross-group theme is that DUI enforcement takes too long and is too administratively complex, which discourages officers from engaging.

- Officers report that a single DUI can take up to six hours from stop through processing and paperwork, during which time other officers must cover all remaining calls. This time burden is contrasted with the relatively minor consequences/outcomes in many jurisdictions, making it feel like a poor use of resources.
- One group shared that building a DWI case now involves search warrants, detailed injury documentation, and lengthy forms, such that “it takes more paperwork for a DWI than for a murder.” Previously, an officer might arrest three people per shift; now, it might be one because of the administrative overhead.
- Reports that used to be a single page have become 20-page forms due to increased data collection requirements. As departments collect more data, the time per incident grows, further pulling officers away from proactive DUI enforcement.
- Commentary in some states- staffing shortages and high call volume lead officers to occasionally “let people go” or not be proactive because they are already backed up with calls and do not have time to fully process an impaired driver.
- Officers also cited technical issues with breathalyzer machines, the complexity of obtaining blood tests (especially when quick judicial or prosecutorial approval is required), and extensive search warrant processes, all of which lengthen the time needed for a case.

Training, ARIDE, DRE Capacity, and Skill Erosion

Another strong theme: training is insufficient, fragmented, or undermined by staffing and time pressures, especially around drug-impaired driving.

- Several groups raised the shortage of DREs (Drug Recognition Experts). Some counties have only one DRE, and officers reported no clear call-out or coordination system to reliably get a DRE to a scene when needed.
- ARIDE training has been moved into academy or ongoing training in some states, but officers described that when they don't smell alcohol, they sometimes "blow past everything else", overlooking drug impairment signs they were supposedly trained to detect.
- One theme was that if ARIDE is present, some prosecutors will not use DREs, but for strong prosecution both are needed.
- There is tension between trying to expand ARIDE training and not "muddying the waters" legally or practically.
- A DRE example highlighted that the commitment and time required for DRE training is a barrier; some officers don't want to become DREs because of time demands and because they fear being "destroyed on the stand," only to see the case plead down anyway.
- One group shared that it takes a lot of skill to be good at DUI, and historically, officers went through the academy and were left largely un-recertified.
 - More recent efforts at recertification showed average test scores around 63%, indicating that many officers lack mastery of SFST and DUI-investigation fundamentals.
 - When recertification and court training were implemented, DUI arrests increased, suggesting a direct payoff when training is prioritized.
- Other mandated trainings (e.g., de-escalation, sexual harassment) compete for limited training days. Departments noted that "being certified and being qualified is different," and mandatory topics reduce time for DUI-specific skills.

Laws, Policies, Refusal Dynamics & Judicial/Prosecutorial Barriers

Another theme across notes is that laws and policies often feel misaligned with the realities of impaired driving, and judicial and prosecutorial practices can undermine officer efforts.

Laws & Policies Limiting Enforcement

- “Why pull them over if it doesn’t make a difference in court or they just get a slap on the wrist?”
- Some states restrict traffic stops for minor infractions (e.g., equipment violations or lane deviations), which used to serve as legitimate bases for investigating impairment.
 - In Delaware, officers cannot stop a vehicle simply for moving to another lane unless they can articulate why it is dangerous; otherwise, it cannot be used for prosecution.
 - In several jurisdictions, probable cause limitations mean that equipment violations or minor infractions are no longer accepted reasons to initiate stops, reducing the opportunities to detect impaired drivers before a crash.

Refusals & Gaps in Sanctions

- Multiple states reported spikes in refusal of breath tests. In some refusal states, the consequence is just a misdemeanor, despite the extensive officer work.
 - In Colorado, refusal rates have risen significantly over the past five years.
- Some prosecutors and judges treat administrative penalties (e.g., license revocation for 30 or 90 days) as sufficient; in Massachusetts, an offender may lose their license for 30 days and pay a small fine, but if the conviction is not fully secured, a future arrest may still be treated as a “first offense.”
- Offenders sometimes choose license revocation over interlock, then simply wait for the statute of limitations to pass before getting their license back, undermining the intended safety impact of interlocks.

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- Interlocks are also ineffective when the offender doesn't own the vehicle, which is increasingly common, allowing people to continue driving impaired in vehicles not covered by the device.
 - Several groups described inadequate laws and lenient judges, or prosecutors who refuse to rely on officer expertise in DUI cases, especially for drugs.
 - In New York, officers reported that prosecutors are not "drunk driving prosecution friendly," and legislation is not designed to support strong impaired driving cases. Some legislators are said to ignore victim voices, listening to "legal side" arguments while dismissing or excluding victim advocates from the conversation.
 - In Washington, if there are not "excruciating circumstances," cases are often pled lower, leading to 90-day license suspensions and probation, which officers interpret as a weak deterrent.
 - An IL example tied to no-cash bail was shared where two DUI fatality offenders were out within 6–7 hours and then skipped town; their current whereabouts are unknown. This creates a perception that the system does not take impaired driving fatalities seriously.
 - Toxicology labs in some jurisdictions, like Washington, have over a one-year backlog for results, and one group mentioned approximately two-year waits in some areas, which undercuts timeliness of prosecution and officer motivation.
 - Officers feel "handcuffed" by policies, demoralized when their cases are pled down, and discouraged when they see serious offenders quickly released or minimally sanctioned.

