

**ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
SENATE TRANSPORTATION STANDING COMMITTEE**

March 13, 2025

1:38 p.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Senator Jesse Bjorkman, Chair
Senator Jesse Kiehl
Senator Mike Shower, via Teleconference

MEMBERS ABSENT

Senator Löki Tobin, Vice Chair
Senator Bert Stedman

COMMITTEE CALENDAR

PRESENTATION(S) : HIGHWAY~ BIKE AND PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

- HEARD

PREVIOUS COMMITTEE ACTION

No previous action to record

WITNESS REGISTER

SHANNON MCCARTHY, Communications Director
Office of the Commissioner
Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOTPF)
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Co-presented Highway, Bike and Pedestrian Safety.

PAM GOLDEN, State Traffic and Safety Engineer
Data Modernization and Innovation Office
Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOTPF)
Fairbanks, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Co-presented Highway, Bike and Pedestrian Safety.

ANDY MILLS, Special Assistant to the Commissioner
Office of the Commissioner
Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOTPF)
Juneau, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Answered questions during the presentation Highway, Bike and Pedestrian Safety.

DAN SMITH, Director
Measurement Standards and Commercial Vehicle Compliance
Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOTPF)
Anchorage, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Co-presented Highway, Bike and Pedestrian Safety.

CARLOS ROJAS, Commercial Vehicle Compliance Chief
Measurement Standards and Commercial Vehicle Compliance
Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOTPF)
Fairbanks, Alaska

POSITION STATEMENT: Assisted with the presentation Highway, Bike and Pedestrian Safety.

ACTION NARRATIVE

[1:38:33 PM](#)

CHAIR BJORKMAN called the Senate Transportation Standing Committee meeting to order at 1:38 p.m. Present at the call to order were Senators Kiehl, Shower (via teleconference) and Chair Bjorkman.

PRESENTATION(S) : HIGHWAY, BIKE and PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

[1:39:22 PM](#)

CHAIR BJORKMAN announced the presentation Highway, Bike and Pedestrian Safety by Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOTPF).

[1:39:57 PM](#)

SHANNON MCCARTHY, Communications Director, Office of the Commissioner, Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOTPF), Anchorage, Alaska, introduced herself.

[1:40:01 PM](#)

PAM GOLDEN, State Traffic and Safety Engineer, Data Modernization and Innovation Office, Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOTPF), introduced herself. She stated that highway, bike, and pedestrian safety effects everyone.

[1:40:41 PM](#)

MS. MCCARTHY advanced to Slide 2 and discussed the Safe Systems Approach:

[Original punctuation provided.]

SAFE SYSTEMS APPROACH:

- Death and Serious Injuries are Unacceptable
- Humans Make Mistakes
- Humans Are Vulnerable
- Responsibility is Shared
- Safety is Proactive
- Redundancy is Crucial

Partners in Safety

[Slide 2 includes a Safe System Approach infographic.]

MS. MCCARTHY said that this approach is a partnership with law enforcement, emergency medical services (EMS), and the public. She stated that the goal of this approach is to have zero traffic-related deaths. She said that Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOTPF) is data-driven but is lacking data from the public. The Partners in Safety project aims to gather data from the public.

[1:42:27 PM](#)

MS. GOLDEN said that Partners in Safety will attempt to reach all major cities and boroughs within the next year.

[1:42:59 PM](#)

MS. MCCARTHY advanced to Slide 3 and discussed traffic-related fatalities in Alaska:

[Original punctuation provided.]

Alaska Fatalities

(5 years of fatal crash data)

Different Crash Types REQUIRE Different Solutions

Bicyclist - 7
Drugs or Alcohol - 66
Pedestrian - 70
At Intersection - 72
Unrestrained - 73

Speeding - 85
Lane Departure - 171

WHERE DO WE RANK IN COMPARISON TO OTHER STATES?

Per 100M Vehicle Miles Traveled
(and not by population)

2020 - 31st

2021 - 29th

2022 - 17th

*2022, 16 states had higher fatality rates

MS. MCCARTHY highlighted non-motorized incidents (e.g. those involving bicycles and pedestrians) and incidents that were related to behaviors (e.g. unrestrained and speeding).

[1:44:26 PM](#)

CHAIR BJORKMAN asked if DOTPF measures instances of distracted driving (e.g. texting while driving).

