

2002 Annual Report

The

**SMOOTH
OPERATOR**
PROGRAM

A Cooperative
Effort to Combat
Aggressive Driving in
the District of Columbia,
Maryland and Virginia



We're Getting Tough on Aggressive Drivers!

ABOUT THIS ANNUAL REPORT

The Smooth Operator program battles aggressive driving in the Washington, DC metro area and has been active for several years. Three years ago, Smooth Operator began enhancing law enforcement efforts with public awareness programs, and began tracking results and publishing an annual report on the results of the Smooth Operator initiative. This is the third report.

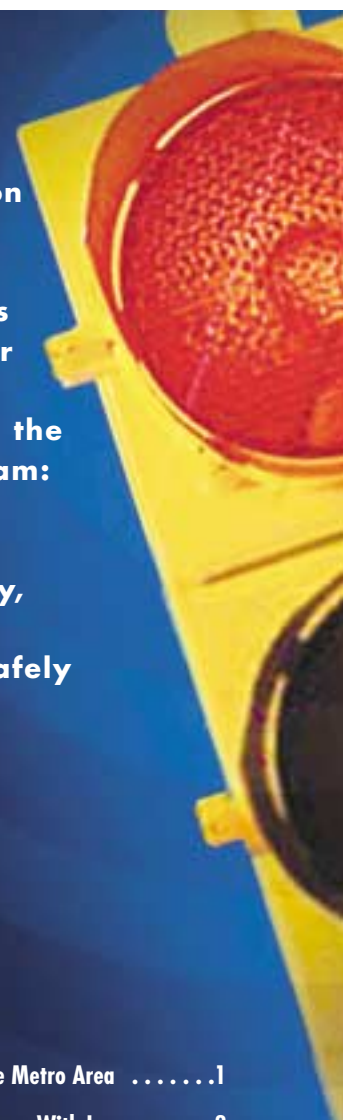
This report describes the work performed and results of efforts undertaken in 2002 for the Smooth Operator program. In the Overview of the Program, there is an outline of the total program over the past three years and a look at the ongoing problem in the Washington, DC metro area.

Aggressive driving is defined as a combination of unsafe and unlawful driving actions that demonstrate a conscious and willful disregard for safety. The following offenses are included in the Smooth Operator Program:

- Running red lights and stop signs
- Following too closely, or tailgating
- Changing lanes unsafely
- Failing to yield the right of way
- Improper passing
- Speeding

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A CLOSER LOOK AT AGGRESSIVE DRIVING IN THE WASHINGTON, DC METRO AREA -

The Problem is Clear

As area roads become more congested and aggressive driving behaviors increase, the consequences are obvious. Cars crash, and drivers are being hit and killed at an alarming rate in Washington, DC, Maryland and Virginia.

In fact, aggressive driving may be responsible for two-thirds of all the people who die in crashes in the United States each year. It's the leading cause of death for Americans under the age of 40!

Closer Than You Think

Area drivers rate aggressive driving as the biggest highway danger today, according to the American Automobile Association. It's ranked worse than drunk driving and congestion. It's all around us when we drive, because almost every motorist drives aggressively at times. There are chronic aggressive drivers, as well as those who change when they get behind the wheel and drive aggressively for the thrill and power of it.

No matter how good a driver we think we are – and studies show that most people consider themselves good drivers – we can all drive aggressively if we're stressed or in a hurry.

Characteristics of Aggressive Drivers:

- They are high-risk drivers, more likely to speed, to drive unbuckled and/or to drive impaired.
- They are drivers who see their vehicles as providing a cover of anonymity and therefore tend to be less inhibited and more likely to engage in aggressive behavior.
- They are frequently "Type A" personalities characterized by high levels of competitiveness, time urgency, irritation, and hostility.
- They run stop signs, disobey red lights, speed, tailgate, weave in and out of traffic, pass on the right, make unsafe lane changes, flash their lights, blow their horns, or make threatening hand and facial gestures.

(Source: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Aggressive Driving Action Guide)

Behavioral Issues In Drivers

Several behavioral problems contribute to aggressive driving on our roads today:

- Driving brings out anger in many people. While they are civil at home and at the office, when they get behind the wheel, they totally change.
- Some aggressive drivers drive that way simply for the thrill and the power of it.
- People often feel safest acting out their anger behind the wheels of their cars.
- Young drivers learn from their parents. If they drive aggressively, the youngsters will, too, when they get behind the wheel.
- Most motorists believe themselves to be above average drivers – making it very difficult to change behavior.
- Most motorists feel powerless about aggressive driving, and feel too little is being done to stop it.

The Consequences Spread

Because of aggressive driving, commuters experience tremendous stress and loss of time and productivity at work. Stressed or resentful drivers often take their stress out on their children, partners and co-workers. Workers today are more concerned about commuting than ever, and aggressive driving is ranked high on the list of commuting issues.

Why It's Such a Challenge in the Metro Area

Our area features many roadways in and out of the region, combined with a large amount of commuters and commercial traffic.

- Studies show we suffer from the fourth-worst traffic congestion in the country.
- Area roads are more crowded, and busy roads take extra time, increase frustration, and diminish civility and good driving manners.
- Motorists in our area lose more hours to traffic delays – 82 hours per year on average – than any other city in the country.
- Parents spend twice as much time behind the wheel as they do with their children.
- Demand on our road system is increasing fast—but road capacity is not.



SMOOTH OPERATOR 2002

Continuing Success

In May, the annual campaign for the 2002 Smooth Operator program was launched across the greater Washington, DC region and throughout portions of the State of Maryland. The campaign did more in 2002, reaching millions with targeted messaging and getting excellent results with a smaller advertising budget than in past years.

