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Trooper Efforts on I-59 to Prevent Car-Truck Fatalities

MONTGOMERY —The Department of Public Safety is taking the steps to prevent car-truck crashes by renewing its efforts on an initiative known as TACT: Ticketing Aggressive Cars and Trucks, according to Col. Hugh B. McCall, Public Safety director. McCall said the enforcement and educational program is made possible by a grant DPS received from the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration.

McCall announced that this particular initiative will be conducted along the I-59 corridor between Tuscaloosa and Birmingham. It will include intensive enforcement, the use of billboards, and news media involvement.

TACT focuses on the unsafe driving behaviors that contribute to serious and fatal crashes between personal and commercial motor vehicles, said McCall. These include unsafe lane changes, following too closely, failure to signal lane changes, failure to yield the right of way, speeding, and aggressive driving, which is a combination of two or more risky driving behaviors.

Alabama state troopers have been targeting their TACT enforcement on sections of roadways identified as high-risk areas for crashes involving commercial vehicles, McCall said. He said the University of Alabama's Center for Advanced Public Safety is conducting pre- and post-initiative analysis of serious and fatal crashes involving commercial vehicles both to guide enforcement activities and to gauge their effectiveness.

Studies, both nationally and in Alabama, show that automobile driver-related causal factors are indicated for the automobile driver in more than 80 percent of the fatal crashes involving a car and a commercial motor vehicle.

The Alabama Department of Transportation and the Alabama Trucking Association have partnered with the Department of Public Safety in the TACT program, helping educate motorists about sharing the road safely through posters, electronic message boards, and displays on commercial motor vehicles.

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration initiated TACT in 2004 as a pilot program in Washington state. Based on the success of the pilot, FMCSA has encouraged other states to participate, and Alabama is now one of 15 states that have received federal funding to implement a TACT program.