



Office of
Financial Management
STATE OF WASHINGTON

Activity Inventory Performance Measure Assessment

Washington Traffic Safety Commission

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Office of Financial Management Assessor:

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Based on a review of the following: The agency strategic plan, the budget activity inventory, internal performance measure reports, and an interview with the agency contacts

Current Strengths and Good Practices

- The measures submitted to OFM indicate significant progress has been made in highway safety over time.
- All the submitted performance measures are very relevant and results-oriented.
- There was sufficient data in agency reports to allow for some statistical analysis.
- All the budget activity measures are also used in internal and external agency reports and plans.
- For the most part, the language used in the measures is understandable to readers who are not agency or industry experts.

Budget Activity and Performance Measure Comments and Potential Improvements

- The agency budget is allocated using only one budget activity. OFM and the agency should consider breaking up this activity, because while the agency concentrates on research, and data collection and analysis, it also manages a grant program, and conducts educational campaigns with those funds.
- The agency should consider whether any measures relating the following topics should be added to the current suite submitted to OFM as a part of the budget, in order to bolster the decision making process around the funding initiatives relating to the implementation of the **Target Zero** Highway Safety Plan:
 - The number of pedestrians and bicyclists injured in school zones
 - The motorcycle fatality rate
 - Seatbelt use among Native Americans on tribal reservations
 - The crash rates involving distracted drivers - Specifically, cell phones and text messaging
 - Number of serious injuries and fatalities caused by the failure of cable median barriers
 - The number of serious injuries and fatalities caused by unsecured loads
- Currently, the agency is reporting estimates instead of performance targets. The agency should consider using fixed performance targets to improve the understandability of these performance measures.
- Data entered into the performance Measure Tracking System (PMT) only goes back to 2001. The data going back to 1993 used to make the charts in this assessment came from agency-published reports. Since all the measures are on an annual reporting cycle, the measures in the PMT would benefit from this existing historic data.

Analysis of Current Activity Measure Data

- All the actual data in the performance measures reviewed show data that are trending in the desirable direction with the following attributes:
 - The seatbelt usage rates (slide 8) have an abnormally large jump after 2001-02 that probably corresponds to a specific event. As the rate passes 90%, the rate of increase is likely to slow.
 - The slight downward trend in the speed-related fatality rates (slide 10) is not strong enough to say there is a correlation between the rate and the reporting fiscal years.
 - The trends in the overall death rate and the drinking driver related death rates (slides 9 & 11) are stable and predictable. Future results should follow the trend lines.

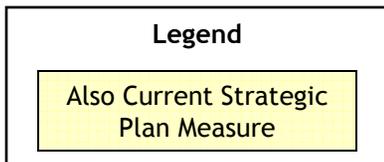
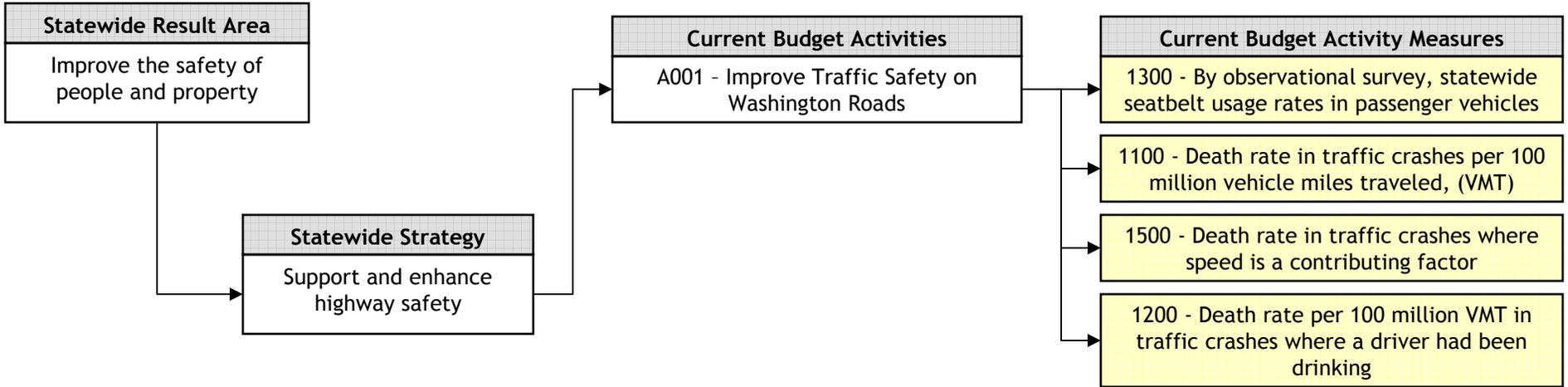
Agency Comments and Future Actions