2002 Objectives

The objectives of the 2002 Smooth Operator campaign were to:

- Create awareness for the dangers of driving aggressively.
- Communicate stepped-up efforts to reduce aggressive driving.
- Raise the visibility of law enforcement efforts on roads and highways.
- Alter the aggressive driving behaviors of motorists.
- Increase the awareness of safety issues for commercial vehicles and buses: stopping, maneuverability, and visibility.

Campaign Dates

Law enforcement waves were carried out during specific weeks over the summer:

- May 19-24
- June 16-21
- July 21-26
- August 25-30

A total of 219,467 citations and warnings were issued during the four week long enforcement waves.

In conjunction with the high profile presence of law enforcement, a public education and awareness campaign enhanced the enforcement efforts from May 19 to August 30.

Targeted at licensed drivers between the ages of 18 and 49, the campaign was aimed at areas with high incidences of aggressive driving behavior citations. It reached people who live and drive in the greater Washington, DC region and throughout portions of the State of Maryland. The campaign consisted primarily of radio announcements supplemented with bus backs and billboards.

New Participants in 2002

In 2001, 26 agencies and organizations participated in the Smooth Operator program. By 2002, 50 different law enforcement agencies, and the Maryland State Police barracks in all 23 counties were on the team.

For the first time, the District of Columbia and Maryland divisions of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration partnered with Smooth Operator to focus part of the campaign's message on the danger of driving aggressively around trucks and buses.

The Maryland Transportation Authority also joined the team by sponsoring billboards for the program and the distributing Smooth Operator materials at tollbooths.

THE 2002 MEDIA CAMPAIGN

Specific Focus On Public Education

The 2002 media campaign with a budget of \$770,000, focused on educating the public about the aggressive driving issue and the Smooth Operator efforts to combat it. The five goals were:

1. Increase public awareness of aggressive driving behavior and its destructive consequences, by putting a face to the crime.
2. Make the issue real for people, with a media campaign called "Victims & Voices."
3. Support an intensive region-wide education and enforcement effort, adding a component for educating people about aggressive driving around commercial vehicles.
4. Improve drivers' behaviors to reduce the incidence of aggressive driving. Use increased public awareness and education in conjunction with increased law enforcement.
5. Create a social climate that stigmatizes aggressive driving through stiffer penalties and behavioral intervention, increased law enforcement, and public awareness.

The Target Audience

The audience for the campaign included all drivers, including truck and bus drivers, in Washington, DC, Maryland and Virginia as the primary audience. Pedestrians, employers, day care providers, driver education providers, judicial agencies, law enforcement, and tourists were secondary audiences.

Demographics of the Target Audience

The campaign was targeted at adult drivers from the ages of 18-49. This was a different target than in past years. There were two reasons for this. First, research shows that younger drivers are more likely to be aggressive drivers than drivers over 50. In addition, the reduction in the 2002 campaign's advertising budget made the need for purchases of advertising to be more highly targeted and effective.

Methods Used:

1. Enlist the support of state and local law enforcement in the campaign, tying in advertising strategies with waves of law enforcement.
2. Use radio and outdoor transit advertising to continue to increase public awareness of aggressive driving and define aggressive driving behaviors and consequences.
3. Put a face to the crime by employing "Victims & Voices" – lines and exclamations of those who drive aggressively or who are affected by aggressive driving in radio commercials.
4. Continue to target four specific aggressive driving behaviors: red light and stop sign running; speeding; unsafe lane changes; and tailgating.
5. Remind all drivers to be careful and courteous when driving around trucks and buses.
6. Conduct public awareness efforts which highlight the victims and voices of aggressive driving.
7. Distribute posters with short messages and brochures that explain aggressive driving and the Smooth Operator program, and help increase the public's acceptance of enforcement technology.
8. Evaluate the campaign by conducting pre- and post-surveys to determine public awareness and attitudes toward aggressive driving and measure changes and results.



Poignant Radio Messages

Because of its cost-effectiveness and ability to reach area drivers so frequently and easily, the 2002 media campaign relied heavily on radio advertising, primarily during "drive times."

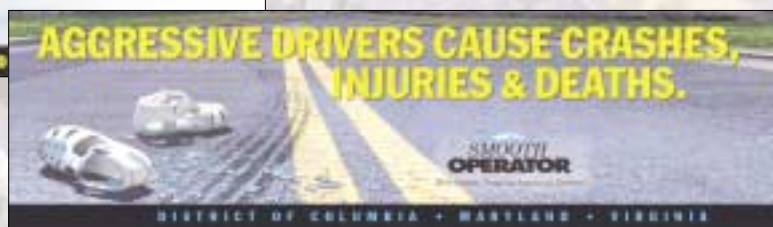
Maryland Public Television's MotorWeek lent its support to the Smooth Operator program in 2002. John Davis, the host of MotorWeek, became the voice of Smooth Operator in all the radio spots which ran during the campaign. MotorWeek and John Davis felt that aggressive driving is a serious problem in this area and wanted to align themselves with a worthy program.

The advertising consisted of four studio-produced 60-second spots. A radio spot was also produced targeted at aggressive driving around commercial vehicles.

Announcer-read spots in :30-, :20- and :10-second segments were also produced to be aired as often as possible. The total number of spots run was 8,266 with a total net reach* of 3,641,777.

A mix of several radio stations was used over the course of the campaign. Scripts were also translated into Spanish and used on Hispanic stations in the area.

