

# REPORT DIGEST

## MANAGEMENT AND PROGRAM AUDIT

### ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION'S TRAFFIC SAFETY PROGRAMS

Released: March 2006



State of Illinois  
Office of the Auditor General

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## SYNOPSIS

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) administers highway safety programs for the State of Illinois. These programs are aimed at reducing the number and severity of motor vehicle crashes, fatalities, personal injuries, and property damage.

In July 2004, the Division of Traffic Safety (DTS) was reorganized, resulting in the layoff of 17 employees. IDOT did not adequately plan for the reorganization. For example:

- An April 2004 agency-wide reorganization plan did not detail the need or rationale for the reorganization nor how the responsibilities of the laid-off employees would be carried out;
- No grant project monitoring took place for the first several months of FY05;
- IDOT hired back three laid-off DTS employees under contract to perform necessary day-to-day operations, including processing reimbursement claims; and
- Some functions are being performed by individuals in a manner that is not consistent with their organizational placement.

IDOT miscalculated the savings from the elimination of the positions in the Division of Traffic Safety. IDOT's cost savings estimate, prepared after the reorganization, failed to take into account the cost of staff and contractual personnel hired or transferred to fulfill the duties of the laid-off employees.

During our project file review of 25 files from FFY04 and 25 files from FFY05, we determined that appropriate monitoring was not taking place. For example:

- Project files were missing documentation that was required within the grant agreements;
- Project goals were not met for all nine FFY04 files and all nine FFY05 files reviewed where the grant agreements contained measurable goals; and
- DTS paid reimbursement claims from grantees without having received all documentation required by the agreement.

IDOT is not maximizing federal reimbursements. Unlike other states, DTS does not use fringe or indirect cost rates when claiming federal reimbursement, which could result in an additional \$1.1 million annually. In addition, IDOT did not seek federal reimbursement for nine IDOT staff working to administer highway safety projects in FY05. By not billing for these nine employees, IDOT failed to be reimbursed for more than \$400,000.

IDOT lacked written policies and procedures to guide the review and award of grant applications. Decision documents used for acceptance or denials of grant applications were not maintained to substantiate the Highway Safety Planning Committee's decisions.

IDOT has had significant problems in implementing a new Crash Information System. As a result, IDOT could not provide complete crash data for calendar year 2004.



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## REPORT CONCLUSIONS

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The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) administers highway safety programs for the State of Illinois. These programs are aimed at reducing the number and severity of motor vehicle crashes, fatalities, personal injuries, and property damage. Many of IDOT's Division of Traffic Safety's programs are carried out by local law enforcement agencies and other grantees.

In July 2004, the Division of Traffic Safety (DTS) was reorganized, resulting in the layoff of 17 employees. IDOT did not adequately plan for the Traffic Safety reorganization, which was part of an agency-wide reorganization. Most of the 17 laid-off Division of Traffic Safety (DTS) employees worked in the Bureau of Safety Program's Safety Projects Section, which was responsible for administering and monitoring traffic safety grants largely funded by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). Examples of issues due to IDOT's lack of reorganization planning included:

- An April 2004 agency-wide reorganization plan did not document the need or rationale for the reorganization nor how the responsibilities of the laid-off employees would be carried out;
- In May 2004, NHTSA expressed concerns to IDOT about not being informed of the termination of federally funded Traffic Safety employees and requested a reorganization plan;
- In June 2004, IDOT submitted a draft reorganization plan to NHTSA. While the June plan identified areas where IDOT concluded improvements were needed, IDOT was unable to provide auditors with documentation to support its analysis;
- No grant project monitoring took place for the first several months of FY05;
- IDOT hired back three laid-off DTS employees under contract to perform necessary day-to-day operations, including processing reimbursement claims;
- Some functions are being performed by individuals in a manner that is not consistent with their organizational placement and responsibilities;
- Some staff hired had limited educational backgrounds and experience related to the desired qualifications; and
- DTS provided some training to project managers, as of September 1, 2005; however, DTS did not have policies and procedures manuals for its staff.

IDOT miscalculated the savings from the elimination of the positions in the Division of Traffic Safety. IDOT's cost savings estimate, prepared **after** the reorganization, failed to take into account the cost of staff and contractual personnel hired or transferred to fulfill the duties of the laid-off employees. It also did not take into account legal costs associated with the lawsuit filed by the laid-off IDOT employees, which according to IDOT totaled \$57,282 as of June 30, 2005. Furthermore, in a June 2005 memo, IDOT stated that it intended to hire a total of 27 **new** employees in DTS. As of December 2005, IDOT had hired 18 of the 27.

