
Meeting Notes

- 10:00 AM Welcome Introductions **Larry Krantz**
- TxDOT Update
 - FY26 proposal modifications must be submitted and approved by April 30th
 - FY26 proposal to be submitted to NHTSA by August 1st, with project approval finalized afterward
 - Schedule on-site monitoring with your TxDOT Program Manager soon, if you haven't already
 - Expect an update on the new TxDOT Director of the Behavioral Traffic Safety Section this summer
- Old Business **Christine Adams**
- Check out the Street Talk Blog on TxIDTF website. Visit the site here: [Street Talk Blog – Texas Impaired Driving Task Force](#)
 - New Insights on Drugs and Driving: NHTSA's 2024 Fact Sheet (Posted)
 - Unpacking the DUI Puzzle—Who's Driving Impaired and Why It Matters (Coming Soon!)
 - Insightful conversations with researchers and impaired driving stakeholders are coming your way. Episodes will be available to stream soon!
 - Podcast I: Sarah Hacker, University of California, San Diego – Cannabis and Traffic Safety Messaging
 - Podcast II: Kyle Clark, IACP – Wet Labs and Green Labs and the Florida Impaired Driving Coalition Initiatives
 - Podcast III: Ryan Huling, Austin Police Department – Qualified Technician Program
- 10:15 AM Regional Toxicology Liaisons Project **Chris Heartsill**
- Society of Forensic Toxicologists (SOFT) awarded the Regional Toxicology Liaison (RTL) Project grant by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).
 - The project's aim is to increase support, identify challenges, and improve the effectiveness of drug-impaired driving investigations by working directly with laboratories and stakeholders.
 - Primary Goals:
 - Increase support and identify challenges
 - Strengthen communication across states
 - Provide shared resources and expert guidance

- Improve coordination with the criminal justice system
 - Enhance accuracy and consistency in data reporting
- Project Coordinator: Amy Miles (amy.miles@slh.wisc.edu) – Midwest Region
 - Sabra Jones (sabra@soft-tox.org) – Northeast Region
 - Chris Heartsill (chris@soft-tox.org) – Mid-South Region
 - Kristin Burke (kristen@soft-tox.org) – West Region
 - Pending on future funding, the goal is to hire two more liaisons for the Southeast Region and Northwest Region.
- Short-Term Goals:
 - Identify laboratories and stakeholders in the three regions and develop a database of relevant contacts.
 - Using the SOFT Toxicology Resource Committee's completed survey, the RTLs will examine each laboratory's responses in their respective regions under the direction of the Program Manager (PM). While each RTL will work within their region they will collaborate with the other regions to identify any areas that overlap and can be addressed as a group and to ensure consistency across the regions.
 - Follow-up conversations will occur with each laboratory by the appropriate RTL to discuss their responses to the survey. This will provide an opportunity for the RTL to meet each laboratory and understand and prioritize their needs. The PM will review the conversations with the laboratories and provide suggestions and support.
 - Where available, the promotion of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences (AAFS) published standards will be used to ensure continuity and quality of testing for all laboratories. In those laboratories where it is not feasible to meet the standards, gaps will be evaluated and resources identified to facilitate the use of the standards. Priority will be placed on laboratories that are not able to meet the NSC-ADID guidelines and/or the ASB published standards.
 - Encourage laboratories to pursue accreditation. If accreditation is currently not attainable, the RTL will work with the laboratory to identify the specific needs to achieve this goal.
 - Promotion of standardization in testing and support of method validation and development which will include sharing methods amongst the laboratories within and across each of the three regions.
 - Each RTL will provide support for the toxicology laboratories in their regions including but not limited to: determining resources to assist with testing needs, understanding limitations in providing comprehensive testing, facilitating partnerships with local stakeholders.
 - Identify each Laboratory's Information Management System (LIMS) to understand the data collection and output. Any gaps or limitations of the LIMS may be addressed by turning to resources for funding to either enhance or replace the existing system. Examine ways to share data with partners if this is not already occurring, including ensuring FARS is receiving the

laboratory's data when appropriate.