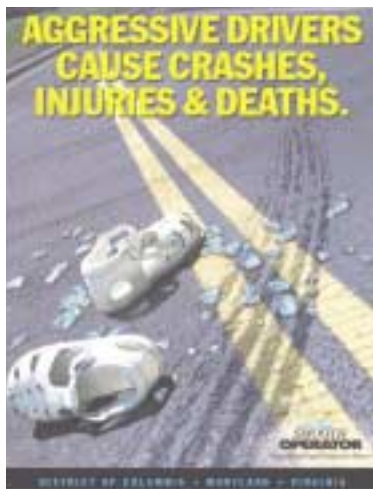
**Net reach: The total number of individuals who heard the message.*



Highlights of the Radio Campaign:

- Spots ran on stations for 10 weeks.
- Six or seven area stations were used on each weekly schedule, with 20 :30-second spots played per week per station.
- Spots were concentrated in peak drive times for targeted exposure.
- :30- and :60- second spots were rotated, and radio stations aired the Smooth Operator message in public service announcements and as a part of a variety of station promotions.

The radio strategy worked well. Research shows that public awareness of the campaign increased from 71% in 2001 to 76% over the course of the campaign in 2002.



Outdoor & Transit Advertising

The outdoor display advertising element of the program also put a face on the problem, by using photos of a child's shoes on a road surface suggesting the aftermath of a crash. The message was in a simple headline: "Aggressive Drivers Cause Crashes, Injuries and Deaths."

The message was placed on bus backs in the District, Maryland and Virginia and on billboards in the Baltimore area. These messages supplemented the radio messages and provided targeted exposure to drivers when they were on the road.

For the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's concern about aggressive drivers around commercial vehicles, a bus back was produced showing a truck and a driver and asking; "Bus & truck drivers are looking out for you. Are you looking out for them?"

125 bus backs were seen over three months, reaching 82.5% of the audience.

Posters

1,500 posters, similar in design to the bus backs, were created and printed. They were distributed to law enforcement agencies, motor vehicle branch offices, driver safety schools, hospitals, and some retail outlets in Washington, DC, Maryland and Virginia.

Brochures

250,000 educational brochures were distributed through radio stations, motor vehicle branch offices, highway safety programs, hospital waiting rooms, and law enforcement agencies. Brochures were also distributed at tollbooths throughout the state of Maryland and at court-ordered anger management classes for convicted aggressive drivers. Brochures are inserted into mailings with red-light camera violation notices.

In 2002, hundreds of radio spots aired and bus backs were displayed at no charge for an approximate value of \$500,000.

Public Awareness Efforts

Media awareness of the campaign resulted in a tremendous amount of earned media for Smooth Operator 2002. Coverage in the beginning of the campaign in May alone featured a variety of free print, radio and TV coverage.

May Print Media Articles:

The Washington Times, May 21, 2002
Associated Press, May 21, 2002
Richmond Times, May 21, 2002
The Journal, (Baltimore) May 21, 2002
The Washington Post, May 21, 2002
Potomac News, May 21, 2002
Baltimore Sun, May 22, 2002
Baltimore Sun, May 29, 2002 –
“Letters to the Editor”
Baltimore Sun, May 31, 2002 –
“Letters to the Editor”
Motorweek’s June Program Guide
Motorweek’s Newsletter -
Society for Excellence in Television

May Television Coverage:

In the Washington Market:
“Washington Report” - News Channel 8 Cable -
May 20, 2002 6:00-6:30 pm
“PrimeTime Report” - News Channel 8 Cable -
May 20, 2002 9:00-10:00 pm
ABC 7 News at 6 - WJLA-TV CH 7 (ABC) -
May 20, 2002 6:00-6:30 pm
“Good Morning Washington” - WJLA-TV CH 7
(ABC) May 21, 2002 5:00-6:00 am
“News 4 Today” - WRC-TV CH 4 (NBC)
May 20, 2002 6:00-7:00 am
“News 4 at 10:00” - WRC-TV CH 4 (NBC)
May 20, 2002 10:00-11:00 am
“News 4 at 4:00” - WRC-TV CH 4 (NBC)
May 20, 2002 4:00-5:00 pm
“News 4 at 5:00” - WRC-TV CH 4 (NBC)
May 20, 2002 5:00-6:00 pm
“News 4 at 6:00” - WRC-TV CH 4 (NBC)
May 20, 2002 6:00-7:00 pm
“News 4 at 11:00” - WRC-TV CH 4 (NBC)
May 20, 2002 11:00-11:35 pm
“Fox 5 News at 10” - WTTG-TV CH 5 (FOX)
May 20, 2002 10:00-11:00 pm
“9 Eyewitness News at 5” - WUSA-TV CH 9
(CBS) May 20, 2002 5:00-6:00 pm
“9 Eyewitness News at 6” - WUSA-TV CH 9 (CBS)
May 20, 2002 6:00-6:30 pm
“9 Eyewitness News Tonight” - WUSA-TV CH 9
(CBS) May 20, 2002 11:00-11:35 pm
“9 Eyewitness News This Morning” - WUSA-TV
CH 9 (CBS) May 21, 2002 5:00-6:00 am
“9 Eyewitness News This Morning at 6” - WUSA-
TV CH 9 (CBS) May 21, 2002 6:00-7:00 am

The earned media for TV and Radio coverage in May, 2002 was \$43,860.00.

