

Washington State Patrol Media Release

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Leave More Space for Trucks

Olympia, WA., For four weeks this summer, Washington State Patrol, along with county and local law enforcement agencies, will be out making sure car and truck drivers are behaving themselves around each other. During the months of July and September, Washington State Patrol, and other law enforcement agencies, will participate in the 2009 Ticketing Aggressive Cars and Truck (TACT) project that will focus on how drivers can share the road safely with commercial motor vehicles on rural routes instead of the interstate.

In Washington, between 2005 and 2007, commercial vehicles were involved in nearly 5000 collisions. On rural roads, the driver of the car was at fault two-thirds of the time, causing the deaths of 175 people, and another 450 people were injured.

“Motorists who drive recklessly, or are unsafe around these big rigs, are asking for trouble,” said Chief John R. Batiste, Washington State Patrol. “When a car and a commercial vehicle are involved in a collision, the car will lose.”

The goal of this year’s TACT Project is to change driver behavior when operating around commercial motor vehicles, to reduce the number of crashes, injuries and fatalities on our state’s roadways, and to increase public awareness about unsafe driving behaviors around commercial vehicles (i.e. cutting off trucks, tailgating, failure to yield right of way, speeding, and aggressive driving).

“However, this isn’t only about automobile drivers,” Batiste added. “Troopers and other police officers assigned to TACT will also be watching for truck drivers who don’t share the road.”

The two two-week enforcement periods are from July 13 - 24, and September 14 - 25, 2009. The routes for the TACT projects will happen simultaneously in western Washington along State Route 8 and State Route 12 between Elma and Aberdeen, and in eastern Washington along State Route 2 north of Spokane.

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Law Enforcement will also be partnering with the Washington Trucking Association (WTA) during the TACT program. WTA will provide a truck and driver during the emphasis with an officer riding in the vehicle spotting violations that happen around the vehicle. Along with the truck, the WSP aircraft will take to the sky during each two-week period looking for unsafe drivers around trucks.

The 2009 TACT project is a grant from the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration. The grant is part of a program directed by Congress in 2004 to educate passenger car drivers on how to share the roadway safely with commercial vehicles.