WTSC appreciates the thorough review of our performance measure process. The recommendations, made by Brian Willett, Budget Assistant to the Governor, were easy to understand and on-point. We will continue to work with OFM staff to determine when and how to best implement suggested improvements.

Specific Comments:

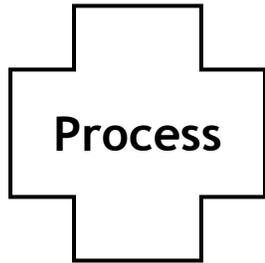
1. We will discuss the suggestion of breaking up our single budget activity with OFM.
2. As far as the specific recommendations for additional performance measures, We want to limit the number of performance measures we submit to OFM to only the most critical. Our state strategic highway safety plan “Target Zero” lists a wide range of performance measures. These performance measures cover a wide range of traffic safety emphasis areas, from RR Crossing safety to impaired driving. We fear that if we include most or many of Target Zero’s performance measures in our report to OFM, then it might give the false impression that a priority four performance measure is just as important as a priority one performance measure. One of Governor Gregoire’s tenants of accountability is based on the belief that we can’t be everything to all people. We need to stay focused on high priority areas and proven strategies. I believe WTSC can expand the performance measures reported to OFM beyond DUI, seat belt use and speed to include one or more performance measures from the state strategic traffic records plan. This will result in reporting performance measures for each emphasis area in Target Zero priority one and two that WTSC has a role in.
 - The number injured in school zones each year is too small to use as a key performance measure
 - We do not have information on seat belt use on Native American reservation lands. We are working with the tribes to improve the quality of traffic safety data available and to improve the quality of their traffic safety programs.
3. We will look into the target vs. estimate issue and we will put more historical data into PMT for our existing measures.

Budget Activity & Performance Measure Linkages



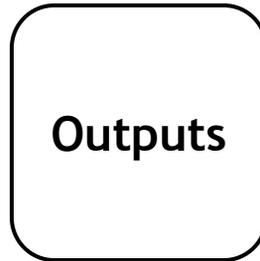
Budget Activity Measure Perspectives

⑤ Process characteristics the customers/stakeholders want



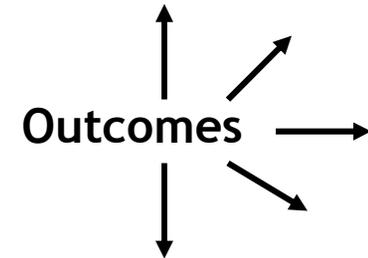
⑥ Process characteristics the agency wants

③ Product/service attributes customers/stakeholders want



④ Product/service attributes the agency wants

① Customer/stakeholder desired outcomes



② Agency desired outcomes

1300 - By observational survey, statewide seatbelt usage rates in passenger vehicles

②

1100 - Death rate in traffic crashes per 100 million vehicle miles traveled, (VMT)

②

1500 - Death rate in traffic crashes where speed is a contributing factor

②

1200 - Death rate per 100 million VMT in traffic crashes where a driver had been drinking

②

Legend

Strategic Plan and
Budget Activity Measure

Activity Measure Critique - Seatbelt Usage

Performance Measure Description: No additional explanation is needed.