In the Baltimore Market:

“ABC2 News at 6:00” - WMAR-TV CH 2 (ABC)
May 20, 2002 6:00-6:30 pm
“Direct Connection” - WMPT-TV CH 22 (PBS)
May 20, 2002 7:30-8:00 pm
“Eyewitness News at Six” - WJZ-TV CH 13 (CBS)
May 21, 2002 6:00-7:00 pm
“The Morning Edition” - WJZ-TV CH 13 (CBS)
May 22, 2002 7:00-8:00 am
“ABC2 News at 5:30” - WMAR-TV CH 2 (ABC)
May 21, 2002 5:30-6:00 pm

In the Richmond Market:

WWBT-TV12
WTVR-TV6

May Radio Coverage:

“Morning Edition” Local Cut-Ins - WAMU-FM
88.5 (NPR) Local Radio - May 20, 2002
6:00-6:30 am
WTOP-AM 1500 (CBS) Local Radio
May 20, 2002 6:00-7:00 am
WTOP-AM 1500 (CBS) Local Radio
May 20, 2002 7:00-8:00 am
WTOP-AM 1500 (CBS) Local Radio
May 20, 2002 4:00-5:00 pm

EVALUATION HIGHLIGHTS

Tracking the 2002 Efforts

Riter Research of Edgewater, Md, was commissioned to conduct a multi-wave tracking study to evaluate the effectiveness of the 2002 campaign.

Pre- and post-campaign consumer telephone surveys were used, involving 500 motorists. An initial survey in May provided benchmark measurements. A second survey between August 25 and September 3, 2002 provided post-campaign measurements.

Study participants all met the following criteria:

- Licensed drivers
- Residing within selected jurisdictions
- Between the ages of 21 and 54

Getting the Message Out:

- 76% of motorists in September 2002 said they had seen messages about aggressive driving, up from 71% in May.
- Nearly six out of 10 motorists remembered seeing or hearing the Smooth Operator message. 59% remembered Smooth Operator ads, up from 51% in May. Only 38% recalled Smooth Operator when asked three years ago.
- The awareness of police efforts to crack down on aggressive driving increased from 53% in May to 58% in September.

Improving Driving Behavior:

- Those who said their driving behavior had improved increased from 15% in May to 20% in September. In 2000, just 4% said their driving behavior had improved.
- The number who said that they had driven aggressively during the past month declined from 25 percent to 19 percent.
- Occurrences of aggressive driving behavior in the last 10 times people drove declined from 1.04 to .81.

In 2002, there were 81,223,663 impressions of the education and awareness message on people in the area from the media campaign alone.

Using Technology to Battle Aggressive Driving:

- The vast majority of drivers now support the use of video cameras and other high technology solutions to catch aggressive drivers, particularly those who speed and run stop lights and stop signs.

Increasing Awareness of Aggressive Driving Around Commercial Vehicles:

- 97% of drivers are aware of commercial vehicles stopping distances, visibility and maneuverability.

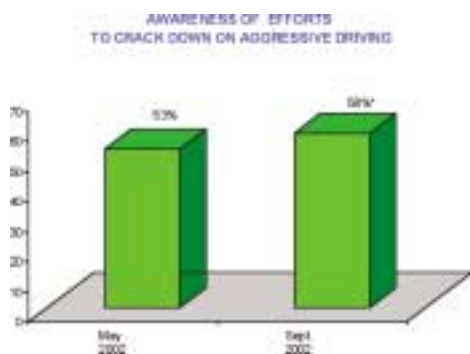


THE SMOOTH OPERATOR 2002 DRIVER AWARENESS AND BEHAVIOR TRACKING STUDY - DETAILED FINDINGS

GENERAL AWARENESS

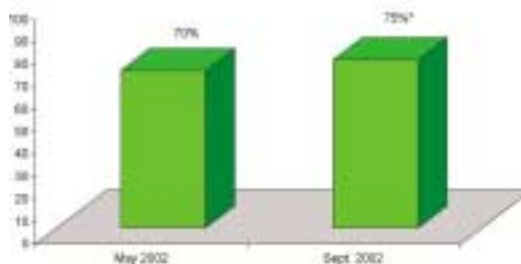
Before the 2002 communications program began, 53% of people reported having seen or heard about municipalities and police efforts to crack down on drivers who drive aggressively.

After the campaign, there was a significant increase (5%) in the proportion of respondents who reported seeing or hearing about the aggressive driving crackdown.



**Difference between waves is significant.*

AGREE THAT THERE HAS BEEN MORE NEWS ABOUT
POLICE EFFORTS TO TICKET AGGRESSIVE DRIVERS
(% Strongly / Somewhat Agree)



Since the onset of the Smooth Operator program, motorists are more likely to recognize the messages about the efforts of police to ticket aggressive drivers.

In April 2000, the percentage of people aware of efforts to crack down on aggressive driving was just **30%**. Today, it is **58%**.

RECALLING OF MESSAGES

More than half of drivers (56%) mentioned they had heard a message about aggressive driving – up substantially from May (41%).

MESSAGE RECALL

(Base: Recalled Hearing / Seeing Message on Driving Behavior / Concerns)

	May 2002	Sept. 2002
Aggressive driving	41%	56%*
Drunk driving	30	30
Speeding	19	10*
Seat belts / buckle up	11	11
Unsafe driving	1	10*
Road rage	3	7*
Drivers who tailgate	5	5
Driving with cell phone	4	5
Running red lights	5	4
Yielding to traffic	2	4
Police cracking down on aggressive drivers	3	3

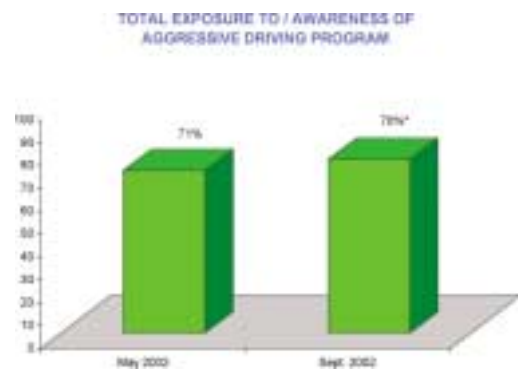
*Difference significant between waves.
Table excludes all other responses < 3%.