To determine the impact that the July 2004 reorganization and staff reductions had on DTS operations, we surveyed grantees and reviewed DTS grantee project files. Grantees reported both positive and negative comments about the performance of DTS before and after the reorganization.

During our project file review of 25 files from FFY04 and 25 files for FFY05, we determined that appropriate monitoring was not taking place. For example:

- Project files were missing documentation that was required within the grant agreements. Missing documents included progress reports, documentation of media, patrol plans, reimbursement claims, and budget documents. The FFY04 project files were more complete than the FFY05 files;
- All project goals were not met for all nine FFY04 files and all nine FFY05 files reviewed where the grant agreements contained measurable goals;
- Many documents were not date stamped upon receipt. Therefore, it was difficult to determine whether reimbursement claims were paid timely, or whether other documentation, such as progress reports and final reports were received in the time frames required by the project agreement; and
- DTS paid reimbursement claims from grantees without having received all documentation required by the agreement.

IDOT lacked written policies and procedures to guide the review and award of grant applications. Decision documents used for acceptance or denials of grant applications were not maintained to substantiate the Highway Safety Planning Committee's decisions.

IDOT rolled over approximately \$13.3 million from FFY04 to FFY05 in unused National Highway Traffic Safety Administration funds. In September 2004, and again in an April 2005 management review,

NHTSA requested that IDOT develop a liquidation plan. As of the end of our fieldwork (September 2005), IDOT had not developed the requested liquidation plan which details how to liquidate past funding that continues to roll over from year to year. Subsequently, in November 2005, IDOT submitted a liquidation plan to NHTSA.

Like the NHTSA programs, IDOT has been rolling over funds for the Motor Carrier Safety Assistance Program (MCSAP). In August 2004, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) wrote a letter to IDOT threatening to deobligate \$2,275,982 in funding because of the large rollover amount. In September 2004, IDOT submitted a liquidation plan to FMCSA.

IDOT is not maximizing its federal reimbursements. Unlike other states, IDOT's Division of Traffic Safety does not use fringe or indirect cost rates when claiming federal reimbursement. While DTS bills NHTSA for some costs incurred (such as retirement and social security), others such as healthcare and other indirect costs are not billed. If IDOT billed NHTSA and FMCSA using the 90.85 percent overhead rate it charges the Federal Highway Administration, IDOT could claim an additional \$1,136,900 annually. IDOT could bill NHTSA an additional \$465,600 and FMCSA an additional \$671,300 annually.

In addition, IDOT did not seek federal reimbursement for all IDOT staff working to administer NHTSA highway safety projects in FY05. On July 1, 2005, DTS began to require nine employees to fill out specific timecards in order to request reimbursement from NHTSA. We determined that by not billing for these nine employees during FY05, IDOT failed to be reimbursed for more than \$400,000.

There continue to be other employees working on federal traffic safety programs for which IDOT is not seeking federal reimbursement in FY06. The other employees' annual salaries total more than \$80,000.

Data compiled by IDOT shows that safety belt and child safety seat usage have increased significantly over the last five years. However, the percent of fatalities related to alcohol has not significantly changed. When compared to the other states in NHTSA's Great Lakes Region, Illinois had above average seat belt usage but also had above average percentage of alcohol related fatalities for FFY04.

IDOT has had significant problems in implementing a new Crash Information System. As a result, IDOT could not provide crash data for calendar year 2004 and is using crash data from calendar year 2003 for highway safety planning for FFY06.

Regarding MCSAP, due to data limitations, it was difficult to determine if the motor carrier program has been effective in reducing the number of crashes or fatalities related to large trucks or buses in Illinois. Crashes related to large trucks in calendar year 2004 were at their highest point for the five-year period 2000-2004. However, we question whether the crash data reported by IDOT to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration has been accurate because of the large fluctuations in the data. The number of fatal and non-fatal crashes involving large trucks decreased from 5,153 in 2000 to 3,547 in 2001. However, by 2004, the number of crashes involving large trucks increased to 7,825.

DTS's Evaluation Unit conducts reviews of traffic safety programs and received a commendation in the most recent management review conducted by NHTSA. Although DTS has conducted reviews of initiatives conducted using NHTSA funds, IDOT has not reviewed the operational efficiency of traffic safety operations. In addition, no effectiveness or efficiency reviews have been conducted of motor carrier safety programs.

