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# ANNUAL REPORT

## and Campaign Summary

**T**his is the fifth in a series of annual reports outlining the Smooth Operator program’s efforts to reduce aggressive driving in the District of Columbia, Maryland and Northern Virginia. This report describes the 2004 Smooth Operator public education and awareness campaign and law enforcement activities. Where possible, information on this year’s program is compared and contrasted with the program last year.

Aggressive driving is a combination of unsafe and unlawful driving actions, which demonstrate a conscious and willful disregard for safety. It includes such offenses as speeding, tailgating, making unsafe lane changes, running red lights and stop signs, passing improperly and failing to yield the right of way.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration estimates that aggressive drivers are responsible for 2/3 of all highway fatalities and nearly 35 percent of all crashes. If these statistics are projected to the population of the District, Maryland and Northern Virginia, more than 1,000 area highway fatalities may be associated with aggressive driving behaviors.

Aggressive drivers are considered a serious threat on Washington area roads and highways. AAA Mid-Atlantic considers aggressive driving an epidemic in the Washington area. AAA Mid-Atlantic’s 2003 Transportation Poll concluded that 43 percent of area drivers are more worried about speeding, tailgating and darting across lanes – all considered aggressive driving behaviors – than about any other danger on the highways. Eighty-seven percent of those surveyed reported seeing aggressive driving so dangerous that they felt it threatened their lives.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) reports similar results. A NHTSA survey showed that more than 60 percent of drivers believe that unsafe driving by others is a major threat to themselves and their families.

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**Learn more about aggressive driving and the Smooth Operator Program at [www.smoothoperatorprogram.com](http://www.smoothoperatorprogram.com).**

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**S**mooth Operator is a unique public safety initiative and partnership of the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia. It's a coordinated, interstate program designed to combat the aggressive driving problem in these areas and find short- and long-term solutions to the problem.

The Smooth Operator program began in 1997, when 18 law enforcement agencies decided to launch four week-long enforcement waves in an effort to reduce aggressive driving on area roads and highways. Since then, Smooth Operator has expanded every year, as more agencies have become part of the team.

During the first three years of the program, nearly 200,000 citations for aggressive driving behavior were handed out to area motorists. Still, area officials felt that more needed to be done to raise motorists' awareness of the problem and find solutions to the aggressive driving problem.

**Congestion in the Washington area costs nearly \$2.3 billion and wastes 203 million gallons of fuel.**

**Congestion in the Baltimore area costs nearly \$1.1 billion and wastes 101 million gallons of fuel.**

A coalition of elected officials and representatives from government agencies, the private sector and law enforcement agencies from the District, Maryland and Northern Virginia met to design and implement a comprehensive program to reduce aggressive driving. They felt that motorists might be less inclined to drive aggressively if they knew more about the problem and its destructive consequences.

As a result, in 2000, a public awareness and education component was added to Smooth Operator. The campaign featured ordinary people who can become aggressive drivers. It stressed how aggressive driving will cost drivers penalties and points, as well as crashes, injuries and deaths.

Smooth Operator is effective, according to results of program evaluations conducted before and after each annual program. Each year, Smooth Operator's combination of public education and waves of law enforcement has been effective in increasing motorists' awareness of the problem and making area roads and highways safer for everyone.

### **TRAFFIC CONGESTION IS A GROWING PROBLEM IN THE WASHINGTON, D.C. AND BALTIMORE AREAS**

Traffic congestion encourages aggressive driving, as motorists speed, weave in and out of traffic, pass improperly and run red lights in an effort to arrive at their destinations more quickly. The effects of traffic congestion contribute to the aggressive driving problem in both the Washington, D.C. and Baltimore areas.

In its 2004 Urban Mobility Report, the Texas Transportation Institute concluded that traffic congestion continues to grow in American cities. Both the Washington, D.C. and Baltimore areas continue to experience significant traffic congestion during an increasing number of hours per day.

The Texas Transportation Institute reports that while the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area has the nation's ninth largest population, in 2002 it ranked third in annual delay per traveler during peak periods, behind Los Angeles and

San Francisco. Each Washington area motorist is delayed 67 hours per year during peak periods due to traffic congestion, and a trip that should take 30 minutes takes 45 minutes in the Washington area, a delay that ranks fourth in the nation. Congestion in the Washington area costs nearly \$2.3 billion and wastes 203 million gallons of fuel.



Congestion in the Baltimore metropolitan area is less severe than in Washington, but it is still a major problem. In 2002, congestion in the Baltimore area ranked 16th worst in the nation. Each motorist in the Baltimore area is delayed 48 hours per year during peak periods due to traffic congestion, and a trip that should take 30 minutes takes nearly 41 minutes, a delay that ranks 15th in the nation. Congestion in the Baltimore area costs nearly \$1.1 billion and wastes 101 million gallons of fuel.