- Weekly virtual meetings will be organized by the PM and conducted by the RTLs to monitor progress. If any laboratories are difficult to connect with or apprehensive to participate, the RTLs and the PM will work together to create a communication plan to address the issue. During the meetings, successes and barriers to the progress of the project will be discussed.
- Quarterly, informal virtual one-hour meetings will be conducted by each RTL with the laboratories in their regions and the PM will be present at each meeting. Specific topics will be discussed which will be chosen ahead of time such as instrumentation, knowledge transfer, method development guidance, laboratory process improvement successes, etc. The quarterly meetings will allow for time to have a question/listening session to provide laboratories the opportunity to network and collaborate. The topic discussed may be used in all three regions during their quarterly meetings. If possible, all three RTLs should be present on relevant topics at each quarterly regional meeting.
- Long-Term Goals
 - Work to bring consistency to laboratory testing throughout the regions
 - Be a liaison between toxicology laboratories and other partners in the impaired driving problem
 - Ensure the laboratories are aware and involved in state and regional meetings where impaired driving is discussed
 - Expand the project to the other regions (Southeast and Northwest)
- State Toxicology Assessment
 - Multiple one-day events by region. The full-day exercise will promote discussion among impaired driving stakeholders, focusing on toxicology testing, and improving the overall status of impaired driving in the state.
 - Facilitated by the RTL to promote communication and identify barriers to testing and investigation. Assessment will involve labs and traffic safety partners.
 - DUID Testing and Reporting: What do the labs test and why? How are the results communicated?
 - Traffic Safety Partners: Perceptions and understanding of toxicology testing
 - The Assessment will:
 - Promote discussion
 - Discover barriers to analytical testing reporting and communication
 - Understand the impact of statutes and laws on testing
 - Identify resources for testing, reporting, and communication
 - Discussion of alternative matrices
 - Identify how each impaired driving partner fits into the investigation
 - TxIDTF role in Assessment
 - Help connect RTL to traffic safety partners in the designated Texas regions
 - Review assessment report completed by RTL and help to

achieve relevant recommendations/action items

- Convene a subcommittee to report to the membership

11:15 AM

Quarterly Updates

- **Judicial Bond** **Judge Weiser**
 - Completed Programs in 2025
 - Criminal Justice Conference – Georgetown (2/20/25) DWI-related topics
 - Consequences of DWI Arrests on Military Bases
 - Crossfading in Texas: A Critical Threat to Our Roadways
 - Key Insights on the Interstate Compact
 - 2025 DWI Court Team Basic and Advanced Training - Galveston (3/3/25)
 - One of the few conferences of its kind where entire DWI Court Teams come together to collaborate, learn, and work through real-world scenarios as a unit.
 - Honored Judge Laura Barker with Texas Impaired Driving Safety Award as she was unable to attend the Texas Impaired Driving Forum.
 - 2025 Regional A Conference (4/7/25) DWI-related topics
 - DWI Discovery Issues
 - The Intersection of Mental Health and Impaired Driving
 - Mandatory Traffic Fines, Ignition Interlocks and Occupational Driver's License
 - Upcoming Programs
 - 2025 Regional B Conference (5/12/25)
 - Same Agenda as Regional A Conference
 - DWI Summit – Rockwall (6/5/25) & Jourdanton (6/27/25) DWI-related topics
 - Mandatory Traffic Fines
 - Occupational Driver's Licenses
 - Ignition Interlocks
 - Pre-Trial Issues
 - 2025 Impaired Driving Symposium – Denton (7/30/25) DWI-related topics
 - K-9 Searches and Impaired Driving
 - Mental Health and Impaired Driving
 - DRE and oral fluid testing
 - Facilitated Scenarios
 - Ongoing challenges include:
 - Lack of traffic fine collection and related audit concerns
 - Potential implications from The US Supreme Court's decision in Smith v. Arizona. The decision particularly affects how forensic evidence is presented in court, requiring that the analysts who perform the tests be available for cross-examination.

Emma Dugas

- Impaired Driving Prevention Programs
 - Public Health Approach
 - Interventions that alter social norms
 - Change occurrence of risky behaviors
 - Create safer environments
 - Encourage Diverse and Culturally Responsive Approach
 - Advocacy
 - Communication campaigns
 - Alcohol service restrictions
 - Employer programs
 - Safe community initiatives
 - Driver education
 - Educational outreach
 - How do we achieve this?
 - These prevention approaches are achieved through local, state, and national partnerships that utilize evidence-based strategies and best practices.
 - Prevention Subcommittee Updates
 - Supporting School Resource Officer
 - The TxIDTF will work toward inviting stakeholders from TEA, school boards, and other school district leadership to the table to better understand key issues, such as where the funding is coming from to place SROs in schools and the intended outcomes of SROs in schools as they relate to impaired driving.
 - AAA Texas secured a booth at the upcoming Annual Texas Association of School Resources (TASRO) conference on July 6th-8th in Grapevine, TX.
 - Support Safe Community Coalitions/Traffic Safety Programs
 - In effort to support safe community coalitions and traffic safety programs, partners are working to increase collaboration and integrate the prevention efforts and strategies of local traffic safety programs with the strategies of local underage drinking and substance abuse prevention coalitions.
 - Stakeholders attend, network, and collaborate with community coalition partners consistently to extend the reach in educating the community.
 - Develop an infographic/fact sheet that aligns with alcohol and substance use prevention strategies.