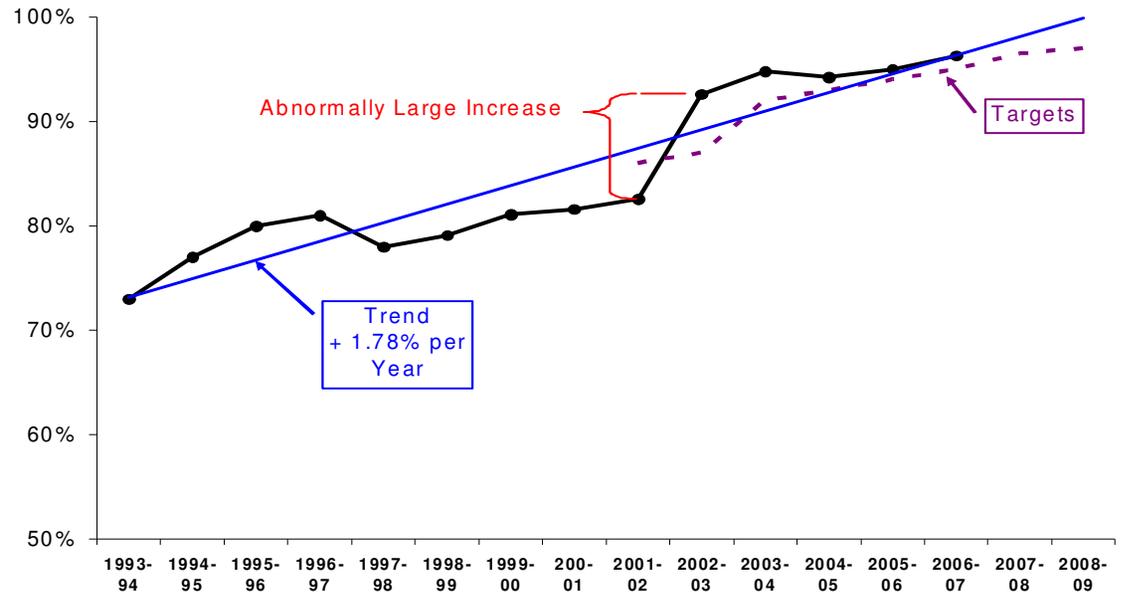
Budget Activity Links: A001 - Improve Traffic Safety on Washington Roads

Category of Measure: An intermediate outcome

Analysis of Variation: The variation pattern is in the form of a strong trend. The trend is not entirely stable and predictable because of the abnormally large increase after 2001-02. This type of abnormal jump usually corresponds to a specific event*

Analysis of Targeted vs. Actual Performance: The targets appear to be estimates. The estimates closely follow the increasing trend line of the actual data.

1300 - By Observational Survey, Statewide Seat Belt Usage Rates in Passenger Vehicles



Comments About Desirable Characteristics

Relevance: Good - However, as the actual numbers grow past 90%, the improvement rate is likely to slow to the point that this measure will track maintenance of gains instead of continuing improvement rates.

Timeliness: Annual data is rarely timely, but makes sense for this type of data. Thankfully, the agency publishes data going back to 1993, which provides enough data for some analysis.

Understandability: Good, but the phrase, 'By observational survey' should be moved to the footnotes.

Reliability: The survey methodology is dictated by NHTSA.

Comparability: Since 2005, Washington's seat belt use rate is #1 or #2 in the nation and above the national average of about 80%.

Cost Effectiveness: Since this is an observational survey, the data collection must be very expensive.

General Comments & Explanations:

Agency Comment:

Two events in mid-2002 resulted in a drastic increase in seat belt use in Washington. In May of 2002, the WTSC funded the state's first Click it or Ticket sustained enforcement and media campaign. In July of 2002, Washington State's seat belt law was changed from secondary to primary (or standard) enforcement.