Congestion in both metropolitan areas will only get worse. The demands on Washington area roads and highways are expected to increase by 40 percent by 2020, but road capacity will increase only 9 percent. The population of the Washington area is expected to increase by 25 percent, or 1.4 million people, during the same time period. The majority of these people will travel area roads and highways every day.

### THE GOALS OF THE 2004 SMOOTH OPERATOR PROGRAM WERE:

- ✓ Increase public awareness of aggressive driving behaviors and their destructive consequences around automobiles, trucks and buses.
- ✓ Support an intensive region-wide education and enforcement effort.
- ✓ Improve all drivers' behavior to reduce the incidence of aggressive driving through increased public awareness and education, in conjunction with increased law enforcement to reinforce the negative consequences of aggressive driving.
- ✓ Create a social climate that stigmatizes aggressive driving as a socially unacceptable behavior through public awareness, increased law enforcement, stiffer penalties for lawbreakers and behavioral intervention.

The primary target audience for the Smooth Operator program was all drivers in the District of Columbia, Maryland and Northern Virginia, including truck and bus drivers. Secondary target audiences included pedestrians, employers, day care providers, driver education providers, judicial agencies, law enforcement and tourists.

### LAW ENFORCEMENT EFFORTS TO REDUCE AGGRESSIVE DRIVING

Again this year, law enforcement agencies in the District, Northern Virginia and throughout the state of Maryland conducted four week-long waves of intensive law enforcement targeted at aggressive driving behaviors. The law enforcement waves were conducted: May 23 – May 29; June 20 – June 26; July 25 – July 31; and August 22 – August 29, 2004. As a result of law enforcement efforts during the four waves, nearly 267,000 citations and warnings were issued for a variety of offenses including aggressive driving related infractions. This is 12 percent more than the number of citations issued last year, and an increase of 38 percent more than the total number of citations issued during the first three years of the program. Since the inception of Smooth Operator's law enforcement efforts in 1997, more than 1.1 million citations and warnings have been issued. The drivers receiving these citations have gotten the Smooth Operator message the hard way.

The District, Maryland and Northern Virginia have been innovative in their efforts to enforce laws against aggressive driving behavior. They have used unmarked and non-traditional vehicles, such as Camaros and TransAms, to enhance their law enforcement presence on roads and highways. In-car video systems have been used to document aggressive driving violations and provide proof during resulting trials. Red light cameras have been used to reduce the number of vehicles running red lights. Automated speed enforcement has been used in the District to slow motorists down. Laser imaging, which uses lasers instead of radar, also has been used to detect speeding.

### PUBLIC AWARENESS AND EDUCATION CAMPAIGN

The overall theme for Smooth Operator's 2004 public awareness and education campaign was, "Aggressive Driving Is Contagious. Catch It – You're CAUGHT." The primary target audience for the campaign was adult drivers aged 18 to 49, with special emphasis on males during drive time and on females and caregivers during the carpool hours of 7 to 9 a.m. and 2 to 4 p.m.

Over the course of the Smooth Operator public awareness campaign, a total of 5,367 radio spots were aired, an increase of 1,045, or 24 percent.

The 2004 public awareness and education campaign was built on the awareness established by previous campaigns, and was successful.

### Media Advertising

Radio advertising was the primary vehicle used to communicate the Smooth Operator message, because it reached drivers in their vehicles. Two radio spots emphasized the message, "Aggressive driving is contagious, and if you catch it, you're going to get caught!" A third spot said, "Aggressive driving around trucks and buses is contagious, and if you catch it, you're going to get caught!" All of the spots were produced in both English and Spanish to reach the increasingly diverse population of the area.

Radio advertising ran in the Washington, D.C., Baltimore, Salisbury and Hagerstown markets during the following dates: May 5 to 19, June 13 to 26, July 18 to 31 and August 15 to 28. A variety of station formats were targeted, including all news, talk, country, young urban, Hispanic, classic rock, alternative rock and adult contemporary.

Over the course of the Smooth Operator public awareness campaign, a total of 5,367 radio spots were aired, an increase of 1,045, or 24 percent, over 2003 totals. In the Washington, D.C. market, a total of 1,907 spots were aired, with a net reach of 1,991,158. (Net reach: The total number of individuals who heard the message.) Nearly 85 percent of the target audience heard the message 20.2 times. In the

Baltimore market, 1,171 spots aired with a net reach of 942,577 – 77.4 percent of the target audience heard the message 15.8 times. Radio advertising in the Salisbury and Hagerstown markets was similarly effective.