AD RECOGNITION

A measure of advertising effectiveness, ad recognition finds whether or not people remember hearing or seeing ad messages. Recall of the Smooth Operator program increased from 51% in May to 59% in September.



*Difference significant between waves.



Since the onset of the 2002 campaign in May, there was a significant increase in the proportion of drivers aware of the campaign and municipality and police efforts to crack down on aggressive driving. It increased from **71% to 76%**.

OPINIONS ABOUT ENFORCEMENT

Motorists were asked if they felt police enforcement is “too much, too little, or just about right.”

More motorists believed enforcement is too little. The increase in perceptions about the lack of enforcement may be related to the media focus on aggressive driving.

FEELING TOWARD POLICE ENFORCE ‘TOO LITTLE’

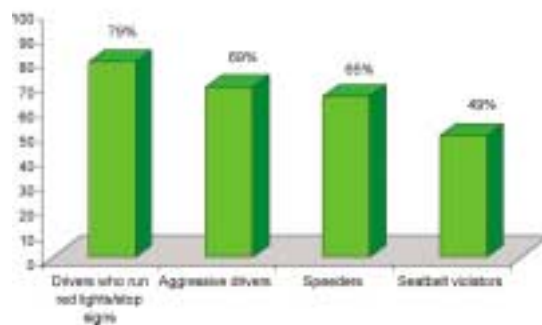
	May 2002	Sept 2002
Aggressive drivers	62%	72%*
Drivers who tailgate	69	71
Drivers who change lanes frequently to get ahead	61	70*
Drivers who use shoulders to pass	61	61
Drunk drivers	50	57*
Drivers who run red lights / stop signs	50	56*
Drivers who drive under the speed limit	48	48
Speeding	42	47
Drivers who do not use seat belts	39	38

*Difference significant between waves.

ANTI-AGGRESSIVE DRIVING TECHNOLOGIES

Driver views on video cameras and other technologies vary by the offense. The majority of motorists support the use of video cameras and other technologies to catch aggressive drivers, speeders, and drivers who run red lights and stop signs. (Support for video cameras to catch aggressive drivers is highest among women.) But motorists are divided on the use of cameras, etc., to catch seatbelt violators.

FAVOR USING VIDEO CAMERAS AND OTHER TECHNOLOGIES TO CATCH AGGRESSIVE DRIVERS (May / September 2002)



Last year, 41,730 people throughout our nation lost their lives in traffic crashes, and an additional three million were injured.

COMMERCIAL VEHICLES

To gain insight into how drivers view commercial vehicles, respondents in the survey were asked who poses the biggest problem for specific situations – commercial vehicles such as tractor trailers, dump trucks, buses and other big rigs or personal vehicles such as passenger cars, SUVs, minivans and pick-up trucks.

Since May, some changes have occurred in perception about who is or isn't the biggest concern. The major observation is that the majority of motorists believe that personal vehicles are the bigger concern.

During the campaign, however, some shifts have occurred in motorists' opinions on weaving in and out of traffic, and aggressive driving.

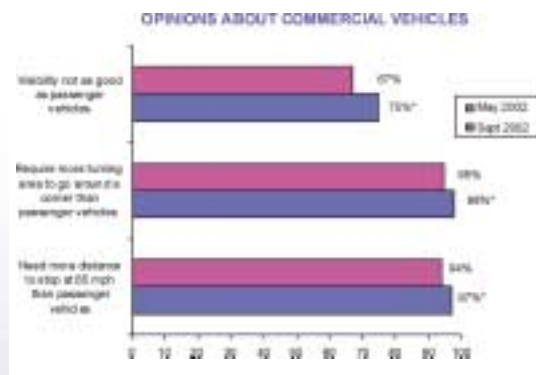
BIGGEST CONCERNS

	Commercial Vehicles		Personal Vehicles	
	May 2002	Sept 2002	May 2002	Sept 2002
Speeding	26%	28%	58%	57%
Tailgating	29	32	60	55
Weaving in / out of traffic	19	24*	72	66*
Aggressive driving	19	25*	70	61*

*Difference significant between waves. Table excludes 'both.'

The evaluation showed that a significant proportion of drivers became more aware of specific issues with commercial vehicles:

- Trucks require more area to turn a corner than passenger vehicles.
- The visibility of drivers of commercial vehicles is not as good as a driver in a passenger vehicle.
- At 65 mph, commercial vehicles need more distance to stop than passenger cars, minivans, or SUVs.



*Difference significant between waves.

DRIVER PERCEPTIONS OF PROBLEMS

The evaluation studied 12 driving behaviors in terms of their perceived seriousness. In addition to asking about personal vehicles, drivers were also asked about commercial trucks and buses.

Research shows that motorists believe drunk drivers and aggressive drivers are the most serious situations facing them.