Activity Measure Critique - Overall Death Rates

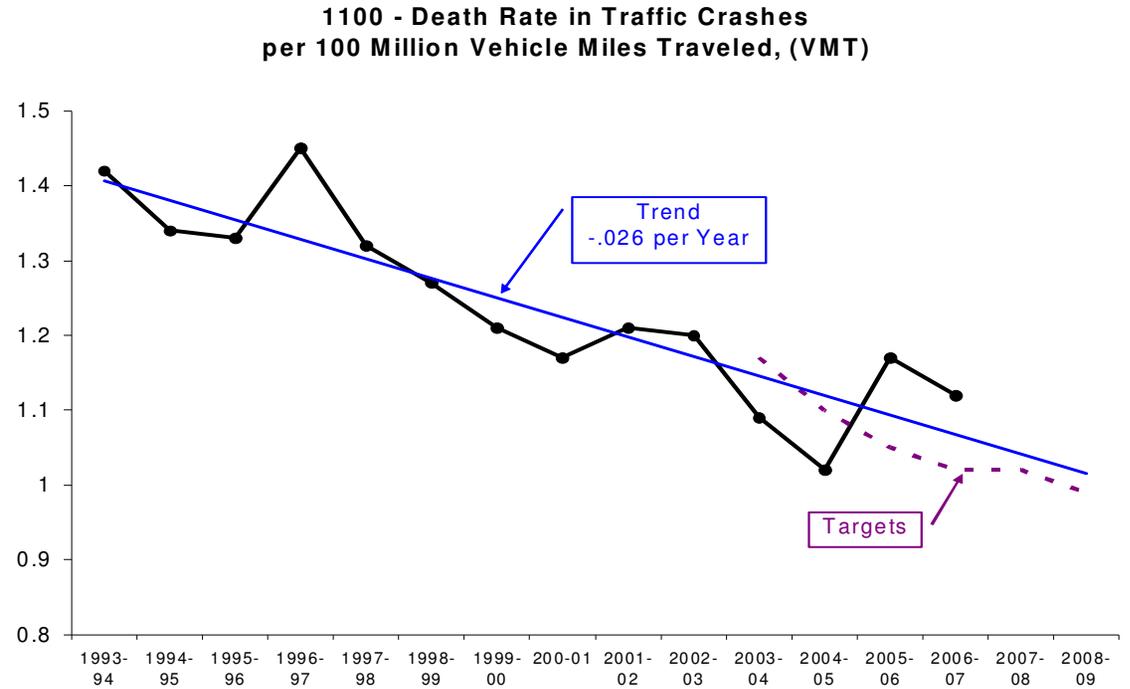
Performance Measure Description: Measuring the rate in 100 million vehicle miles traveled allows for better comparisons between counties and states.

Budget Activity Links: A001 - Improve Traffic Safety on Washington Roads

Category of Measure: An ultimate outcome

Analysis of Variation: A strong and stable decreasing (desirable) trend is evident in the actual data. Future results should follow the trend line down.

Analysis of Targeted vs. Actual Performance: The targets are really estimates that mirror the trend line.



Comments About Desirable Characteristics

Relevance: Measures the purpose of the agency.

Understandability: Using VMT instead of true percentages is a tradeoff in understandability for comparability.

Comparability: Washington's traffic crash death rate typically places us in the top 5 or 10 safest states in the country.

Timeliness: Annual data is rarely timely, but makes sense for this type of data. Thankfully, the agency publishes data going back to 1993, which provides enough data for some analysis.

Reliability: Should be good because of the definitions needed to automate the data collection.

Cost Effectiveness: Data comes from automated systems and is analyzed by agency staff.

General Comments & Explanations:

Agency Comment:

This rate of deaths per 100 million vehicle miles travelled is widely accepted as the most reliable measure of road safety when comparing states or nations. This is due in large part due to the fact that the measure controls for exposure.