Advertising on bus backs also were used as a supplement to the radio advertising. The ads ran on 135 buses over a three-month period, an increase of 12 buses, or 25 percent, over 2003 totals. Bus back ads had a net reach of 2,344,736 – 92 percent of the target audience saw the message 17.1 times.

One television spot aired with the message, “Aggressive driving is contagious, and if you catch it, you’re going to get caught!” Seventy spots were aired on cable television stations during four week-long periods with a net reach of 985,487. More than 49 percent of the target audience heard the message 1.7 times

A total of \$528,075.83 was spent on paid media advertising. In addition to the paid advertising, a total of \$141,983 in added value was provided by radio stations and bus companies for free.

All three radio spots and the television spot can be viewed at the Smooth Operator Program website, [www.smoothoperatorprogram.com](http://www.smoothoperatorprogram.com).

## Public Relations and Media Coverage

The 2004 Smooth Operator program was launched on Tuesday, May 18 at a news conference at the UPS facility in Burtonsville, Maryland. The focus of the news conference was on truck safety, emphasizing the danger of driving aggressively around large vehicles. Media were given the opportunity to participate in ride-alongs in two UPS tractor-trailers and in Maryland State Police cruisers and undercover Trans Ams.

The news conference resulted in more than 25 documented stories. Coverage included media in the Baltimore and Washington areas, WJLA-TV CH 7 (ABC), WRC-TV CH 4 (NBC), WUSA-TV CH 9 (CBS), WBFF-TV CH 45 (FOX), NewsChannel 8, Univision, The Washington Times, the Associated Press, WBAL radio, WTOF radio, WMAL radio and WAMU radio.

Media advisories were disseminated at the beginning of each law enforcement wave. Each

advisory focused on a different message about the dangers of aggressive driving.

The Smooth Operator message had a conservatively estimated reach of eight million media impressions, the equivalent of the entire population of the District, Maryland and Northern Virginia. Stories about Smooth Operator appeared throughout the Baltimore and Washington areas. Television coverage included multiple placements in both the Baltimore and Washington markets. At least 90 television stories and eight radio stories on Smooth Operator aired in both markets. Nine extensive articles and on-line stories ran in both markets. See details on page 7.

The earned media coverage for television, radio and print for the 2004 Smooth Operator campaign was \$373,350, up 77 percent from the \$210,000 total reached in 2003.

## Broadcast and Cable Coverage

### Washington, D.C. Television

- “Good Morning Washington” WJLA-TV CH 7 (ABC)  
May 18, 2004 5:00 - 6:00 am
- “News 4 Today” WRC-TV CH 4 (NBC)  
May 18, 2004 5:00 - 6:00 am
- “9 Eyewitness News This Morning”  
WUSA-TV CH 9 (CBS)  
May 18, 2004 5:00 - 6:00 am

- “Good Morning Washington” WJLA-TV CH 7 (ABC)  
May 18, 2004 6:00 - 7:00 am
- “News 4 Today” WRC-TV CH 4 (NBC)  
May 18, 2004 6:00 - 7:00 am
- “Local Cut-in” WJLA-TV CH 7 (ABC)  
May 18, 2004 7:55 - 8:00 am
- “Tuesday Report” NewsChannel 8 Local Cable  
May 18, 2004 8:30 - 9:00 am
- “Local Cut-in” WJLA-TV CH 7 (ABC)  
May 18, 2004 8:55 - 9:00 am
- “Local Cut-in” WRC-TV CH 4 (NBC)  
May 18, 2004 9:55 - 10:00 am
- “News 4 at 10:00” WRC-TV CH 4 (NBC)  
May 18, 2004 10:00 - 11:00 am
- “News At Noon” WJLA-TV CH 7 (ABC)  
May 18, 2004 12:00 - 12:30 pm
- “Tuesday Report” NewsChannel 8 Local Cable  
May 18, 2004 12:00 - 1:00 pm
- “ABC 7 News At 5” WJLA-TV CH 7 (ABC)  
May 18, 2004 5:00 - 6:00 pm
- “News 4 At 5:00” WRC-TV CH 4 (NBC)  
May 18, 2004 5:00 - 6:00 pm
- “News 4 At 6:00” WRC-TV CH 4 (NBC)  
May 18, 2004 6:00 - 7:00 pm
- “Live Talk” NewsChannel 8 Local Cable  
May 18, 2004 6:30 - 7:00 pm
- Univision  
May 18, 2004
- Metro Network News – News Director Jim Hawk interviewed Smooth Operator Law Enforcement Coordinator Thomas Gianni on June 23. Metro Networks News feeds news to approximately 50 radio stations in the greater Washington area.
- “Thursday Report” NewsChannel 8 Local Cable  
June 24, 2004 8:30 - 9:00 am
- “Primetime Report” NewsChannel 8 Local Cable  
June 24, 2004 9:00 - 9:30 pm
- “Washington Report” NewsChannel 8 Local Cable  
June 25, 2004 5:00 - 5:30 pm
- “ABC 7 News At 6” WJLA-TV CH 7 (ABC)  
June 25, 2004 6:00 - 6:30 pm
- “Washington Report” NewsChannel 8 Local Cable  
June 25, 2004 6:00 - 6:30 pm
- “Primetime Report” NewsChannel 8 Local Cable  
June 25, 2004 9:00 - 9:30 p
- “Fox5 Morning News” WTTG-TV CH 5 (FOX)  
July 26, 2004 5:30 - 6:30 am

