
ASCE December Meeting Minutes

Speaker: Chris Bortz, PE – Assistant Bureau Chief in the Bureau of Transportation Safety at KDOT
Topic: Current crash statistics in the state of Kansas
Date: Wednesday, December 7, 2022
Location: Wichita Advanced Learning Library
711 West 2nd Street N., Wichita, KS 67203

President Scott Lindebak called the meeting to order at 12:03 pm and opened with announcements.

Announcements

- Meeting will be held next month, speaker: McConnell Air Force Base's Civil Site design team
- Scholarship was awarded to Mason Ericson, and we had 5 total applicants. Mason was invited to the January ASCE meeting to present him with the Scholarship.
- Applications for the ASCE STEM Grant for K-12 schools is due December 19th.
- If you are interested in signing up to help with the Hands-on Engineering, contact Daniel Mealiff. They occur the first Saturday of every month, 10:30 am-11:30 am.
- ASCE Kansas Section Award nominations are now open. There are 4 awards available (Lifetime Achievement, younger member, outstanding member, and outstanding faculty/Practitioner Advisor)

Vice President Layla McDaniel introduced the guest speaker, Chris Bortz. Chris Bortz is the Assistant Bureau Chief in the Bureau of Transportation Safety at KDOT. Chris has been in the KDOT Traffic Safety Section for 22 years. In his new role as Assistant Bureau Chief, he is active in strategic safety planning, budgeting and programs all focused on reducing death and injury on Kansas roads. Chris is married and has three adult children and received a Bachelor of Science degree from Kansas State University and enjoys golf and cruising in his spare time.

Presentation Notes

Chris discussed the current crash statistics in the state of Kansas, including the last several years of data, and how 2020 & the COVID pandemic affected data trends.

Approximately 400 people die on Kansas roads every year, with many of those accidents taking place in & around the urban areas such as Wichita, Kansas City, & Topeka. The rural areas have a much more random pattern associated to the location of crashes. The number of traffic fatalities in the Kansas have stayed relatively stagnant between 2020 & 2021 with 425 fatalities in 2020 & 426 fatalities in



2021, and the state is predicting total fatalities will be down for 2022. However, the **national** number of fatalities in the first 6 months of 2022 is up 0.5% compared to 2021, which is the highest number of fatalities in the 6-month period since 2006.

When analyzing the U.S. Traffic fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles travelled, the rate of traffic fatalities has stayed stagnant in the last 10 years.

When comparing the fatalities by road type, city streets has the most fatalities and this can be attributed to the fact that there are more roads on within the cities, so accidents are more concentrated in these areas. US Highways & county roads generally have the next highest number of fatalities with Kansas Highways & Interstates well below that.

There was a drastic jump in crashes from 2020 to 2021, but the number of crashes in 2021 (57,539), was still less than in 2019 (64,043), before the COVID Pandemic. Traffic began trending back to normal numbers in 2021 & even more in 2022, which explains the drastic rise in crashes between 2020 & 2021. It is important to keep in mind that only accidents with damages more than \$1,000 are reported to the state, and about 10,000 of those crashes are deer related.

The state does a great job collecting alcohol related crash data, however, the drug-related data tracking needs improvement. Other States, such as Colorado, have improved their drug-related data tracking due to the legalization of marijuana in those states. There was about 100 more Alcohol related crashes in 2020 compared to 2019 & 2021.

Distracted driving related crashes have decreased by 4.2% from 2017 to 2021. The state has implemented a texting law and made other strides to help minimize distracted driving.

Kansas places 35th in the country for the observed percentage of seatbelt use, with about 87% of drivers belted, and 48% of fatalities are belted. Pick-up trucks have the worst seatbelt rates compared to other types of vehicles. Seat belt usage is generally down in rural districts.

When analyzing the fatalities by age groups in the past 7 years, people aged 20-30 & 56-60 have the most fatalities.

Pedestrian fatalities don't follow a general trend from year to year due to Kansas being a more rural state than most.

During the pandemic, the overall VMT was down in 2020, however, there was an increase in speeding citations and drug & alcohol related incidents.



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Meeting Attendees

1	Michael	Armour	24	Bethany	Mally
2	Tim	Aziere	25	Layla	McDaniel
3	Michael	Bailey	26	Dakota	McKee
4	Alfred	Blanco	27	Aubrey	Mealiff
5	Eric	Broce	28	Daniel	Mealiff
6	Lee	Carmichael	29	Rebecca	Mellies
7	John	Cillessen	30	Elizabeth	Motter
8	Colin	Costley	31	Elizabeth	Motter
9	Macee	Crowell	32	Dustin	Nickel
10	Steve	Degenhardt	33	John	Oswald
11	Martin	Eby	34	Rohith	Panthangi
12	Slade	Engstrom	35	Larry	Schaller
13	Alan	Farrington	36	Daniel	Schrant
14	Arlan	Forakeer	37	James	Shimp
15	Daniella	Gonzalez	38	Brad	Shores
16	Derek	Hake	39	Anne	Stephens
17	Abdul	Hamada	40	Michelle	Strait
18	Gary	Janzen	41	Karl	Svatty
19	Kyle	Kerns	42	Mike	Thompson
20	Steve	Lackey	43	James	Wagner
21	Scott	Lindebak	44	Amy	Wegner
22	Dmitry	Lomachenko	45	Wendy	Zhang
23	Ky	Louanghaksaphone			

Meeting adjourned by President Scott Lindebak at 1:04 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Secretary Macee Crowell.



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