Growth in Drug-Impaired Driving & Complexity of Substances

Almost every group noted that the variety and complexity of impairing substances has increased dramatically. Officers agreed that in the last five years there has been an increase in the variety of drugs causing impairment, with specific mentions of marijuana, fentanyl, and other substances.

- In New York, some substances are not listed under controlled substance schedules (e.g., certain inhalants), meaning officers cannot enforce or

provide accountability for impairment related to those substances. A similar situation exists in Massachusetts, where if the specific drug cannot be pinpointed, officers may not be able to obtain blood evidence or proceed effectively.

- Ohio historically relied on urine testing with a 35-nanogram threshold for marijuana but is moving toward oral fluid testing due to increasing issues with other drugs. However, Ohio still uses urine-only for many drug-impaired cases, which officers feel is not well suited to the broader drug landscape.
- Officers underscored that alcohol is the only substance with a clear numeric standard (e.g., 0.08 BAC); for other drugs “there is not a unique number to choose,” and the law requires showing impairment, not simply presence of the substance. This makes arrest, charging, and prosecution more complex and subjective.
- Cannabis was repeatedly raised as a chronic issue:
 - Edible products now have extremely high THC concentrations and are packaged to look like candy, making them accessible and attractive to youth and the broader public.
 - The drug environment has outpaced law, training, and lab capacity, making drug-impaired driving cases harder to detect, articulate, and prosecute.

Officer Morale, Motivation, and Post-2020 Culture

Deep morale and cultural issues both internally and externally referenced are shaping how officers approach DUI enforcement.

- Officers across several groups referenced the murder of George Floyd and the “summer of love” as a turning point. Public opinion of law enforcement is described as “way down” post-2020, with officers feeling they are made to feel bad about being cops and about writing tickets.
- There is a noted fear of being filmed, including “First Amendment auditors” and the risk that body cam footage will be used against the officer, causing some to avoid proactive enforcement or skip turning on their cameras.

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- Younger officers are described as bystanders on calls, reluctant to take the enforcement lead and preferring reactive responses or more “exciting” assignments (violent crime, dignitary details) instead of traffic safety work that they view as tedious and high-risk for complaints.
 - Some officers are reportedly sympathetic to DUI offenders, explicitly avoiding SFSTs or arrests because they “don’t want to ruin their lives.” This is described as a culture shift among younger officers, especially in environments with minimal performance incentives.
 - Traditional incentives like specialty equipment (radar, in-car computers) are now standard issue, removing “toys” as motivators. At the same time, overtime grant funds for DUI enforcement are going unused or being returned because officers prefer easier overtime (e.g., high school games, church events) where they can “do nothing” and earn equal or better pay with less stress and paperwork.
 - Officers expressed that when public realizes you won’t stop them, reckless behavior increases. But when enforcement resumes, officers find themselves second-guessing their decisions, given the current climate around police scrutiny and use of force.
 - Even if laws and training existed in a perfect state, low morale, fear of scrutiny, and misaligned incentives seem to heavily suppress proactive DUI enforcement.

Data, Technology, and Use of Traffic Safety Partner Research

Lastly, notes show both potential and gaps in how data is used to guide and support impaired driving enforcement.

- Some agencies work closely with traffic safety partners to use crash data, high-crash corridors, and contributing factor reports to place officers strategically (for example, using contributing factors reports in 10 counties to decide where to station officers and brainstorm where those factors originate).
 - Tools like heat mapping and TRACE-type programs can identify “last drink” locations and hotspots by time of day, day of week, and geography, allowing agencies to concentrate enforcement.

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- However, those tools often came with long forms and time-consuming data entry, so officers did not use them consistently, and the tools eventually became optional.
 - Some communities use technologies like drones operated by highway patrol during saturation patrols, and DREs on gators in hospitality districts, to work around limitations like no-pursuit policies while still focusing on high-crime, high-impaired-driving areas.
 - Officers mentioned systems where troopers submit daily recaps of activities, which can support analyses of productivity and help identify “champions” who excel at DUI enforcement.
 - In one example, eight officers made 22 DUI arrests in a weekend while 72 others made only three; recognizing and incentivizing such champions was cited as a way to build culture.
 - However, in some states, agencies are unwilling to share data, forcing partners to rely on Department of Transportation data that is two years behind, limiting real-time targeting and evaluation.
 - One group noted that there is no standalone statewide standardized reporting or technology system for impaired driving data, which limits the ability to see the full scope of the problem or hold leaders accountable based on data.

Additional comments that were more MADD programming specific included the decline in prevention, victim visibility, and community engagement. Several notes highlight that prevention and public engagement around impaired driving have weakened, reducing the upstream deterrence effect.

- After COVID, MADD “took a hit”: less support, fewer victim speakers, decreased law enforcement recognition events, and an overall weaker unified front between advocacy groups and law enforcement.
- Some schools no longer want MADD presentations, describing them as “too graphic” or insisting they don’t have that problem at their school, despite data suggesting otherwise. Law enforcement is often more focused on guns and violent crime, leaving little time for school presentations or prevention-focused engagement.



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- School resource officers have been reduced or removed in many districts, and driving schools are not providing the same level of DUI prevention education they once did.
- Agencies noted that schools mainly want to focus on fentanyl and are less open to impaired driving prevention as a primary topic.
- Some groups suggested starting prevention at the school district policy level, though they acknowledged that even there, school limitations may restrict who can enter to provide programming.

END OF REPORT