



# Farm Labor Transportation

Gary Cordner

# Background



- California 1999
- Central region
- 600,000 farm laborers  
May-September
- 200,000 the rest of the  
year
- Migrant laborers  
primarily from Mexico
- California Highway  
Patrol

# The Problem

- Vehicle crash on August 9, 1999, 5:00 a.m.
- 13 fatalities
- Farm workers who were passengers in a van
- Seated on benches
- No seat belts
- Driver unlicensed



# Analysis

- Past data on farm labor vehicle crashes not reliable – did hand searches for Central Division
- Estimated 40-60 crashes per year from 1992-1999
- Fatalities <5 per year, but many crashes with multiple injuries



# Analysis 2

- Farm labor vehicles exempt from state's seat belt law
- No targeted inspection of farm labor vehicles
- Unsafe transportation common in Mexico
- Inexperienced drivers from Mexico
- Suspicion/fear of police in Mexico



# Response



- Law amended to require seat belts in farm labor vehicles
- Vehicle operators & owners made responsible
- Annual inspection to certify farm labor vehicles, with visible sticker
- SAFE program established by CHP
- Implemented regularly scheduled, non-punitive vehicle inspections
- Increased enforcement during high season

# Response 2

- 1-800-TELLCHP tip line
- Outreach to stakeholder groups
- Bilingual officers
- Brochures, flyers, radio, television
- Education through schools, migrant camps, health fairs, etc.



# Implementation



- First year:
  - 3,060 vehicles inspected
  - 1,274 vehicles certified
  - 521 vehicles taken out of service
  - 1,201 citations issued
  - 195 presentations to 38,000+ attendees
  - 80 TV & radio appearances



# Assessment

- Zero fatalities in 2000 & 2001
- 75% reduction in injuries
- 73% drop in crashes
- Program expanded state-wide & continued
- Law amended in 2002 to also require forward-facing seating



# Any Questions?

## How Californians See America

