Farm Labor Transportation

Gary Cordner
Background

- California 1999
- Central region
- 600,000 farm laborers
  May-September
- 200,000 the rest of the year
- Migrant laborers primarily from Mexico
- California Highway Patrol
The Problem

- Vehicle crash on August 9, 1999, 5:00 a.m.
- 13 fatalities
- Farm workers who were passengers in a van
- Seated on benches
- No seat belts
- Driver unlicensed
Analysis

• Past data on farm labor vehicle crashes not reliable – did hand searches for Central Division
• Estimated 40-60 crashes per year from 1992-1999
• Fatalities <5 per year, but many crashes with multiple injuries
Analysis 2

- Farm labor vehicles exempt from state’s seat belt law
- No targeted inspection of farm labor vehicles
- Unsafe transportation common in Mexico
- Inexperienced drivers from Mexico
- Suspicion/fear of police in Mexico
Response

- Law amended to require seat belts in farm labor vehicles
- Vehicle operators & owners made responsible
- Annual inspection to certify farm labor vehicles, with visible sticker
- SAFE program established by CHP
- Implemented regularly scheduled, non-punitive vehicle inspections
- Increased enforcement during high season
Response 2

- 1-800-TELLCHP tip line
- Outreach to stakeholder groups
- Bilingual officers
- Brochures, flyers, radio, television
- Education through schools, migrant camps, health fairs, etc.
Implementation

• First year:
  – 3,060 vehicles inspected
  – 1,274 vehicles certified
  – 521 vehicles taken out of service
  – 1,201 citations issued
  – 195 presentations to 38,000+ attendees
  – 80 TV & radio appearances
Assessment

• Zero fatalities in 2000 & 2001
• 75% reduction in injuries
• 73% drop in crashes
• Program expanded state-wide & continued
• Law amended in 2002 to also require forward-facing seating
Any Questions?

How Californians See America

- Coffee
- Canada
- California (awesome)
- Vegas (around here somewhere)
- Religious Nutballs who try to force their religion on us
- Fake Cowboys & Pickup Trucks
- Old People
- Loud and obnoxious New Yorkers

GraphJam