

2011 Best Traffic Records Web page Questionnaire
Mississippi

Again for 2011, ATSIP seeks to recognize exemplary work in the field of "Best Traffic Records Web Page". A wealth of information exists on the Internet. This questionnaire, and a visit to your web site, will provide the means of evaluation for the committee to select and award the governmental agency that makes the most complete and accurate traffic records safety information available to the public. Characteristics we will be considering include:

Ease in getting to the site,
Navigating the site,
Querying the data,
The availability of multiple years of data,
User-Friendly.

If you would like your web site to be considered for this recognition, please complete the following short questionnaire and forward it by e-mail as an attachment to Tim Kerns (tkerns@som.umaryland.edu) by April 15. E-mail attachments are preferred, however, proposals may be mailed to Tim Kerns, National Study Center for Trauma/EMS, University of Maryland Baltimore, 110 South Paca Street, 4th Floor, Baltimore, MD 21201. Winning websites will be highlighted at the 2011 Traffic Records Forum in Charlotte, NC.

1. Web Page Address proposed for Consideration: <http://psdl.ssrc.msstate.edu>
2. Agency Submitting: Public Safety Data Lab, Social Science Research Center
Mississippi State University
3. Contact's Name & Title: Lee Weiskopf
Address: PO Box 5287, Mississippi State, MS 39762
4. Contact's Phone Number: (662) 325-3839
5. Contact's E-mail Address: lee.weiskopf@ssrc.msstate.edu

Traffic Records Data Components - Please Complete As Appropriate To the Web Page:

Crash Data

§ 5 Number Of Years of Data Available At The Site That May Be Queried

§ 2009 Most Current Year of Data Available

§ 10-15% % of Crash Report information available on the web site

§ 95% % MMUCC Compliant

Integration of data - Can data in files be linked with other files by common identifiers? No

Is a Selection Of Canned Reports Available? Yes

Is An On Line Manual Or Help Function Available To Assist Users With Navigating and Accessing Data On the Site? Yes

- 1) What, in your opinion, is the web site's best feature?

The best feature about the Public Safety Data Laboratory's (PSDL) website is the access to

several ways of querying crash data, as well as the accompanying charts and graphs. The motto of "a picture is worth a thousand words" is no truer than we graphing and charting data, especially crash data. Seeing decreasing crash numbers and fatalities on Mississippi's highways and roads in a bar chart is inspiration for the public and policy makers to continue the fight and keep up the good work of reducing injuries and fatalities. Local leaders can query information on their specific county, and may do so by time of day, day of week, holiday times, driver's age, etc. They can also use this site to compare their area to other areas of the state or the state as a whole.

This information is useful for law enforcement personnel, local leaders, activists, etc to examine trends and patterns, so they may better be equipped to do their job and tell the story. Raw numbers in spreadsheets are important, but providing charts and graphs help capture the attention of the casual observer in order to highlight the issues, problems and success Mississippi is facing in the realm of traffic and highway safety. The site is also set up to easily allow the charts and graphs generated by the user to be exported into a PDF or saved as a JPEG for presentation uses.

2) How would you improve the site?

Personally, I would like to add more query features and also mapping features. Pinpointing data by when, how, who and where will further the public's knowledge of Mississippi traffic safety information and how to continue lowering fatalities and crashes. Mapping could also include features that give more information than location, such as citation offense, number injured/fatality, time of crash/citation, investigating agency, etc. Much like the charts, the information can be filtered by the different variables, giving the user the specific information he/she is looking for.

Additionally, I would like to add more reports from other agencies, making this web page the "one stop shop" for all information related to traffic safety in Mississippi. Information from local law enforcement agencies, Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT), and even the Mississippi Department of Health would add great features. Data integration and coordination will only enhance the available information for the public, in turn reducing the crashes and deaths on Mississippi's highways and roadways.

3) How often is the site updated?

The data on the site is updated once a year, generally after the first quarter of the year. For example, we have yet to add 2010 Crash Data to the website because we are waiting for final authorization and analysis of that year's data. We add other reports and information as we get it, so we are constantly updating and changing as needed.

As we enhance the data sources and the quality of the data from existing sources, our plans are to continue providing relevant, secure data for public consumption on this website. Ideally, every time someone visits the site he/she will find something new and informative.

- 4) Is the web page 'agency' designed or was a vendor used?

The page was designed by the Public Safety Data Laboratory (PSDL) of the Social Science Research Center (SSRC) at Mississippi State University. The PSDL is funded by a grant from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and administered by the Mississippi Department of Public Safety's Governor's Office of Highway Safety (OHS).

The SSRC and Governor's Office of Highway Safety have a long history of partnership and collaboration, including seat belt studies and DUI education for law enforcement officials. This partnership created the PSDL, and the two groups have worked closely in the development of this website and other areas of this project. The OHS realizes the need for university based research and applications, and in seeking that has found a partner with those capabilities and interests.

- 5) Are levels of access to data permitted according to need or status?

All information on the web page is available for public consumption. The main goal was to give members of the public access, and building in password and permission levels would defeat that purpose. All identifier data has been scrubbed, so that no individuals involved in crashes can be identified.

The PSDL can provide detailed information that is not accessible on the website to authorized personnel at their request.

- 6) Does the Statewide Traffic Records Coordinating Committee approve updates or changes to the page?

This group does not necessarily approve updates or changes, but has a large influence on the information provided and updated on the page.

- 7) What Agency has responsibility for maintaining the site?

Public Safety Data Laboratory at the Social Science Research Center at Mississippi State University is tasked within the grant from OHS to maintain and update the site. While the PSDL is the one with official responsibility, its staff is constantly in contact with OHS officials coordinating projects and new developments, of which the website is a part.

- 8) Describe any further improvements you intend to make.

Adding 2010 Crash Data will be the next update, but we would also like to work with other agencies and groups and provide more information, such as standard reports and information. We can make changes to fit the changing environment and needs of the public safety community and public in general.

9) Does the agency advertise the Site? How?

The web page is advertised by the PSDL on its twitter account, as well as the SSRC's Facebook and Twitter accounts. A link to the website can be found on the MS Department of Public Safety's home page (<http://www.dps.state.ms.us>) and the OHS's home page (http://www.dps.state.ms.us/dps/dps.nsf/webpages/PublicSafetyPlanning_OfficeOfHighwaySafetyMain?OpenDocument).

There is also a link on the MS Click it or Ticket Facebook page that is maintained by OHS staff. Additionally, the PSDL has generated brochures to pass out to interested parties at associated meetings and events, as well as making presentations at events, such as Mississippi Association of Highway Safety Leaders and State Traffic Records Committee.