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## INTRODUCTION

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Legislative Audit Commission Resolution Number 129 adopted September 22, 2004, directed the Office of the Auditor General to conduct a management and program audit of the Illinois Department of Transportation's traffic safety programs. The Resolution directs the Auditor General to determine:

- Whether the Department's traffic safety programs are being operated in conformity with applicable State and federal requirements;
- Whether the Department has established and implemented procedures to periodically review both the efficiency and effectiveness of its traffic safety initiatives;
- Whether the Department's traffic safety programs have experienced either staffing or budgetary reductions in the past two fiscal years and the impact of those reductions, if any, on the programs' operations;
- Whether the Department has plans for future reductions of staff and/or budget in its traffic safety programs and the extent to which the Department has analyzed the impact of those reductions of the programs' operations; and

- The extent to which any past reductions have impacted, or any planned reductions may impact, federal funding for traffic safety programs.

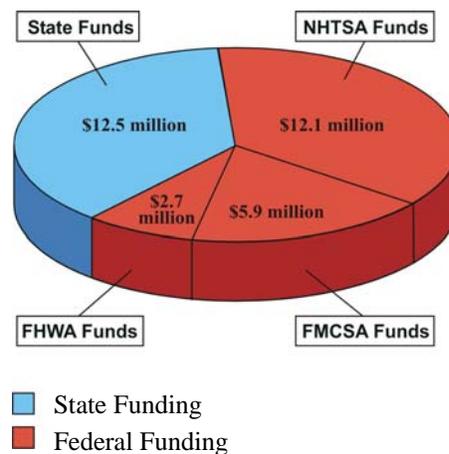
The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) administers highway safety programs for the State of Illinois. These programs are aimed at reducing the number and severity of motor vehicle crashes, fatalities, personal injuries, and property damage. Traffic safety program activities performed by IDOT include public information and education, enforcement in areas of police traffic services, alcohol countermeasures, traffic records, and highway operational improvements. (page 4)

### IDOT DIVISION OF TRAFFIC SAFETY

Traffic safety programs are funded primarily by the federal government in two main program areas. The first is Highway Traffic Safety Programs funded by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). These programs provide the funding for programs designed to reduce impaired driving and increase seatbelt use. The second area is the Motor Carrier Safety Assistance Program (MCSAP). Motor carrier safety programs are funded primarily by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA). These programs consist of commercial vehicle inspections, safety audits of commercial carriers, and the safe transport of hazardous materials.

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) has established a Division of Traffic Safety (DTS) that is responsible for highway safety programs and activities. Digest Exhibit 1 shows that in FY05, expenditures for the Division of Traffic Safety totaled \$33.2 million. State funds comprised \$12.5 million or 38 percent of total DTS expenditures. Federal funds from the

Digest Exhibit 1  
**DIVISION OF TRAFFIC SAFETY  
EXPENDITURES BY FUNDING SOURCE**  
State Fiscal Year 2005



Source: OAG analysis of Illinois Department of Transportation data.

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, and the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration accounted for \$20.7 million or 62 percent of expenditures.

In FFY04 and FFY05, IDOT awarded approximately 300 enforcement and non-enforcement projects to grantees annually. IDOT's Office of Planning and Programming coordinates all grant activities among State and local agencies. IDOT also uses Law Enforcement Liaisons (LELs) hired through Eastern Illinois University and the St. Clair County Sheriff to monitor grantees as well as Local Agency Liaisons (LALs) located within IDOT's Office of External Affairs. (pages 5-7)

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### **DIVISION OF TRAFFIC SAFETY REORGANIZATION**

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**In July 2004, DTS was reorganized resulting in the layoff of 17 employees.**

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In July 2004, DTS was reorganized resulting in the layoff of 17 employees. Of these 17 individuals, 15 were employed in the Bureau of Safety Program's Safety Projects Section. The Safety Projects Section was responsible for National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) highway traffic safety programs. IDOT officials indicated that no future staffing or budgetary reductions are planned.

The 15 staff laid off in the Safety Projects Section were responsible for planning and developing highway safety projects through supervising the development of projects in both State agencies and local governments. This included grant monitoring and review as well as the processing of reimbursement claims. The majority of these employees were project managers and existed to ensure that the grantees were in compliance with the project goals and objectives.