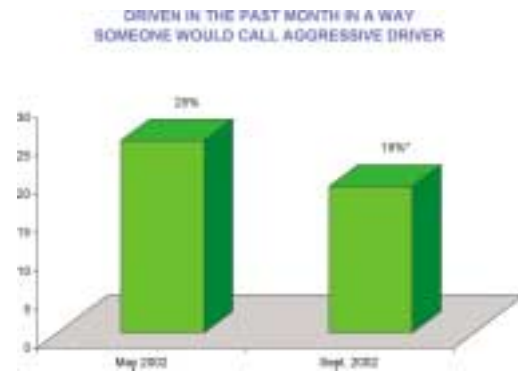
RATED 'EXTREMELY' / 'VERY SERIOUS' PROBLEM

	May 2002	Sept. 2002
Drivers who whip in and out of lanes to get ahead	74%	78%
Aggressive driving by personal vehicles	76	76
Drivers who show disregard for anyone else on the road	74	77
Drunk drivers	69	77*
Drivers who run red lights / stop signs	67	73*
Drivers of personal vehicles who tailgate	64	72*
Speeding by personal vehicles	66	69
Drivers of personal vehicles who show disregard for commercial trucks and buses	59	67*
Drivers who change lanes without signaling	63	60*
Tailgating by trucks and buses	49	59*
Drivers of trucks and buses who whip in/out of lanes to get ahead	59	67*
Aggressive driving by trucks and buses	51	57
Speeding by trucks and buses	50	56*
Drivers who do not use seat belts	44	42
Drivers who drive under the speed limit on the highways / interstates	32	29
Driving behavior of older / senior drivers	34	25*
Commercial vehicles	29	27

* Comparing the pre-campaign and post-campaign results shows a significant increase.

Did their driving behavior improve? Overall, drivers believe they are driving better today. This perception comes mostly from women and drivers between 35 and 44.

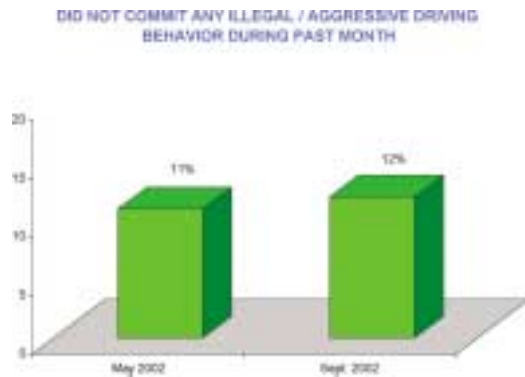
The number of motorists who said that during the past month they have driven in a way that someone would refer to them as an aggressive driver declined.



*Difference significant between waves.

DRIVING BEHAVIOR

Nearly all drivers acknowledged they have driven aggressively, and that their driving behavior remained unchanged over the campaign. The most cited were speeding, speeding to make a light and entering an intersection after the light had turned yellow.



DRIVING BEHAVIOR OF MOTORIST DURING PAST MONTH

	May 2002	Sept. 2002
Enter an intersection after the light turned yellow	53%	58%
Speed to get somewhere	50	54
Speed up to make a light	50	46
Drive while upset	35	32
Drive aggressively	24	20
Roll through a stop sign	19	24*
Refuse to let someone merge into traffic	16	17
Drive without seatbelt fastened	18	15
Cut in front of another car	12	10
Tailgate	10	11
Give another driver an insulting gesture	10	9
Drive through a red light	7	5
Drive on the shoulder to pass	4	3
Pass another car in a no passing zone	1	4*
Drive after a few too many drinks	1	4*
None of the above	11	12

**Difference significant between waves.*

the findings

THE OVERVIEW OF THE SMOOTH OPERATOR PROGRAM:

Smooth Operator is a unique public safety initiative. It began in 1997 with 18 law enforcement agencies participating in four one-week traffic enforcement waves in the Washington, DC metro area. In 1998, a task force of area law enforcement agencies, trauma experts, and government officials was formed to enhance the effort with a public education component.

The Washington, DC metro area-wide program has expanded every year, as more agencies, officials and organizations have joined the team. Aspects of the project make it unique, particularly the multi-disciplinary approach of the program of public awareness joined together with law enforcement.

Working closely and cooperating across many fronts, the many participants and jurisdictions involved in the Smooth Operator program are helping to lessen injuries, accidents and deaths on our roads today. They are doing so through a five-pronged approach of Enforcement, Public Information and Education, Technology, Driver Improvement and Evaluation.

ENFORCEMENT

Pulling Aggressive Drivers Over

Aggressive driving has been a focus of area law enforcement for many years. But, at selected times over the past few years, there have been several weeks with larger than normal amounts of law enforcement on our roads, targeting aggressive drivers. They are pulling over the drivers who are speeding, tailgating, running red lights and stop signs, and changing lanes unsafely. They are the law enforcement component of Smooth Operator.

What We Have Accomplished:

- Awareness of police efforts to crack down on aggressive driving increased from 53% to 58%. It was just 30% in 2000.
- In 1997, 62,000 citations were issued for aggressive driving behavior. In 2002, the number was 219,467. More than 700,000 citations have been issued over the years the program has existed.

- The number of participating law enforcement agencies grew from 18 in 1997 to more than 50 in 2002 – including the Maryland State Police barracks in all 23 counties.

PUBLIC INFORMATION AND EDUCATION

Working Off the Roads, Too

Pulling aggressive drivers over with high profile law enforcement waves is just one component of the Smooth Operator program. There are also public awareness campaigns targeting aggressive drivers and those affected by aggressive driving. Coupled with law enforcement efforts, they work to stigmatize aggressive driving behavior and change public thinking. There is also ongoing analysis and evaluation of aggressive driving behavior and awareness of the program.

What We Have Accomplished:

- The percentage of drivers aware of the Smooth Operator program and police crack downs increased from 71% to 76% Just 38% knew about the campaign in 2000.
- Public recognition of the Smooth Operator program and its efforts to combat aggressive driving increased from 38% to 76% in a few short years.
- In 2002, the total number of times people saw or heard the Smooth Operator message was almost 1,000,000.
- The contracted media has gotten behind the program. In previous years, there was only slight coverage and limited public service messages. In 2002, hundreds of radio spots aired and bus backs were displayed at no charge for a value of almost \$500,000.

