

Adelaide Hills Community Road Safety Group



2000-2001 Community Road Safety Grant: Speed Awareness

The program submitted, and for which funds were received, envisaged a local speed awareness campaign based on raising community awareness of the risks associated with speeding, and seeking a voluntary reduction in traveling speeds on problem roads. Significant changes occurred during the timeframe of this grant, which necessitated a change in focus and the implementation of a different program. This has resulted in delayed application and reporting.

History

The unique geography of the Adelaide Hills, with its numerous narrow and winding roads across the Mt Lofty Ranges, combines with frequent poor weather conditions, multiple roadside hazards and a traffic mix ranging from tractors, horse-floats and stock trucks to powerful motorcycles, local business, residential, commuter and tourist traffic to produce a very high risk environment, which is reflected in the area's over-representation of vehicle crashes, fatalities and the severest injuries.

From its inception, the Group has recognized Speed reduction as a key factor, and has lobbied the relevant authorities to address it as a priority. With the advent of a formal funding process, a community Speed awareness and reduction campaign was a natural, high priority issue to address.

Overview 2000 funding submission

To this end, our proposal centered on a "Take 5" (km/hr) speed reduction message. Pamphlets were designed for community distribution, and associated signage was planned. An article was placed in the *Courier* local newspaper, inviting readers to nominate local roads with speed-related problems. A sub-Committee was formed comprising engineers from both participating Councils, SAPOL and other group members with a traffic engineering background, to review nominated roads and conduct pre-program assessment of existing traveling speeds. The plan also envisaged follow-up review of travelling speeds to assess any changes.

Outcomes

Community response to the newspaper article was swift and resounding, with over 80 responses being received, consistently nominating several key local roads. Initial surveys were conducted on a small number of roads, using traffic classifiers from Councils. Information was correlated with crash information and local Police data on speed "hot-spots".

Community identification of Sheoak Road, Crafers and other roads has enabled focused targeting both by Police and Council, with good results in terms of nomination for Black Spot funding and enforcement.

Unintended/Unexpected Outcome: TSA Speed Review and Reduction Program

At this stage of our program, Transport SA intervened with a state-government funded initiative to conduct a full review of speed limits in the Adelaide Hills and Mt Barker Council areas, designed to determine and reduce speed zones on "at-risk"

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roads. AHCRSG and local Councils were invited to participate in the program, which included wide community consultation sessions, and resulted in the reduction of speed limits on over 200 roads. Most speed limits were reduced from 100 to 80 km/hr, with frequent local nominations for reductions to 60 km/hr. The TSA program also comprised pre- and post-evaluation of traveling speeds by the University of SA, Transport Systems Centre. Anecdotal evidence suggests that not only have lower speeds been achieved on affected roads, but also that reduced travel speeds are being experienced on roads where the limit was not reduced. There may be several reasons for such a response – which is yet to be determined by the final UniSA report.

Following implementation of the TSA program in 2001, the local newspaper conducted street surveys to ascertain the reaction of local residents, and found unanimous support for the reduced speed limits.

Restructured AHCRSG Proposal

Several AHCRSG members were directly involved in the TSA program, and the Group elected to re-assess its proposal once the TSA program was completed. In 2002, the Group chose to expend its allocated funds on a follow-up to the TSA program with a campaign entitled: *“Expect the Unexpected: Slow down in the Hills”* – to further entrench the speed-risk assessment message. To this end, a Group member with an Advertising background offered to commission artwork depicting the various risks frequently encountered on Hills roads.

Target Group

Given their frequent over-representation in crash statistics locally, young drivers (and their families) were identified as the target audience. The artwork was therefore designed to appeal to their interests through a mouse-mat, to be supplied to local high school computer rooms. The same image was also produced as an A4 information sheet, with speed facts on the reverse side for community wide-distribution. It was also planned that the wider community and non-local road users would be reached through the reproduction of the message “Expect the Unexpected: Slow down in the Hills” on corflute signs attached to existing local government signposts across both local Council areas.

Outcomes

- 250 mousemats were produced, and will be distributed to high schools at the commencement of the 2003 academic year
- 10,000 information sheets were produced and distributed (see below).
- No signs were produced.
- There were unanticipated cost overruns, due to the commencement of GST during the delayed timeframe of the project.

Mousemats: *(Sample provided to TSA representative)*

The final result was a very attractive article, which conveys the various risks accurately and with finesse – in a medium which will undoubtedly “reach” its target audience. Due to delays in production, and the commencement of the exam period for the older students, it was not practical to distribute these this year.

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Information Sheets:

Again, the quality and attractiveness of the finished article has made them an instant “hit” with recipients.

The sheets have been distributed to high schools, primary schools, and kindergartens as an inclusion to school families through their own newsletters. Anecdotal reports have come from a wide range of parents on the effectiveness of the format.

It would be fair to say that the Hills have been covered with these attractive sheets, whose distribution has included :

- 3 x Electoral offices (again with strong positive feedback)
- All GP Surgeries, hospitals and community health centers
- Local business outlets including petrol stations, veterinarians, post offices, deli’s, council offices, libraries, etc etc.
- A major distribution occurred through Lobethal businesses during the annual Xmas Lights Festival, which brings in thousands of visitors in the 2 weeks approaching Christmas.

Roadside Signs:

An unanticipated outcome was encountered with the roadside signs due to the format and process required to achieve TSA standards in colours, font size etc., which required the use of designated printers only, at significantly higher costs. It was therefore decided not to proceed with the signs. This has resulted in a markedly reduced exposure of the risk assessment message to passing road users.

The Mount Barker Council was also hesitant about use of their Fire Prevention signposts for more general community messages.

Summary

The process of developing, redesigning and finally distributing our message has been a very positive experience for the Group. Certainly the outcomes could not have been achieved without funding received through the grant process.

AHCRSG is extremely appreciative of the support it receives from TSA’s Community Road Safety Officers and the grant structure, which has allowed us to reach out and promote safer road user to our community. Community feedback suggests that our efforts are both recognized and welcomed.