#### **Reorganization Planning Documents**

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**IDOT could provide little documentation that any formal planning or analysis was conducted.**

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IDOT could provide little documentation that any formal planning or analysis was conducted prior to the July 2004 reorganization of the Division of Traffic Safety (DTS). In April 2004, IDOT developed an agency-wide reorganization plan, which did not document the need or rationale for the DTS reorganization nor how the responsibilities of the laid-off employees would be carried out.

In May 2004, NHTSA expressed concerns to IDOT about not being informed of the termination of federally funded traffic safety employees and requested a reorganization plan. In June 2004, IDOT submitted a draft reorganization plan to NHTSA. While the June 2004 plan identified areas where IDOT concluded improvements were needed, IDOT was unable to provide auditors with documentation to support its analysis.

## **Post-Reorganization Management**

Because IDOT officials did not have an adequate plan prior to the reorganization as to who was going to manage projects and process reimbursement claims from grantees once everyone in the Safety Projects Section was laid off, no project monitoring took place for the first several months of FY05. Some staff hired had limited educational backgrounds and experience related to the desired qualifications. Also, the contracts for the Law Enforcement Liaisons (LELs) were not updated to reflect additional project monitoring responsibilities given to the LELs. Furthermore, some reimbursement claims from grantees were not paid timely. Finally, while DTS has provided some training to project managers, as of September 1, 2005, DTS did not have any policies and procedures manuals for its staff.

After the reorganization, staffing was inadequate to carry out essential DTS functions. According to DTS officials, after the reorganization occurred, claims for reimbursement were coming into DTS and there was no one assigned to process them. Within approximately six weeks of the reorganization, IDOT had hired back three of the laid-off DTS employees under contract to perform necessary day-to-day operations, which included processing reimbursement claims.

Additionally, the changes that have occurred within DTS have led to several organizational issues. In some cases the lines of responsibility have become unclear and some functions are being performed by individuals in a manner that is not consistent with their organizational placement and responsibilities. As is stated in the April 2005 NHTSA management review, there are individuals with DTS responsibilities that do not appear on DTS's organizational chart or program descriptions. Project monitoring and claims reimbursement are now fragmented among four IDOT organizational units (Division of Traffic Safety, Office of External Affairs, Office of Planning and Programming, and Office of Finance and Administration).

## **Reorganization Cost Savings Analysis**

In April 2005, IDOT provided auditors with a cost savings analysis for the reorganization. Although IDOT noted that one of its reasons for the reorganization was to reduce headcount and "streamline functions and realize cost savings," the cost savings analysis was not prepared by IDOT prior to the reorganization.

In response to auditors' questions regarding reorganization cost savings for DTS, IDOT noted, "the reorganization and realignment of personnel within the Division of Traffic Safety resulted in annual cost

savings of almost \$2 million.” Of the \$2 million, \$1,001,880 was for salaries and \$910,208 was for overhead.

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**IDOT miscalculated the estimated savings from the elimination of the positions in the Division of Traffic Safety.**

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IDOT miscalculated the estimated savings from the elimination of the positions in the Division of Traffic Safety. IDOT reported savings from the reorganization of \$1,001,880 in salary costs. However, IDOT's calculations failed to take into account the cost of staff and contractual personnel hired or rehired or transferred to fulfill the duties of the 17 employees that were laid-off. IDOT incurred approximately \$756,570 in annualized costs associated with in-house or contractual staff working on DTS-related activities to replace the employees that were laid-off. It also did not take into account legal costs associated with the lawsuit filed by the laid-off IDOT employees, which according to IDOT totaled \$57,282 as of June 30, 2005.

Additionally, DTS hired several new staff after the reorganization even though IDOT's purpose for the reorganization was to reduce headcount and realize cost savings. Therefore, any savings estimated by IDOT were more than offset by additional hires by DTS in FFY05. In a June 10, 2005 memorandum, IDOT officials noted that they were planning to hire 27 new DTS employees. As of December 2005, DTS had filled 18 of 27 planned hires. (pages 16-29)