[1:44:52 PM](#)

MS. GOLDEN replied that distracted driving is difficult to document, because it requires a witness. She explained that DOTPF receives crash reports from law enforcement. Cell phone records could potentially provide this information. She said that the Strategic Highway Safety Plan considers this issue.

[1:45:44 PM](#)

CHAIR BJORKMAN asked about drivers who fall asleep at the wheel.

[1:45:50 PM](#)

MS. MCCARTHY replied that, while she does not have statistics for this, falling asleep at the wheel is likely reflected in the number of lane departure incidents. She emphasized that this is one of the most dangerous driving incidents and briefly discussed why, offering examples.

[1:46:38 PM](#)

CHAIR BJORKMAN commented that British Columbia (BC) recently implemented structures around winter tire quality. He asked if DOTPF has gathered any metrics on tire quality (e.g. tread depth and tire type) in winter crashes and if this would be valuable information.

[1:47:13 PM](#)

MS. MCCARTHY answered that DOTPF has done research into studded versus winter tires; however, she is not aware of a study into the depth of tread.

[1:47:39 PM](#)

MS. GOLDEN concurred and added that DOTPF has data on blown tires but has not done a winter tire study. She pointed out that different areas of the state have very different weather and thus tire requirements differ by location. She surmised that, as a result, a statewide study would not be definitive.

[1:48:19 PM](#)

SENATOR SHOWER shared his understanding that studded tires bring up issues of cost and damage to the road. He said there may be data related to "studless" tires.

[1:49:26 PM](#)

MS. MCCARTHY agreed that studded tires do cause road damage and research data is available on the DOTPF website.

[1:49:58 PM](#)

ANDY MILLS, Special Assistant to the Commissioner, Office of the Commissioner, Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOTPF), Juneau, Alaska, said DOTPF has investigated the impact of studded tires. He explained that, while studded tires do cause damage to the roads, the increased safety they provide must also be considered.

[1:51:12 PM](#)

CHAIR BJORKMAN clarified that his question was inspired by rental cars with inadequate winter tires. He opined that, while drivers can decide to take on certain risks, those choices may negatively impact other (safer) drivers.

[1:52:22 PM](#)

MS. MCCARTHY shared personal anecdote related to rental cars without snow tires.

[1:52:44 PM](#)

MS. MCCARTHY advanced to Slide 4 and discussed overall crashes in both urban and rural environments. Slide 4 contains a bar chart contrasting urban and rural crashes from 2014-2023, by month. She pointed out that the highest number of crashes occur in December and January. The summer months have the lowest crash rates. Urban areas have more crashes than rural areas.

Urban vs Rural: Overall Crashes

[1:53:17 PM](#)

MS. MCCARTHY advanced to Slide 5 and discussed serious injuries and fatal crashes in urban and rural areas. Slide 5 contains a bar chart contrasting urban vs rural serious injuries and fatalities for 2014-2023, by month. She pointed out that in both urban and rural settings, crashes are low January-April, increasing in July and August. She emphasized that July is the deadliest month. She stated that this is, in part, due to speeding in the summer months. She added that EMS takes longer to arrive in rural areas, which can lead to increased fatalities.

[1:55:08 PM](#)

CHAIR BJORKMAN noted that there are many safety concerns along the Seward Highway in the summer, particularly on cloudy days. He asked if headlights are required at all times on the Seward Highway.

[1:55:47 PM](#)

MS. MCCARTHY replied yes. She mentioned safety corridors and said that, while DOTPF has decommissioned some safety corridors, the Seward Highway and some parts of the Sterling Highway require headlight use at all times.

[1:56:06 PM](#)

MS. MCCARTHY advanced to Slide 6 and discussed pedestrian representation in fatality counts. She emphasized that pedestrians are over-represented in Alaska's fatalities. Slide 6 contains a chart titled, "National Ranking Pedestrian Fatality Rate/100,000 population." She briefly discussed these numbers and their impact on national rankings. She clarified that pedestrians represent 15-20 percent of all fatalities. She added that pedestrians are more vulnerable in crashes.