Activity Measure Critique - Death Rates Involving Speed

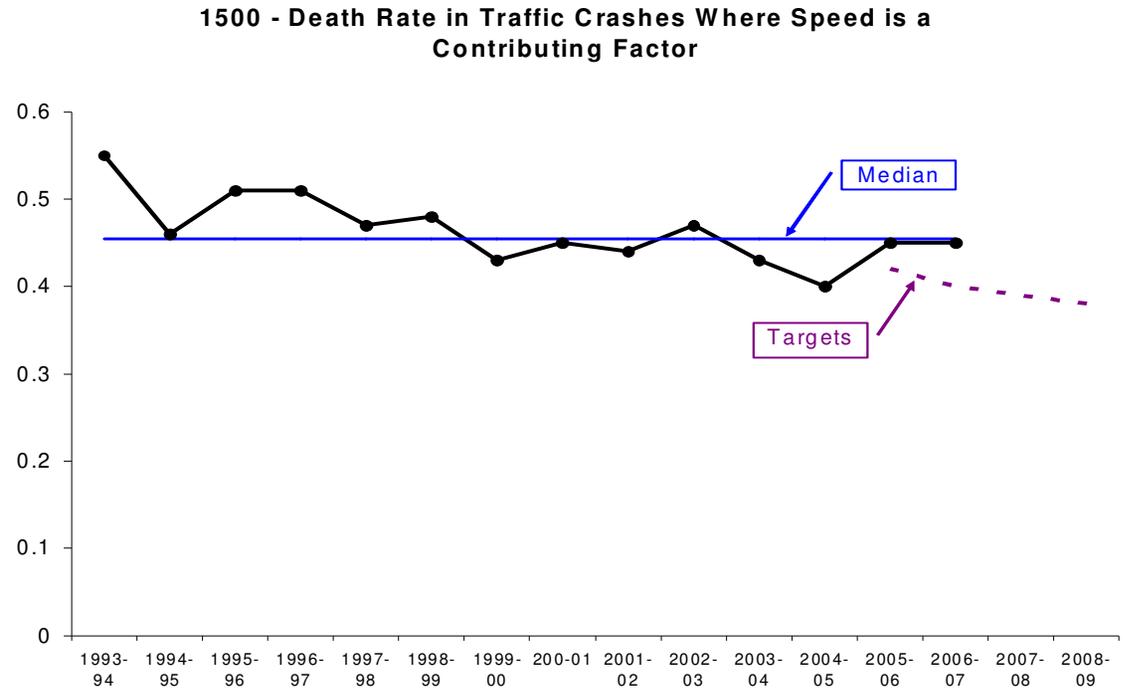
Performance Measure Description: Death rate is in VMT.

Budget Activity Links: A001 - Improve Traffic Safety on Washington Roads

Category of Measure: An outcome

Analysis of Variation: While there is slight downward tilt in the data, the correlation between the changing rate and the reporting years is not strong enough to definitely call it a trend.

Analysis of Targeted vs. Actual Performance: The rates for the past two years have exceeded the estimates (undesirable). The estimates continue down ward following the downward slope of the data.



Comments About Desirable Characteristics

Relevance: Speed is one of the factors frequently cited as a contributing cause of driving fatalities.

Understandability: Using VMT instead of true percentages is a tradeoff in understandability for comparability.

Comparability: The agency did not provide OFM with any comparison data on this subject during this assessment.

Timeliness: Annual data is rarely timely, but makes sense for this type of data. Thankfully, the agency publishes data going back to 1993, which provides enough data for some analysis.

Reliability: There are frequently many other contributing factors, in addition to speed, that together result in the crash.

Cost Effectiveness: Data comes from automated systems and is analyzed by agency staff.