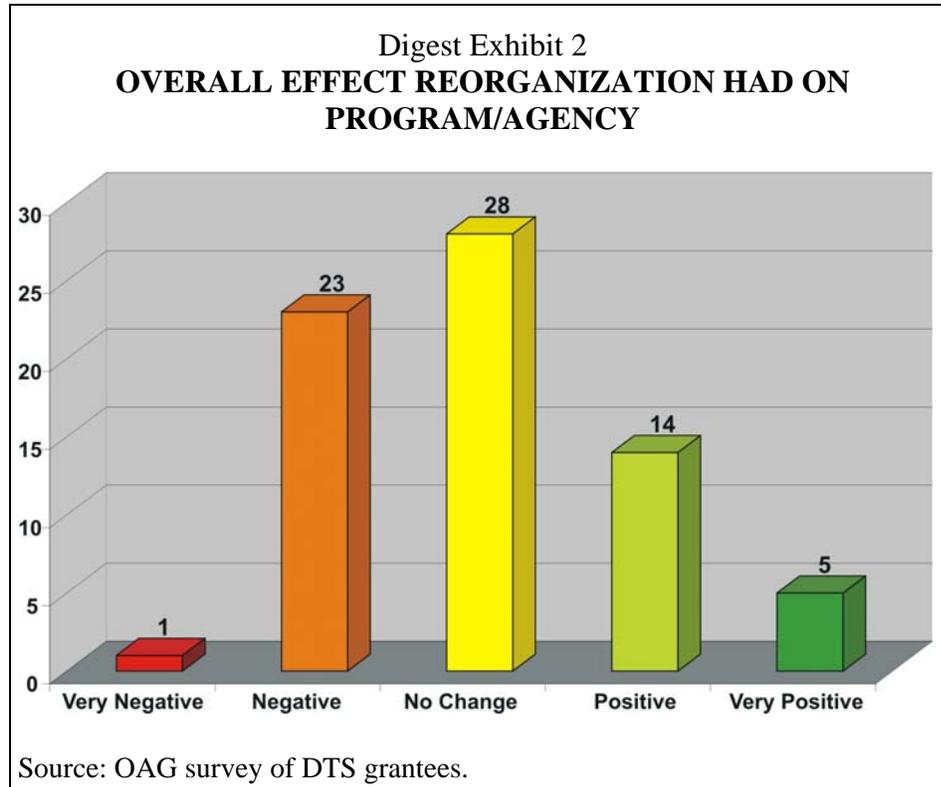
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**GRANTEE SURVEY**

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To determine the impact that the July 2004 reorganization and staff reductions had on DTS operations, we surveyed all grantees that received a grant in FFY04 and/or FFY05. Surveys were sent to 239 grantees and we received 140 responses (59%). Grantees reported both positive and negative comments about the performance of DTS before and after the reorganization.

Of the 140 responses received, 92 (66%) indicated that they had received at least one grant in both FFY04 and FFY05. Of the 92 respondents that received a grant in both years, 71 (77%) indicated they were aware that reorganization had taken place at DTS. The survey asked what overall effect the reorganization had on the grantee's program/agency and asked them to categorize the effect as very positive, positive, no change, negative, or very negative. The 71 responded as follows: no change (28), negative (23), positive (14), very positive (5), very negative (1), as shown in Digest Exhibit 2. (pages 29-33)



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### PROJECT FILE REVIEW

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In order to see if the reorganization had any effect on DTS operations, we randomly selected 60 projects to review. We reviewed 30 from each of the last two federal fiscal years (FFY04 and FFY05). Of the 30, we selected 25 enforcement and non-enforcement projects and 5 State agency projects. There were 300 enforcement and non-enforcement projects in FFY04 and 331 in FFY05. There were 15 State agency projects in FFY04 and 19 in FFY05.

During our review, we examined the project files to see whether required documentation was present, whether documentation was submitted timely as required, whether the grantee met the requirements and goals of the project, and whether DTS project managers monitored the projects as necessary. We compared differences between FFY04 (before the reorganization) and FFY05 (after the reorganization) and determined that the FFY04 project files were more complete than the FFY05 files.

Additionally, during our project file review, we determined that appropriate monitoring was not taking place. For example:

- Project files were missing documentation that was required within the grant agreements. Missing documents included

progress reports, documentation of media, patrol plans, reimbursement claims, and budget documents;

- All project goals were not met for all nine FFY04 files and all nine FFY05 files reviewed where the grant agreements contained measurable goals;
- Many documents were not date stamped upon receipt. Therefore, it was difficult to determine whether reimbursement claims were paid timely, or whether other documentation, such as progress reports and final reports were received in the time frames required by the project agreement; and
- DTS paid reimbursement claims from grantees without having received all documentation required by the agreement. Documentation missing included progress reports, planning documents, and documentation to support the number of officers or hours worked.