[1:57:19 PM](#)

MS. MCCARTHY advanced to Slide 7 and discussed pedestrian crashes. Slide 7 contains a pie chart titled, "2019-2023 Reported Fatal and Serious Injury Pedestrian Crashes by Borough." She pointed out that 67.5 percent of the state's pedestrian crash fatalities occur in the Municipality of Anchorage. She noted that the Municipality of Anchorage is home to 40 percent of the state's population. She contrasted this with the percentages for Kenai (5.8 percent of fatalities and 8 percent of the total population) and Juneau (2.6 percent of fatalities and 4 percent of the total population).

[1:58:07 PM](#)

SENATOR KIEHL asked why Anchorage has a high number of pedestrian fatalities.

MS. MCCARTHY answered that the density of pedestrian traffic is one factor.

[1:58:21 PM](#)

MS. GOLDEN answered that this can be due to a variety of factors, including the density of pedestrian traffic, sidewalk use and availability, speed, etc. DOTPF is working to understand this better.

[1:59:27 PM](#)

SENATOR KIEHL surmised that Anchorage is better equipped in terms of safety (e.g. more bike paths, sidewalks, etc.) and asked if roadway width is a factor.

[1:59:57 PM](#)

MS. GOLDEN replied yes, particularly when pedestrians are crossing the roadway. She said that visibility is important and offered examples of ways to increase visibility. She reiterated that speed is a factor in pedestrian fatalities.

[2:01:35 PM](#)

SENATOR KIEHL observed that Juneau has one road that is wider than 50 feet and estimated that Anchorage has over a dozen.

[2:02:06 PM](#)

MS. MCCARTHY advanced to Slide 8 and continued to discuss pedestrian crashes. Slide 8 contains a bar chart titled, "2019-2023 High Severity Reported Pedestrian Crashes by Month." She pointed out that the lowest months are April-June and peak in August and September. The number peaks again in January. She pointed out that a decrease in light tends to correlate with an increase in pedestrian crashes. Inclement weather and time of day are also factors.

[2:02:50 PM](#)

MS. MCCARTHY advanced to Slide 9 and discussed crashes involving bicyclists:

[Original punctuation provided.]

Bicyclist: Different Crash Problem

Reported Crashes 2019-2023

- ~95 crashes/year

- 77 percent are in Anchorage
- 81 percent injury
- 2.5 in 100 of all statewide fatal crashes
- Trend: total crashes declining while fatalities are increasing again
- 88 percent at intersections or driveways

MS. MCCARTHY stated that the number of bike fatalities is lower than that of pedestrian fatalities.

[2:03:34 PM](#)

MS. GOLDEN advanced to Slide 10 and discussed speed limits:

[Original punctuation provided.]

Speed Limits and Physics

- Speed plays a role in every crash
- Higher speed crashes are typically more severe
- Lowering speed limits without changing the context of the roadway typically results in a 2-3 mph change in operating speed, unless there is regular enforcement

[Slide 10 contains infographics illustrating the risk of serious injury or death to pedestrians hit by a car traveling at various speeds.]

[2:04:59 PM](#)

SENATOR KIEHL asked if the chart is based on roadway sign speed or accident reconstruction for speed at time of impact.

[2:05:17 PM](#)

MS. GOLDEN replied that the chart uses the actual speed at impact.

[2:05:25 PM](#)

MS. GOLDEN advanced to Slide 11 and discussed the Alaska Highway Safety Office:

[Original punctuation provided.]

Alaska Highway Safety Office

Highway Safety Improvement Program

ALASKA HIGHWAY SAFETY OFFICE

Improving Behaviors

High-Visibility Enforcement
Car Seat/CarFit Checks
Impaired Driving Education
Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Education
Seat Belt Education

HIGHWAY SAFETY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Improving Roadways

Road Safety Audits
Signals and Signs
Crosswalk Markings/Crosswalk Enhancements
Guardrail and Crash Cushions
Intersection Improvements

MS. GOLDEN stated that the Alaska Highway Safety Office supports law enforcement, tribal entities, nonprofits, and local government by providing reimbursable grants for high-visibility enforcement, impaired driving enforcement, and other educational programs. She briefly discussed the grant process and timing.