General Comments & Explanations:

Agency Comment:

Although speed has long been a factor in traffic crashes, it is the new kid on the block in terms of research and proven strategies. There is very little substantive material available to guide development of programs to reduce speed related traffic deaths and serious injuries. Washington is currently working with NHTSA to develop and implement a speed pilot project, based on the Click it or Ticket media and enforcement model. If effective, this model might be adopted by other states.

Activity Measure Critique - Death Rates Involving Drinking Drivers

Performance Measure Description: Measuring the rate in 100 million vehicle miles traveled allows for better comparisons between counties and states.

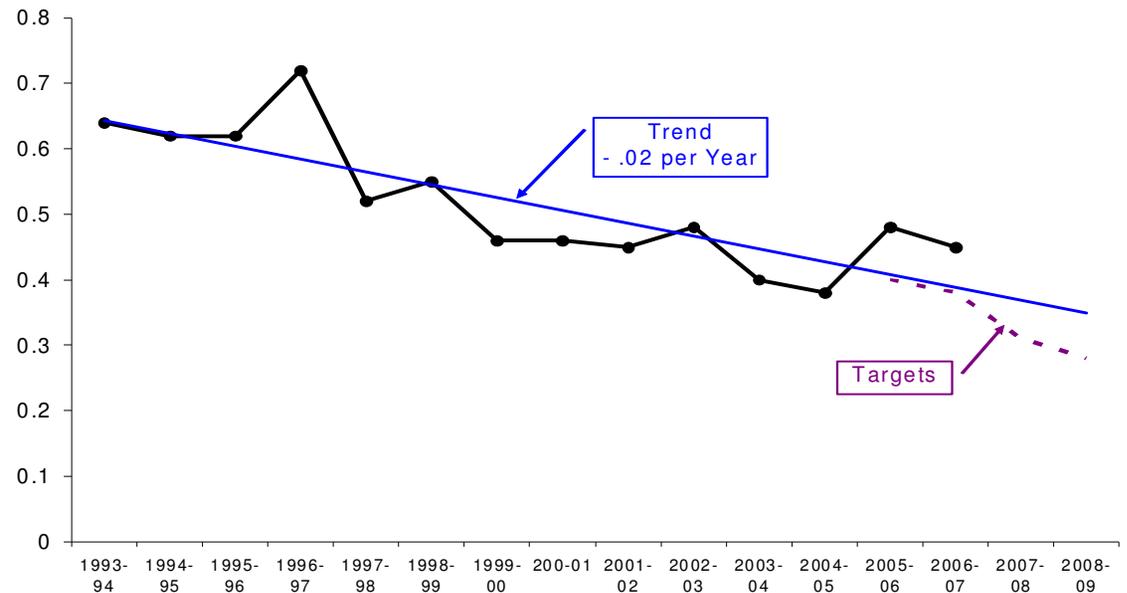
Budget Activity Links: A001 - Improve Traffic Safety on Washington Roads

Category of Measure: An outcome

Analysis of Variation: A strong and stable decreasing (desirable) trend is evident in the actual data. Future results should follow the trend line down.

Analysis of Targeted vs. Actual Performance: The targets are really estimates that mirror the trend line.

1200 - Death Rate per 100 Million VMT in Traffic Crashes Where a Driver Had Been Drinking



Comments About Desirable Characteristics

Relevance: Drinking is one of the factors frequently cited as a contributing cause of driving fatalities.

Understandability: Using VMT instead of true percentages is a tradeoff in understandability for comparability.

Comparability: This rate currently places Washington at about the average of other states.

Timeliness: Annual data is rarely timely, but makes sense for this type of data. Thankfully, the agency publishes data going back to 1993, which provides enough data for some analysis.

Reliability: There are frequently many other contributing factors, in addition to the intoxication, that together result in the crash.

Cost Effectiveness: data comes from automated systems and is analyzed by agency staff

General Comments & Explanations:

Agency Comment:
Reducing impaired driving related deaths and serious injuries is the number one priority of Target Zero.