12:00 PM

LUNCH

1:00 PM

Legislative Update

**Clay Abbott
Nicole Holt**

- Update on [SB22](#) (88th Legislative Session)
 - Allows rural areas to hire a second prosecutor (doubling capacity).
 - Employment is also increasing in larger areas (e.g., Houston), with

rising salaries—

- TDCAA's "Baby Prosecutor" school is over capacity due to the increase in the number of prosecutors; another session scheduled for July.
- While these developments are promising, caseloads remain too high overall, indicating a continued need for support and resources.
- 89th Legislative Session
 - If a bill hasn't passed either chamber, it's still technically alive—but not in great shape.
 - Only one major DWI bill has passed a chamber: [SB 2320](#)
 - First-Time DWI Offenses: The bill increases the penalty for first-time DWI offenses from a Class B misdemeanor to a Class A misdemeanor.
 - DWI with Open Container: The penalty for driving while intoxicated with an open container of alcohol is elevated from a Class B misdemeanor to a Class A misdemeanor.
 - Enhanced Penalties for Certain Offenses: The legislation further increases the penalty for a DWI offense from a Class A misdemeanor to a state jail felony for High BAC offenses.
 - Will increase the need for blood search warrants due to higher refusal rates. Most prosecutors support this bill.
 - Bills "on life support":
 - [HB 945](#): JP signing Blood Search Warrants
 - Changes "Any" magistrate to "A magistrate who is a licensed attorney or justice of the peace."
 - Defendant has to refuse for JP to sign warrant.
 - [SB 476](#): IID (Ignition Interlock Device) Orders
 - Felony in the first degree punishable by life imprisonment (without parole) if caused death while intoxicated and was mandated to IID
 - Numerous bills filed enhancing penalties (e.g., involving pedestrians, children, etc.) that could end up getting combined into a consolidated bill.
 - [HB 750/HB 1482](#): Felony DWI Parole Ineligibility
 - Summary: These bills seek to make individuals convicted of felony DWI ineligible for parole, even for non-violent or first-time felony offenders. This change would effectively remove participants from DWI Court programs, which are designed to provide treatment and rehabilitation as alternatives to incarceration.
 - Estimated \$1 billion cost due to increased incarceration rates and longer prison terms.
 - Status: No DWI Court judges testified – increasing likelihood of passage
 - [HB 2984](#): Rebuttable Presumption
 - Rebuttable presumption of intoxication at 0.08 BAC at time of analysis
- Hemp-Derived Consumables Legislation
 - [SB3](#) – Comprehensive THC Ban

- Summary: SB 3 proposes a total prohibition on all THC products, regardless of source or concentration. This includes hemp-derived products that currently fall below the 0.3% delta-9 THC threshold. The bill aims to close loopholes in the 2019 Texas hemp law that allowed for the sale of psychoactive THC isomers like Delta-8 and Delta-9 derived from hemp.
- Status: Passed Senate; currently pending in House State Affairs Committee
- [HB28](#) – Regulated THC Market with Oversight Shift
 - Summary: HB 28 offers a more moderate approach by preserving the legality of THC-infused beverages and allowing on-site consumption, such as at bars. The bill would shift regulatory oversight of these products from the Department of State Health Services to the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission (TABC).
 - Concern with allowing on-site consumption, specifically at establishments that serve alcohol (polysubstance use potential)
 - Status: Pending In House State Affairs Committee

2:00 PM

2025 Texas Impaired Driving Plan Recommendations

- Membership worked to provide updates on ongoing/not addressed recommendations in the Texas Impaired Driving Plan
 - **All revisions to the Plan are due April 30th**
 - Executive Committee will review and sign the Plan by May 28
 - Plan due to TxDOT by May 30
 - Plan due to NHTSA by July 1
- Texas has been reclassified as a high-range state based on its alcohol-impaired driving fatality rate by vehicle miles traveled. Because of this, the Plan will receive heightened attention during the funding review process, and we want to ensure it's as accurate and current for consideration by NHTSA.

3:00 PM

Conclusion and Adjournment

- Next meeting on July 17th at the Norris Conference Center