



# MISSION POSSIBLE BULLETIN!

Questions?...

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(780) 430-5541

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## **Mission Possible Forum addresses business costs of traffic trauma.**

*Organizations want to protect employees from traffic death and injury.*

More than 80 partners in the Mission Possible Traffic Safety Initiative from the oil and gas sector, forestry industry, health authorities and municipal enforcement agencies gathered at a forum in Red Deer to discuss strategies to protect employees from the growing threat of traffic trauma. The forum, hosted by the Alberta Motor Association and Canadian Petroleum Safety Council, is the first in a series of forums designed to bring industry partners together to address traffic safety.

Over the past decade in Alberta, 34 per cent of work-related fatalities resulted from vehicle crashes. The Alberta Motor Association estimates that Alberta employers lose \$700 million every year in hard and soft costs of traffic collisions. On average, 395 people die in car crashes per year in Alberta – and an estimated one in every nine crash victims was involved in a work-related collision. Even if the crash was not work related, businesses can be seriously affected. The death or serious injury of a colleague may significantly affect productivity and have a detrimental impact on staff morale. Certainly, businesses can suffer from the loss of a vital team member and his or her accumulated expertise and experience. The global costs of a single serious collision can exceed a million dollars.

To deal with this crucial issue, a growing number of Alberta organizations are implementing “Mission Possible @ Work,” a traffic safety program developed by the Alberta Motor Association. The program uses high impact motivational content to heighten awareness and educate all employees on improving their--and their family’s--safety on the road. It is intended for all employees, even those not required to drive as part of their job. It capitalizes on an employee’s willingness to learn through a peer education model and organizational commitment to safety.

Experts in various aspects of road system safety and organizations participating in the Mission Possible @ Work program shared their experience, expertise and plans to improve employee’s transportation safety. Some highlights were:

*(over please)*

*Erich Rast, Enerflex Systems*

- The safety culture is risk-based, not rule-based. It's not enough to tell employees they must wear seatbelts; they must understand the risk.
- Working safely is a condition of employment and should be an expectation of those with whom we do business.
- Safety does not get in the way of production, but actually has a positive effect.

*Rick Warren, Dow Agro Sciences*

- Last year, the company recorded 25 motor vehicle incidents. After implementing a safety program that included Mission Possible @ Work, motor vehicle incidents decreased to 7.
- The program is available to all employees, even those not required to drive as part of their job.
- Employees are required to demonstrate one safety result to maintain commitment and awareness of traffic safety.

**Keynote speaker, Dr. Adam Moscovitch of the Canadian Sleep Institute, provided an overview of the major issue of fatigue and traffic safety.**

- **People need to understand the effects of fatigue can be the same or worse than being drunk.**
- The amplified effect of fatigue and blood alcohol content is believed to be the most common contributor to early morning crashes.
- Fatigue is highly underestimated as a contributing factor in crashes, however, much improvement is being made in the level of knowledge around the issue and the recognition of its impact is "growing exponentially."
- There is a trend towards a joint responsibility between industry and individuals.
- Fatigue should be suspected as a contributing factor in any incident that occurs during the period when people are most vulnerable: between 2:00 and 6:00 a.m.; and early afternoon.
- Improvements in technology contribute to the problem of fatigue. Automated machinery takes away the need for alertness.

*Roger Brown, EnCana*, talked about how his organization was directly affected by a fatality. He showed a photo of a Pan Canadian operator who was ejected from his vehicle and died. Roger recounted the "cold hard facts" of the crash, then "the story the newspapers don't tell": what it was like to break the news to the employee's wife and daughter; the impact on his organization; the loss of a friend of 15 years.

*Trevor Chambers, crash survivor*. Trevor, a former oil worker, suffered a debilitating brain injury when he was ejected from a vehicle in a rollover crash. His candour in describing the long road to recovery—postponing his wedding while he learned to walk and speak again—captured the attention of everyone in the room. It was a powerful reminder of the lasting and far-reaching effects of a motor vehicle crash.

***Breakout sessions***

In several breakout sessions, participants discussed one of several pre-determined issues. These discussions were summarized and presented to the larger group. Some highlights are:

### *How to Measure Success.*

In this session, participants discussed ideas for measuring the success of Mission Possible @ Work and traffic safety programming. Some companies acknowledge that it is difficult to ensure evaluations are completed after each Mission Possible @ Work session; however, the group identified some “soft” indicators to gauge the program’s success and support:

- Number of employees attending meetings
- Positive feedback from employees
- Positive feedback from an independent regulatory body
- Peer pressure by employees encouraging safe driving practices
- More employees report taking what they’ve learned home to their families
- Adoption of the program by other branches
- Employees bringing additional information to work
- Executive support for the program

Some companies suggested these statistical measurements:

- Seat belt use survey
- Number of reported motor vehicle incidents—although it was pointed out that this number can be misleading as the quest to be “incident-free” may discourage people from reporting
- Conversely, the heightened awareness that comes through the Mission Possible @ Work training may make participants more aware, and therefore more likely to report unsafe behaviour

### *Practical Risk Management*

The focus of this discussion was how to apply the concepts of risk management to road safety.

- What constitutes risk: exposure, consequences and likelihood
- Likelihood is measured by statisticians: exposure to risk, hours of work, history or experience, etc.
- Consider ways to reduce exposure (e.g. bus groups of employees to the jobsite)
- Safety programs should be based on risk, not on rules
- Encourage employees to adopt the “Principle of Enlightened Self-Interest,” - understand what’s in it for them
- Lead by example

### *Do Safety Rewards Work?*

In this session participants discussed the merits of safety incentives as a way to influence employee behaviour. The group said:

- Short term rewards don’t change culture
- Rewards can tend to drive reporting underground
- It can have a negative effect if not handles properly - some people don’t want to be singled out from their peers
- One company reported that 80 per cent of people surveyed said rewards did not affect performance
- Employers should be involved in developing meaningful rewards that enhance and reinforce positive behaviour, such as a plaque that can be displayed
- Rewards should not be used to make changes but to recognize the positive results of change

### *What Should a Collision Investigation Look Like?*

In this discussion, participants examined the principles that drive accident investigation:

- If you don't investigate collisions, you are sending a message to your employees that you don't care. The investigation demonstrates your commitment
- Gather evidence for today and for five years from now. Do a good job. Train your people
- Focus on fact finding, not on fault finding
- Learn from the incident

### *How to Enhance the Mission Possible @Work Program*

- Partners would like supporting information to help maintain interest and awareness between sessions, e.g. news releases, testimonials, tips sheets, bulletins, newsletters, quizzes, etc – in electronic format so they can forward them internally.
- Electronic delivery of the program
- More training for leaders
- A means for communication between industry members to facilitate sharing of experiences
- More links to the Mission Possible Traffic Safety Initiative to advise Mission Possible @ Work partners when ad campaigns are out
- More involvement from senior management at meetings
- More topics covered in modules – e.g., construction zones, cell phones, securing loads
- Need to streamline evaluation

“The feedback we received on the Mission Possible @ Work program has been excellent. We'll be taking this information and using it to enhance the program.” says Walter Barta of the AMA, founding partner in the Mission Possible Traffic Safety Initiative. “We're very optimistic about this program's potential. Changing behaviour is very difficult to achieve through the mass media—in 30-second clips. This is a way to leverage limited resources with employers who have a shared interest and a commitment to the cause.”

- 30 -

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