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**None of the files contained all of the necessary documentation to support that requirements, goals, and objectives were met.**

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In addition to our sample of enforcement and non-enforcement projects, we reviewed State agency project files to determine if the requirements, goals and objectives outlined in the project agreement were met. We found none of the files contained all of the necessary documentation to support that requirements, goals, and objectives were met. (pages 33-37)

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### **HIGHWAY SAFETY PLANNING COMMITTEE**

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The Division of Traffic Safety's Highway Safety Planning Committee exists to make decisions as to what highway safety projects are funded each year. Each year, grant applications are submitted to the Committee by local agencies such as police departments, hospitals, and universities.

We requested policies, procedures, and criteria used in the decision-making process as well as dates of meetings, meeting minutes, and decision-making documents such as decision memos. DTS officials noted there were no written policies, procedures, or criteria. Additionally, DTS was unable to provide documentation, such as decision memos and evaluation instruments, to support the decision to deny FFY05 projects other than copies of the denial letters.

For FFY06, the Highway Safety Planning Committee reviewed 153 grant proposals. DTS did not fund 21 project applications or 14 percent. For the FFY06 projects that were not funded, DTS provided

auditors with a list that contained a brief description as to why the application was denied. The list provided did not contain detailed support for the denial. We reviewed the projects that DTS denied due to either a lack of performance or a failure to meet criteria. We found some discrepancies between the reasons noted in the denial letters, the list of denials, and the Highway Safety Planning Committee Review Form. (pages 38-40)

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### **ROLLOVER OF FUNDS**

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In the past, IDOT has rolled over large amounts of unused federal funds from previous years. NHTSA allows IDOT to roll over unused funds for three years after the year for which it was received. One risk of continually rolling over funds is that NHTSA will lower the funding that Illinois gets since IDOT is unable to spend it. Another risk is that NHTSA will simply take the funding that is being rolled over. In FFY05, \$13.3 million was rolled over by IDOT (\$9.9 million from Highway Safety Programs and \$3.4 million from Alcohol Traffic Safety Programs).

NHTSA was concerned about IDOT's rollover of funds after receiving IDOT's FFY05 Highway Safety Plan. In a September 30, 2004 letter, NHTSA requested that IDOT address the liquidation of funds. NHTSA requested that IDOT develop a liquidation plan of action within 60 days and submit it to NHTSA for review. In its April 2005 management review, NHTSA once again requested a liquidation plan be submitted with IDOT's FFY06 Highway Safety Plan. As of the end of our fieldwork (September 2005), IDOT had not developed the requested liquidation plan which details how to liquidate past funding that continues to roll over from year to year. Subsequently, in November 2005, IDOT submitted a liquidation plan to NHTSA.

Like the NHTSA programs, IDOT has been rolling over funds for the Motor Carrier Safety Assistance Program (MCSAP). In August 2004, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) wrote a letter to IDOT threatening to deobligate \$2,275,982 in funding because of the large rollover amount. In September 2004, IDOT submitted a liquidation plan to FMCSA. (pages 46-49)

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### **FRINGE AND INDIRECT COST RATES**

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IDOT is not maximizing its federal reimbursements. Unlike other states, IDOT's Division of Traffic Safety does not use fringe or indirect cost rates when claiming federal reimbursement. While DTS bills NHTSA for some costs incurred (such as retirement and social security), others such as healthcare and other indirect costs are not billed. IDOT only bills about 22 percent to NHTSA and 15 percent to FMCSA for

fringe costs and does not seek federal reimbursement for all associated costs (such as healthcare and indirect costs). IDOT uses a rate of 90.85 percent to bill for employee costs to the Federal Highway Administration for projects; however, IDOT does not bill the 90.85 percent overhead rate when claiming reimbursement from either NHTSA or the FMCSA.

We annualized the billings for the first pay period of FFY06 to NHTSA and FMCSA to estimate additional funds IDOT could claim. If IDOT billed NHTSA and FMCSA using the 90.85 percent overhead rate it charges the Federal Highway Administration, IDOT could claim an additional \$1,136,900 annually. IDOT could bill NHTSA an additional \$465,600 and FMCSA an additional \$671,300 annually.

In addition, IDOT did not seek federal reimbursement for all IDOT staff working to administer NHTSA highway safety projects in FY05. On July 1, 2005, DTS began to require nine employees to fill out specific timecards in order to request reimbursement from NHTSA. We determined that by not billing for these nine employees during FY05, IDOT failed to be reimbursed for more than \$400,000.