[2:07:16 PM](#)

MS. GOLDEN advanced to Slide 12 and discussed safety countermeasures. Slide 12 contains an infographic to show the crash reduction potential for various countermeasures, including median barriers, rumble strips, roundabouts, variable speed limits, sidewalks, and bike paths. She stated that the data is from a national report. While Slide 12 says the proven safety measures are underutilized, Alaska has implemented almost all of these. Alaska is considering variable speed limits. She briefly discussed the two variable speed limit studies that are currently underway for sections of the Seward and Richardson Highways.

[2:08:11 PM](#)

CHAIR BJORKMAN asked what factors variable speed limit depends on.

[2:08:18 PM](#)

MS. GOLDEN replied that weather is the primary factor under consideration. She briefly discussed the process of collecting the data. She explained that a variable speed limit is an electronic sign that displays a new speed limit for a section of road. She noted that this is increasingly common nationwide.

[2:09:52 PM](#)

MS. GOLDEN advanced to Slide 13 and discussed seat belt use. She noted a positive trend in statewide seat belt use. According to Slide 13, in 2023, statewide seat belt use was 95.2 percent while in 2024 seat belt use was 92.1 percent. Slide 13 contains a table with seatbelt use data for Anchorage, Juneau, Fairbanks, Kenai, and MatSu from 2016-2014. A graph illustrating the statewide trend in seat belt use is also included. She briefly discussed the seat belt use data and emphasized that communicating the importance of seat belt use is a priority.

[2:10:50 PM](#)

MS. GOLDEN advanced to Slide 14 and discussed intersections:

[Original punctuation provided.]

Improving Safety in Alaska: Intersections

- Signal conspicuity (upgrading to have signal head for each approaching lane)
- Steps to implement leading pedestrian intervals: Anchorage and Fairbanks
- Technologies to support law enforcement and Emergency Medical Services
- Roundabouts first
- Retroreflective backplates

Traditional Intersection

32 Possible opportunities for a collision. Many of those are dangerous, high speed, head-on, or angle collisions.

Roundabout Intersection

8 Possible opportunities for a collision. Plus the collisions that do happen are slower and less serious.

[2:13:33 PM](#)

MS. GOLDEN advanced to Slide 15 and discussed rural 2-lane safety:

[Original punctuation provided.]

Improving Safety in Alaska: Rural 2-Lane

- Guardrail Upgrades

- Passing Lanes
- Curve Warning Signs
- Rumble/Mumble Strips and Stripes
- SafetyEdgeSM
- Improved Traveler Info

[Slide 15 also includes a cross-section view of an overlay with the SafetyEdgeSM and images of guardrails, signs, and rumble strips.]

[2:16:42 PM](#)

SENATOR KIEHL asked for metrics or survey data for public use of traveler tools, e.g. 511.

[2:17:02 PM](#)

MS. MCCARTHY replied that 511 had close to 400,000 in 2024. DOTPF hopes to continue improving this service.

[2:17:22 PM](#)

SENATOR KIEHL asked if this data could be further broken down into user groups (e.g. Alaskan residents and tourists).

[2:17:31 PM](#)

MS. MCCARTHY replied no. She said there is an increase in application downloads and usage during inclement weather and surmised that this indicates that Alaskans are using the tool.

[2:17:50 PM](#)

MS. GOLDEN added that there were one million unique accesses to 511 in 2024. Usage also increases when a large crash has occurred.

[2:18:23 PM](#)

CHAIR BJORKMAN noted recent updates to low priority roads that have resulted in steeper ditches (e.g. Island Lake Road in Nikiski). He opined that this increases the danger to drivers and asked how these decisions are made.

[2:19:47 PM](#)

MS. GOLDEN answered that this varies by region. She stated that statewide policy and standardization is in development. She said she did not have specific information regarding Island Lake Road.

[2:20:53 PM](#)

MS. GOLDEN advanced to Slide 16 and discussed road safety audits (RSA):

[Original punctuation provided.]

Road Safety Audits are conducted by independent, multi-disciplinary teams

- Identify safety concerns to road users including those that may be under different circumstances
- Identify near, mid, and long-term opportunities that eliminate or mitigate the identified safety concerns

Three packages of Safety Audits kicking off in 2025

- Rural and Remote School Safety Audits
- Statewide Road Safety Audits
- Vulnerable Road User Safety Audits

[2:23:24 PM](#)

MS. GOLDEN advanced to Slide 17 and discussed vulnerable road user safety assessments. Slide 17 includes maps of high injury corridors and intersections in Anchorage, Juneau, Fairbanks, Palmer. She explained that this information is available on DOTPF's website.