The earned media coverage for television, radio and print for the 2004 Smooth Operator campaign was \$373,350, up 77 percent from the \$210,000 total reached in 2003.

- "Weekend Morning Report" NewsChannel 8 Local Cable  
June 26, 2004 7:00 - 7:30 am
- "Fox5 Morning News" WTTG-TV CH 5 (FOX)  
July 26, 2004 7:00 - 8:00 am
- "Weekend Midday Report" NewsChannel 8 Local Cable  
June 26, 2004 12:00 - 12:30 pm
- "Washington Report" NewsChannel 8 Local Cable  
July 26, 2004 5:00 - 5:30 pm
- "ABC 7 News At 5" WJLA-TV CH 7 (ABC)  
July 26, 2004 5:00 - 6:00 pm
- "Fox 5 News at 5" WTTG-TV CH 5 (FOX)  
July 26, 2004 5:00 - 6:00 pm
- "9 Eyewitness News At 5" WUSA-TV CH 9 (CBS)  
July 26, 2004 5:00 - 6:00 pm
- "Washington Report" NewsChannel 8 Local Cable  
July 26, 2004 6:00 - 6:30 pm
- "News 4 At 6:00" WRC-TV CH 4 (NBC)  
July 26, 2004 6:00 - 7:00 pm
- "9 Eyewitness News Tonight" WUSA-TV CH 9 (CBS)  
July 26, 2004 11:00 - 11:35 pm
- "9 Eyewitness News This Morning" WUSA-TV CH 9 (CBS)  
July 27, 2004 5:00 - 6:00 am
- "News 4 Today" WRC-TV CH 4 (NBC)  
July 27, 2004 6:00 - 7:00 am
- "Tuesday Report" NewsChannel 8 Local Cable  
July 27, 2004 8:30 - 9:00 am
- "News 4 At 10:00" WRC-TV CH 4 (NBC)  
July 27, 2004 10:00 - 11:00 am
- "ABC 7 News At 5" WJLA-TV CH 7 (ABC)  
July 29, 2004 5:00 - 6:00 pm
- "Primetime Report" NewsChannel 8 Local Cable  
August 20, 2004 9:00 - 9:30 pm
- "Latenight Report" NewsChannel 8 Local Cable  
August 20, 2004 10:00 - 10:30 pm
- "Latenight Report" NewsChannel 8 Local Cable  
August 20, 2004 10:30 - 11:00 pm
- "Latenight Report" NewsChannel 8 Local Cable  
August 21, 2004 6:00 - 6:30 am
- "Morning Report" NewsChannel 8 Local Cable  
August 21, 2004 7:00 - 7:30 am
- "Morning Report" NewsChannel 8 Local Cable  
August 21, 2004 7:30 - 8:00 am
- "Morning Report" NewsChannel 8 Local Cable  
August 21, 2004 9:00 - 9:30 am

- "Morning Report" NewsChannel 8 Local Cable  
August 21, 2004 11:00 - 11:30 am
- "Midday Report" NewsChannel 8 Local Cable  
August 21, 2004 12:00 - 12:30 pm
- "Midday Report" NewsChannel 8 Local Cable  
August 21, 2004 12:30 - 1:00 pm
- "Midday Report" NewsChannel 8 Local Cable  
August 21, 2004 1:30 - 2:00 pm
- "Midday Report" NewsChannel 8 Local Cable  
August 21, 2004 2:00 - 2:30 pm
- "Midday Report" NewsChannel 8 Local Cable  
August 21, 2004 3:00 - 3:30 pm
- "Washington Report" NewsChannel 8 Local Cable  
August 23, 2004 5:00 - 5:30 pm
- "Washington Report" NewsChannel 8 Local Cable  
August 23, 2004 5:30 - 6:00 pm
- "Washington Report" NewsChannel 8 Local Cable  
August 23, 2004 6:00 - 6:30 pm
- "Washington Report" NewsChannel 8 Local Cable  
August 23, 2004 6:30 - 7:00 pm
- "Maryland Report" NewsChannel 8 Local Cable  
August 23, 2004 7:00 - 7:30 pm
- "Zone Reports" NewsChannel 8 Local Cable  
August 23, 2004 7:30 - 8:00 pm
- "Morning Live" NewsChannel 8 Local Cable  
August 24, 2004 8:00 - 9:00 am