There continue to be other employees working on federal traffic safety programs for which IDOT is not seeking federal reimbursement in FY06. The other employees' annual salaries total more than \$80,000. (pages 50, 51)

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## EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS

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**DTS's Evaluation Unit received a commendation in the most recent management review conducted by NHTSA for performing exemplary evaluations.**

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IDOT has established an Evaluation Unit within the Division of Traffic Safety. The Evaluation Unit regularly produces a variety of annual evaluation reports, survey results, and summary sheets that compare program goals with actual outcomes. DTS's Evaluation Unit received a commendation in the most recent management review conducted by NHTSA for performing exemplary evaluations.

Although DTS has reviewed initiatives conducted using NHTSA funds, IDOT has not reviewed the efficiency of traffic safety operations. Some evaluations we reviewed of NHTSA funded programs included measures that could be used to assess program efficiency. IDOT did not conduct reviews of MCSAP programs to determine their effectiveness or efficiency.

### Outcomes and Accomplishments

Digest Exhibit 3 shows Illinois' traffic safety statistics for the period calendar year 2000-2004. IDOT could not provide complete crash data for calendar year 2004. The numbers that IDOT could provide for 2004 were related to fatalities and seat belt usage. This data shows that safety belt and child safety seat usage have increased significantly over the last five years. However, the percent of alcohol related fatalities has not changed significantly.

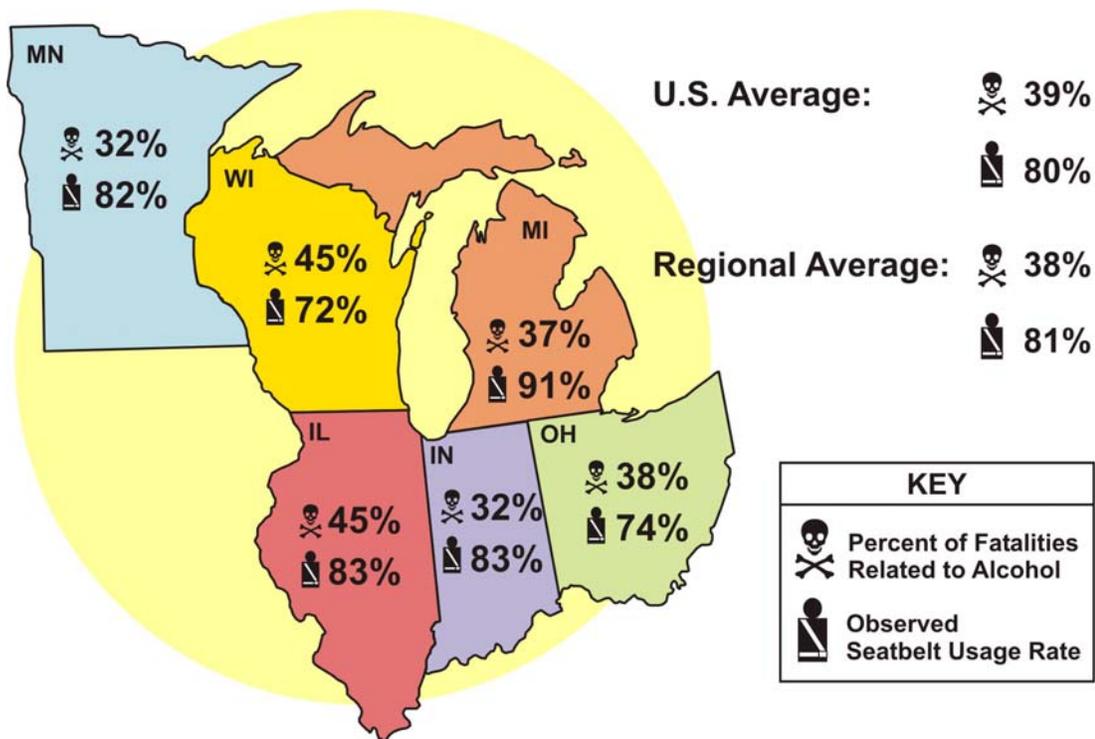
Digest Exhibit 3 <b>ILLINOIS TRAFFIC SAFETY STATISTICS</b> 2000-2004					
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Vehicle Miles Traveled (in Billions)	102.94	103.12	106.18	106.46	108.91
Total Crashes	460,172	443,293	438,990	437,289	n/a <sup>1</sup>
Injury Crashes	91,472	86,343	87,458	88,585	n/a <sup>1</sup>
Injuries	134,256	124,631	127,719	131,279	n/a <sup>1</sup>
Injuries Rate (per 100 million VMT <sup>2</sup> )	130.43	120.99	120.28	123.31	n/a <sup>1</sup>
Fatal Crashes	1,274	1,274	1,273	1,308	1,225
Fatalities	1,418	1,414	1,420	1,454	1,356
Fatalities Rate (per 100 million VMT <sup>2</sup> )	1.38	1.37	1.34	1.37	1.25
Alcohol-Related Fatalities	628	623	653	639	604
Percent of Total Fatalities Related to Alcohol	44%	44%	46%	44%	45%
Safety Belt Usage	70%	69%	74%	76%	83%
Child Safety Seat Usage	n/a <sup>3</sup>	74%	n/a <sup>3</sup>	60%	83%
Notes:					
<sup>1</sup> 2004 crash data was not available.					
<sup>2</sup> VMT denotes "vehicle miles traveled".					
<sup>3</sup> A child safety seat usage survey was not conducted or data was not available.					
Source: IDOT Highway Safety Program Annual Evaluation Reports, NHTSA and IDOT data.					