TECHNOLOGY

High Technology Contributions

The Smooth Operator program works with a variety of new technology such as lasers, red light cameras and aerial surveillance in enforcement efforts. Other technology tools are being explored in various jurisdictions all around the Washington, DC metro area.

The program is encouraged by data from across the United States and around the globe which shows that, when cameras and other technology are in use, aggressive driving behaviors and crashes, deaths and serious injuries decline – often dramatically.

What We Have Accomplished:

- Awareness and acceptance of red light cameras and enforcement technologies has increased. Today, the vast majority of drivers (79%) support it.

The Washington, DC Example

Washington, DC's population of approximately 572,000 swells to 3 million during an average workday, with 950,000 vehicles on District roadways. It's the 3rd most congested region in the country.

Unsafe driving is the top problem in DC neighborhoods, according to polls. Studies show speed is a factor in 50 – 60% of our fatal collisions. In a 2001 study, 78% of drivers 21-54 favored use of video cameras to address aggressive driving.

DC police believe traditional law enforcement alone is inconsistent and ineffective, and photo enforcement technologies can greatly increase enforcement and save lives. Police Chief Charles Ramsey says automated enforcement is a major element in the campaign to prevent needless injuries and deaths on DC streets.

With Photo-Radar, the percentage of violators (speeds in excess of 10 mph) dropped from 31% to 13% - a 58% reduction!

Legislation enacted in 1996 stipulated:

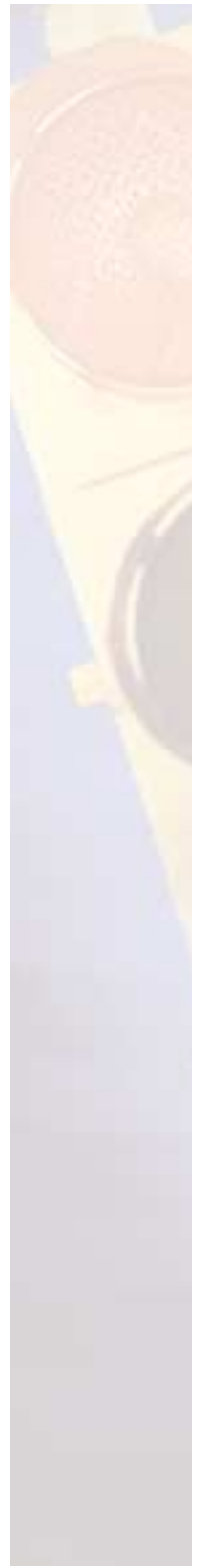
- Recorded images are prima facie evidence.
- Photo evidenced citations constitute moving violations.
- Any moving violation can be photo enforced.
- Notices of Infraction can be mailed.
- Registered owner liability with limited exceptions.
- Infractions are non-pointable offenses.

DC Results of Red Light Programs in the District Through July, 2002:

- 39 cameras installed.
- 316, 731 notices of infraction mailed.
- Approximately 17.8 million in fines collected from violators.
- Reduction in red-light violations at intersections with cameras: 64% -- more than 24,282 fewer violations each month just at the monitored intersections.
- Red-light running fatalities fell from 16% in 1998 to just 2% in 2000, the first full year of red-light camera enforcement.

DC's Reasons for Red Light Cameras:

- No cost to taxpayers, with costs covered by fines.
- Revenue generated for municipalities - more than \$34 million in DC since August 1999.
- Systems provide public safety without additional resources.
- It's a force multiplier, letting uniformed officers concentrate on other priorities
- No profiling issues.



An Ongoing Problem – A Long-Term Solution

1998-1999

Law enforcement began concentrating more intensely on aggressive driving behaviors, and conducting enforcement waves at specific times of the year. The Smooth Operator task force was created to couple law enforcement with public education and target the problem.

2000

A public awareness campaign was conducted during the summer. \$1.3 million was spent on advertising reaching 6.1 million people with thousands of billboards, radio spots and print messages, combined with several waves of law enforcement.

2001

The Smooth Operator 2001 program carried on the awareness, adding anger management kits and enforcement technologies to the program. \$1.2 million was spent on advertising, and 8.4 million people were reached with the message at least once, with radio, billboards and print messages.

2002

The Smooth Operator program expanded to include 50 agencies and organizations, and every barrack of the Maryland State Police to its awareness efforts. \$770,000 was spent on advertising, and the campaign message reached 5.9 million people at least once, through radio spots, transit messages and billboards. The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration participated in 2002, in order to spread its message about aggressive driving around trucks, buses and commercial vehicles. The Maryland Transportation Authority also joined the team and sponsored billboards for the program and the distribution of Smooth Operator materials at tollbooths.

Results show that the Smooth Operator program is working – and it's the only proven, long-term solution to aggressive driving we have in the Washington, DC metro area.

DRIVER IMPROVEMENT

Aggression specialist, Steven Stosny, Ph.D., was invited to join the Smooth Operator Task Force in 1998 to head its driver improvement committee. The challenge was to develop an intervention program for aggressive driving offenders that could be duplicated throughout the area. His intention was to adapt methods that had proven successful in reducing aggression in homes, schools and workplaces to a curriculum for offenders.

The result was the Smooth Operator course for driver empowerment. The strategy is a 6-hour stand alone or supplement to other driver improvement courses. The curriculum helps aggressive drivers build a conditioned response to regulate aggressive impulses automatically.

Smooth Operator & Driver Empowerment

A pilot of the program was successfully tested in Arlington in 2000. The Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration then scheduled a full-scale study. But that investigation proved unnecessary once the MVA examined the driving records of past graduates of Dr. Stosny's intervention for family violence.