[2:23:51 PM](#)

MS. GOLDEN advanced to Slide 18 and discussed new safety efforts:

[Original punctuation provided.]

**Improving Safety in Alaska:
New Ways of Working to Support Safety**

- Complete Streets Policy Under Development
- Alaska Traffic Manual - Update Alaska's with New National Manual Updating Speed Limit Policy
- Urban Safety Corridor Selection Criteria
- Highway Preconstruction Manual
- Adding Accessible Pedestrian Signal Technology (Leading Pedestrian Signals)
- Focus on Cruise Ship Communities/Cruise Ship Docks - Safety Measures for Significant Influx of Pedestrians (Sitka, Hoonah)

[2:27:50 PM](#)

SENATOR KIEHL asked for more information about efforts related to highways as main streets.

[2:28:43 PM](#)

MS. GOLDEN replied that this has evolved over the past decade. Highway engineers previously focused on cars; however, the new policies consider the road context as a whole. She explained how road design and speed are interconnected and emphasized that DOTPF is working with local governments to implement changes.

SENATOR KIEHL asked it would be possible to have parking along one of these roads - or multiple pedestrian crossings in an area. He recalled being told that a roundabout near a school would work to calm traffic. He asked if this is the type of change Ms. Golden is referring to.

[2:31:21 PM](#)

MS. GOLDEN replied yes. She explained how the research and data would be used by the various programs to ensure policies are accommodating to all users.

[2:31:58 PM](#)

CHAIR BJORKMAN commented that his constituents in Moose Pass and Cooper Landing will appreciate this conversation. He added that bike and pedestrian infrastructure along the roadway is vitally important.

[2:33:12 PM](#)

MS. MCCARTHY advanced to Slide 19 and discussed safety corridors:

[Original punctuation provided.]

**Improving Safety in Alaska:
Safety Corridors**

Designated Safety Corridors

- Seward Highway Milepost 90-117 (May 2006)
- Parks Highway Milepost 44-52.5 (October 2007)
- Knik Goose Bay Road Milepost 0.6-17.2 (July 2009)
- Sterling Highway Milepost 83-93 (July 2009)

Rural Highways with elevated fatal and serious injury crashes

Designation = Partnership and Support for Education, Enforcement, Engineering, and Emergency Response

De-Designation with Reconstruction

- Parks Reconstruction Phase 1-3 complete
- Knik Goose Bay Phase 1 substantially complete, Phase 2 FFY27
- Seward Highway Phase 2b FFY25, Phase 3 FFY26, Phase 7 FFY26
- Sterling Highway FFY26

What's next? Urban Safety Corridors

MS. MCCARTHY stated that safety corridors were intended as a temporary measure as long-term solutions were developed. She described the process of planning and problem solving.

[2:36:39 PM](#)

MS. MCCARTHY advanced to Slide 20 and discussed the Vision Zero Task Force (VSTF):

[Original punctuation provided.]

**Improving Safety in Alaska:
Vision Zero Task Force**

- Partnership with Anchorage Police Department, Municipality of Anchorage, DOTPF Regional and Statewide staff
- Looked at Contributing Factors
- Effectively Reducing Speeds
 - Speed studies
 - Operational considerations
 - Public Buy In
 - Enforcement
 - Engineering = Physical changes to the infrastructure that match expectations
 - Prioritizing Actions
- Tudor Rd, Muldoon Rd

[Slide 20 contains a chart listing Anchorage Corridors and their action priority and a map titled, "Pedestrian Fatalities within the Midtown and Downtown Anchorage, 2019-2024."]

MS. MCCARTHY explained how speeding increases the risk to pedestrians and bikers.

[2:40:00 PM](#)

MS. MCCARTHY advanced to Slide 21 and gave a brief overview of the Protected Bike Lanes Pilot Project:

[Original punctuation provided.]

Improving Safety in Alaska:
Protected Bike Lanes Pilot Project

Anchorage Protected Bike Lane Pilot Study
6th Ave. (from Coastal Pl. to A Street)/A Street (from
10th Ave. to 6th Ave.)

- Phase 1 = Pine and McCarrey Streets
- Phase 2 = A St./6th Ave.
- Temporary Materials
- Utilized by approximately 100-150 users during weekdays
- Reduced speeds slightly on A St./6th Ave.
- Did not increase crashes
- Next?
 - No immediate plan for A St./6th Ave.
 - Discussing Lane Drops
 - 2026-2027 Winter Protected Bike Lanes

[Slide 21 contains an infographic to show the protected bike lane, traffic lanes, and parking lane.]

[2:42:02 PM](#)

MS. MCCARTHY advanced to Slide 22 and discussed the safe systems approach in action:

[Original punctuation provided.]

Safe Systems Approach: Tetlin to Ft. Knox

- Established Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) to inform the research
- Commissioned Corridor Study - Kinney Report
- \$1M brush cutting in advance of haul to increase sight distance
- Maintenance Bridge Monitoring Plan
- Winter Maintenance Memorandum of Agreement (MOA)
- Emergency Medical Services (EMS) coordination
 - Jaws of life

- PiLits (pronounced "Pie lights")
- 511 upgrades
 - Audible bus and plow alerting
 - Bridge heights
 - Winter Operations dashboard

MS. MCCARTHY explained that a mining company started an ore haul in interior Alaska. She said that some of the segments have a lower annual average daily traffic (AADT) rate; however, there was an increase in the number of trucks carrying ore. The technical advisory committee (TAC) was made up of stakeholders. She briefly discussed the corridor study and said that it identified some safety measures that DOTPF was able to implement immediately. She explained that the speed limit along this road is 55 miles per hour (MPH). There are bus stops along this stretch of road, which is unusual. She explained that, while the bus stops were found to have adequate site distance (i.e. they met national standards), DOTPF cleared a larger section of the right-of-way surrounding the bus stops. She explained that this increases visibility for all drivers. She briefly discussed the bridge monitoring program, winter maintenance, and EMS services on the road. She explained the 511 upgrades, which will provide information about buses and plows on the roadway.

[2:46:38 PM](#)

SENATOR KIEHL asked if audible alerting is required in the ore-haul vehicles.

[2:46:46 PM](#)

MS. MCCARTHY replied that ore-haul vehicles do have navigation systems in them.

[2:46:59 PM](#)

SENATOR KIEHL stated that there is a great deal of concern about this area and asked if there are any TAC recommendations that have not been implemented.

[2:47:14 PM](#)

MS. MCCARTHY replied that DOTPF is still reviewing the extensive report (which was published in November). She said some of the larger projects would need to be programmed and scheduled in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).

SENATOR KIEHL said he would look for future updates.

[2:47:42 PM](#)

MS. MCCARTHY returned to Slide 23 and discussed the winter operations dashboard. She offered an example of how the dashboard benefits winter drivers by providing snowplow information.

[2:48:37 PM](#)

DAN SMITH, Director, Measurement Standards and Commercial Vehicle Compliance, Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOTPF), Anchorage, Alaska, advanced to Slide 23:

[Original punctuation provided.]

Programs: Measurement Standards and Commercial Vehicle Compliance

The goal is to reduce commercial motor vehicle-involved accidents, fatalities, and injuries through a consistent, uniform, and effective safety program.

Nine Weigh Stations Statewide

- Fairbanks (4 stations) - 6 filled PCNs
- Anchorage (3 stations) - 10 filled PCNs
- Tok (1 station) - 4 filled PCNs
- Sterling (1 station) - 3 filled PCNs

MR. SMITH stated that the Driver Vehicle Safety Program includes multiple levels of inspection. He briefly discussed each inspection level. This ranges from a license check to an in-depth vehicle inspection.

[2:50:34 PM](#)

CARLOS ROJAS, Commercial Vehicle Compliance Chief, Measurement Standards and Commercial Vehicle Compliance, Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (DOTPF), Fairbanks, Alaska, discussed weigh stations. He said there are 32 commercial vehicle compliance inspectors statewide and 9 weigh stations. He explained that the inspectors are assigned to a weigh station and briefly discussed their work. He said DOTPF inspects vehicles statewide.

[2:51:22 PM](#)

CHAIR BJORKMAN asked whether DOTPF has jurisdiction over rental vehicles.

[2:51:33 PM](#)

MR. SMITH replied no. He explained that rental vehicles do not meet the definition of a commercial vehicle enforced by his division.

[2:52:01 PM](#)

MR. SMITH advanced to Slide 24 and discussed FFY2024 safety efforts:

[Original punctuation provided.]

Measurement Standards and Commercial Vehicle Compliance

FFY2024 - Safety Efforts

Weight Compliance Rate = 97.3 percent

Roadside

250 CMVs Weighed

Driver/Vehicle Safety Inspections

8,310 Inspections

Weigh Stations

68,908 CMVs weighed

Of the **8,310** Driver/Vehicle Safety Inspections, **82 percent** of the vehicles and **98 percent** of the drivers inspected did not have any out-of-service violation.

MR. SMITH explained the process for weighing vehicles roadside. He emphasized that this is challenging, particularly in winter conditions. DOTPF exceeded its goal of weighing 200 vehicles roadside and 32,000 at weigh stations.

[2:53:45 PM](#)

MR. ROJAS reiterated that the roadside driver/vehicle safety inspections are comprehensive. He briefly described the 37-step inspection procedure.

[2:54:34 PM](#)

MR. SMITH advanced to Slide 25 and discussed measurement standards and commercial vehicle compliance:

[Original punctuation provided.]

Measurement Standards and Commercial Vehicle Compliance

Vehicles Weighed per Station

Tok - 10,764
Ester - 1,684
Fox - 7,417
Richardson IB - 9,169
Richardson OB - 8,421
Glenn IB - 11,795
Hans Roelle Memorial OB - 10,277
Potter - 3,911
Sterling - 5,470

[2:55:03 PM](#)

SENATOR KIEHL asked whether all trucks that meet the commercial vehicle definition must stop at the weigh station.

[2:55:23 PM](#)

MR. ROJAS answered that when the weigh station is open, all commercial vehicles are required to stop.

[2:56:03 PM](#)

SENATOR KIEHL asked about weigh station hours.

[2:56:15 PM](#)

MR. ROJAS replied that weigh stations are open 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. He explained that staff schedules are determined based on traffic counters, etc.

[2:56:45 PM](#)

SENATOR KIEHL directed attention to slide 24 and driver/vehicle safety inspections. He commented that 98 percent of drivers is a great compliance rate; however, the 82 percent vehicle rate means that close to 1 in 5 vehicles are not compliant. He asked for additional information about the severity of the safety violations.

[2:57:17 PM](#)

MR. ROJAS replied that there is a wide range of potential violations, some of which are very small violations. He said one of the most common violations is over-weight vehicles (beginning at 1,000 pounds).

[2:58:04 PM](#)

SENATOR KIEHL asked if the violations are grouped by severity. He commented that 1 in 5 trucks having a marker light out is less worrisome than 1 in 5 trucks having weak brakes or bad tires.

[2:58:50 PM](#)

MR. ROJAS replied that DOTPF evaluates the inspection reports to determine priorities. He stated that he did not have the critical item violation percentages.

[2:59:29 PM](#)

SENATOR KIEHL indicated that he would like DOTPF to provide this information for further consideration.

[2:59:38 PM](#)

MR. SMITH commented that the vehicle violations are in line with the national average and the driver compliance is better than the national average.

[3:00:00 PM](#)

MR. SMITH advanced to Slide 26 and continued to discuss measurement standards and commercial vehicle compliance:

[Original punctuation provided.]

Driver/Vehicle Safety Inspection by Area

- Statewide Law Enforcement Partners - 499 (6 percent)
- Anchorage - 3,869 (47 percent)
- Fairbanks - 2,412 (29 percent)
- Sterling - 687 (8 percent)
- Tok - 843 (10 percent)

MR. SMITH explained how DOTPF addresses vehicles that do not regularly visit weigh stations. In those instances, DOTPF will visit projects and suggest ways to improve the safety score.

[3:01:09 PM](#)

MS. MCCARTHY thanked the committee. She offered to follow up with additional information.

[3:01:19 PM](#)

CHAIR BJORKMAN thanked the presenters. He emphasized the importance of road safety.

3:02:38 PM

There being no further business to come before the committee, Chair Bjorkman adjourned the Senate Transportation Standing Committee meeting at 3:02 p.m.