Regarding MCSAP, due to data limitations, it was difficult to determine if the motor carrier safety program has been effective in reducing the number of crashes or fatalities related to large trucks or buses in Illinois. Crashes related to large trucks in calendar year 2004 were at their highest point for the five-year period 2000-2004. However, we question whether the crash data reported by IDOT to the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration has been accurate because of the large fluctuations in the data. The number of fatal and non-fatal crashes involving large trucks decreased from 5,153 in 2000 to 3,547 in 2001. However, by 2004, the number of crashes involving large trucks increased to 7,825.

Efforts undertaken related to the NHTSA traffic safety programs are primarily related to seat belt and alcohol usage. These programs include awarding enforcement and non-enforcement grants to local and State agencies and advertising campaigns.

Digest Exhibit 4 shows how Illinois compares to the other states in the NHTSA's Great Lakes Region for seatbelt use and the percent of alcohol related fatalities for FFY04. For 2004, Illinois had above average seat belt usage. However, the percent of fatalities related to alcohol was tied with Wisconsin for the highest in the Region. (pages 54-58)

Digest Exhibit 4  
**PERCENT OF SEATBELT USAGE AND FATALITIES RELATED TO ALCOHOL -GREAT LAKES REGION**  
 Federal Fiscal Year 2004



Source: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

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## **CRASH DATA**

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IDOT has several different information systems that contain crash data that could be used to plan traffic safety program activities and assess the effectiveness of programs operations. Unfortunately few of these systems provide consistent, accurate, and reliable data. As of October 2005, IDOT could not provide crash data for calendar year 2004. As a result, IDOT is using calendar year 2003 crash data to plan traffic safety activities for FFY06.

### **Crash Information System (CIS) and Mobile Capture and Reporting System (MCR)**

In August 2004 IDOT contracted with a private vendor to conduct an audit of IDOT's crash systems including CIS and MCR. According to the audit, as of August 2004, IDOT had invested approximately \$1.5 million in the CIS project and approximately \$1.8 million to complete the MCR project. The audit found significant problems with the crash systems.

We followed up on the audit's recommendations with IDOT officials in the Bureau of Information Processing and the Division of Traffic Safety. As of August 2005, 5 of the 23 recommendations had not been implemented and 5 were only partially implemented.

### **MCSAP Data**

Data for crashes involving large trucks and buses is kept on the Motor Carrier Management Information System (MCMIS). This system also has data regarding the number of inspections completed. A review of state safety data quality in June 2005 conducted by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) rated Illinois' data as "poor" overall and rated completeness and accuracy of crash data as "poor".

### **Traffic Records Coordinating Committee**

At the request of NHTSA, IDOT re-established a Traffic Records Coordinating Committee in late 2004 to assess problems with traffic safety data. The 32-member Committee includes representatives from IDOT as well as other State agencies and the federal government. The Committee met for the first time in December 2004. The Committee has recommended that a traffic records assessment be conducted in FY06 using a team of experts assembled by NHTSA. (pages 64-68)

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**RECOMMENDATIONS**

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The audit contains 11 recommendations to the Illinois Department of Transportation. The Illinois Department of Transportation generally agreed to implement the 11 recommendations. The Department's written responses can be found in Appendix H.

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**WILLIAM G. HOLLAND**  
Auditor General

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March 2006