The MVA analysis showed a link between domestic abuse and aggressive driving. Two-thirds of those ordered into treatment for family violence also had multiple aggressive driving convictions in the year before treatment. Also, the Smooth Operator approach reduced the number of people convicted of red light and stop sign running, tailgating, and unsafe lane changes from 312 the year before to 7 the year after treatment. (The same intervention eliminated physical abuse in 86% of the cases, based on victim reports and court records.) The 98% reduction in violations was three times better than standard driver improvement programs throughout the state, even though the family abuse program never addressed driving.

“A seamless stream of resentment and latent aggression goes back and forth from home to the road to work or school,” explains Dr. Stosny. “We can prevent a lot of family abuse and, at the same time, help people work better, just by teaching them to drive with self-value and respect, which requires value and respect of others.”



EVALUATION

An evaluation commissioned by the Smooth Operator participants is not the only study done on the Smooth Operator program and the aggressive driving problem in the Washington, DC metro area.

A Smooth Operator Awareness Study was conducted by WR&A Market Research in 2002. Findings included that respondents consider aggressive driving to be a critical highway safety issue. Support for increased police enforcement, higher fines and penalties and red light cameras was validated.

Smooth Operator Task Force member Dr. Samir Fakhry of Inova Fairfax Hospital has also given expert testimony to legislative bodies regarding the impact of aggressive driving and the severity of crash injuries. He and Kathy Salaita, Sc.D., authored "Aggressive Driving: A Preliminary Analysis of a Serious Threat to Motorists in a Large Metropolitan Area" which was published in February 2002 in *The Journal of Trauma Injury, Infection, and Critical Care*, 52(2) 217-224.

Inova also presented a poster, "Working Towards Primary Injury Prevention: A Highway Based Evaluation of Aggressive Driving in a Large Metropolitan Region" at the 61st meeting of the American Association for the Surgery of Trauma in September 2002 in Orlando, Florida.

SMOOTH OPERATOR WORKS

The Smooth Operator program is delivering successful solutions to the aggressive driving problem. Careful evaluation of pre- and post-campaign results over the past three years shows that the program works. It has increased public awareness of aggressive driving issues and law enforcement efforts.

As long term evaluation of campaigns for seat belt usage and anti-drunk driving has clearly shown, public education combined with enforcement is a proven deterrent and a force for behavioral change.

LOOKING FORWARD

Aggressive driving is a long-term problem, and will be with us for some time to come:

- Area congestion is the fourth-worst in the nation according to authorities – and will only get worse in the future.
- According to studies, demand on our roads will increase 40% by 2020 – but road capacity will increase only 9%.
- The Washington, DC metro area is expected to grow by 1.4 million people (25%) with a million new jobs by 2020.
- More than half of all workers in the Washington, DC metro area now commute to jobs in jurisdictions other than where they live.

Making aggressive driving socially unacceptable will reduce it, but this will take time. The Smooth Operator program is moving in the right direction.

In the future, the program will continue to raise public awareness of the dangers of aggressive driving. The program will also work to make aggressive driving a higher priority on social, political, legal, and judicial agendas. It will ensure that the police enforce aggressive driving laws, that prosecutors persistently charge violators, and that judges convict and sentence offenders. The Smooth Operator program is a cooperative effort spreading the word and providing leadership and support to end aggressive driving on our roadways.



SMOOTH OPERATOR 2002

Funding Organizations:

District of Columbia, District Department of Transportation
Maryland State Highway Administration, Highway Safety Office
Metropolitan Police Department
Commonwealth of Virginia, Department of Motor Vehicles
Maryland Transportation Authority

Participating Organizations:

AAA Mid-Atlantic
Commonwealth of Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles
CompassionPower
District of Columbia, Department of Motor Vehicles
District of Columbia, District Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration
Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration
George Washington University Hospital
Governors Highway Safety Association
Inova Fairfax Hospital
Maryland Department of Transportation
Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration
Maryland Public Television's MotorWeek
Maryland State Highway Administration, Highway Safety Office
Maryland Transportation Authority
Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
National Center for State Courts
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
Network of Employers for Traffic Safety
Virginia Department of Transportation
Washington Redskins

Participating Law Enforcement Agencies:

Aberdeen Police Department
Alexandria City Police Department
Annapolis Police Department
Anne Arundel County Police Department
Arlington County Police Department
Arlington County Sheriff's Office
Baltimore City Police Department
Baltimore County Police Department
Berlin Police Department
Capital Heights Police
Carroll County Sheriff's Office
Cheverly Police
Chevy Chase Village Police Department
Fairfax County Police Department
Fairfax County Sheriff's Office
City of Fairfax Police Department
City of Falls Church Police Department
City of Falls Church Sheriff's Office
Fort Myers Police Department
Gaithersburg Police Department
Greenbelt Police Department
Hampstead Police Department
Harford County Sheriff's Office
Town of Herndon Police Department
Howard County Police Department
Laurel City Police
Loudoun County Sheriff's Office
City of Manassas Police Department
Manassas National Battlefield Park Rangers
Manchester Police
Maryland State Police
Maryland-National Capital Park Police
Maryland Transportation Authority Police
Metropolitan Police Department
Montgomery County Police Department
Ocean City Police Department
Prince George's County Police Department
Prince William County Police Department
Snow Hill Police Department
Spotsylvania County Sheriff's Office
Stafford County Sheriff's Office
Sykesville Police Department
Taneytown Police Department
United States Park Police
University of Maryland Baltimore City Police
Town of Vienna Police Department
Virginia State Police Department
Westminster Police Department
Worcester County Sheriff's Office



We're Getting Tough On Aggressive Drivers!

District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia