

FACTORS INFLUENCING DRIVERS' COMPLIANCE WITH "SLOW DOWN, MOVE OVER" LAWS

INTRODUCTION

Roadside assistance providers and emergency response personnel often work in dangerous conditions that place them at risk of being struck by vehicles traveling at high speeds. "Slow Down, Move Over" laws strive to protect these workers by requiring passing motorists to move over at least one lane while passing them, or reduce their speed if unable to move over safely. All 50 States have some form of Slow Down, Move Over law, however, the details of these laws, such as the types of emergency or roadside assistance personnel to which they apply, the amount of speed reduction required, and the penalties for violations vary between states. Surveys consistently find very high levels of self-reported compliance with these laws, however, data from field studies as well as experiences of roadside assistance providers suggest that actual levels of compliance are lower. The AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety is working with researchers at Westat to examine factors influencing compliance with Slow Down, Move Over laws and to find ways to increase compliance.

PROJECT GOAL AND PLAN

This project seeks to understand what factors influence compliance with Slow Down, Move Over laws, and identify effective ways to promote safe behavior when passing roadside assistance and emergency response personnel. First, researchers will document key differences in state Slow Down, Move Over laws. Then, they will survey and/or interview traffic safety stakeholders in all states to characterize public information & education as well as enforcement efforts related to these laws. Next, qualitative data regarding drivers' knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs will be obtained from focus groups with drivers in a subset of states, and objective measures of driver behavior when passing roadside assistance and emergency response vehicles on highways will be obtained by analyzing video from traffic management centers. This data will be used to advance understanding of the factors that influence drivers' compliance with Slow Down, Move Over laws and develop recommendations to increase compliance.

Project Team

Westat

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Period of Performance

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