#### Washington, D.C. Radio

- "The Diane Rehm Show" National Syndicated Radio  
May 18, 2004 10:00 am - 12:00 pm
- "The Kojo Nnamdi Show" WAMU-FM (NPR)  
May 18, 2004 12:00 - 1:00 pm
- "The Kojo Nnamdi Show" WAMU-FM (NPR)  
May 18, 2004 1:00 - 2:00 pm
- WTOP (CBS)  
May 18, 2004 4:00 - 5:00 pm
- WMAL-AM Radio  
May 18, 2004
- WTOP (CBS)  
May 19, 2004 6:00 - 7:00 am
- "Washington Weekly Report" WJFK-AM Radio  
August 15, 2004
- WARW-FM Radio  
August 22, 2004
- "Sundays with Chli Amar" WRQX-FM Radio  
August 29, 2004

#### Baltimore Television

- "Fox 45 News At Ten" WBFF-TV CH 45 (FOX)  
May 18, 2004 10:00 - 11:00 pm
- "Fox 45 Late Edition" WBFF-TV CH 45 (FOX)  
May 18, 2004 11:00 - 11:30 pm
- "Fox 45 Late Edition" WBFF-TV CH 45 (FOX)  
June 22, 2004 11:00 - 11:30 pm
- "Fox 45 Morning News" WBFF-TV CH 45 (FOX)  
June 23, 2004 7:00 - 8:00 am
- "Fox 45 News At Ten" WBFF-TV CH 45 (FOX)  
June 23, 2004 10:00 - 11:00 pm
- "ABC2 News: Good Morning Maryland" WMAR-TV CH 2 (ABC)  
June 24, 2004 6:00 - 7:00 am
- "ABC2 News at 5:00" WMAR-TV CH 2 (ABC)  
June 24, 2004 5:00 - 5:30 pm
- "WB 54 News at 6:30" WNUV-TV CH 54 (WB)  
June 26, 2004 6:30 - 7:00 pm
- "Fox 45 News At Ten" WBFF-TV CH 45 (FOX)  
June 26, 2004 10:00 - 11:00 pm
- "Eyewitness News At 4" WJZ-TV CH 13 (CBS)  
July 26, 2004 4:00 - 5:00 pm
- "ABC2 News at 6:00" WMAR-TV CH 2 (ABC)  
July 26, 2004 6:00 - 6:30 pm
- "ABC2 News: Good Morning Maryland" WMAR-TV CH 2 (ABC)  
July 27, 2004 6:00 - 7:00 am
- "Fox 45 News At Ten" WBFF-TV CH 45 (FOX)  
July 27, 2004 10:00 - 11:00 pm
- "Fox 45 Late Edition" WBFF-TV CH 45 (FOX)  
July 27, 2004 11:00 - 11:30 pm
- "Fox 45 Morning News" WBFF-TV CH 45 (FOX)  
July 28, 2004 6:00 - 7:00 am
- "Fox 45 News At Ten" WBFF-TV CH 45 (FOX)  
August 26, 2004 10:00 - 11:00 pm
- "Fox 45 Morning News" WBFF-TV CH 45 (FOX)  
August 27, 2004 6:00 - 7:00 am

#### Baltimore Radio

- WBAL Radio, May 18, 2004

### Other Television

- "News 6 At 5:30" WTVR-TV (CBS)  
Richmond/Petersburg  
July 26, 2004 5:30 - 6:00 pm
- "News 6 At 11" WTVR-TV (CBS)  
Richmond/Petersburg  
July 26, 2004 11:00 - 11:35 pm
- "Fox 21 27 Ten O'Clock News" WFXR-TV CH 27  
(FOX) Roanoke/Lynchburg  
August 25, 2004 10:00 - 11:00 pm
- "MotorWeek" – MotorWeek's Consumer Reporter,  
Anjolette Crosby, had a truck ride-along on June  
24. The national PBS program is on hiatus right  
now, but they plan on running the story in the fall.

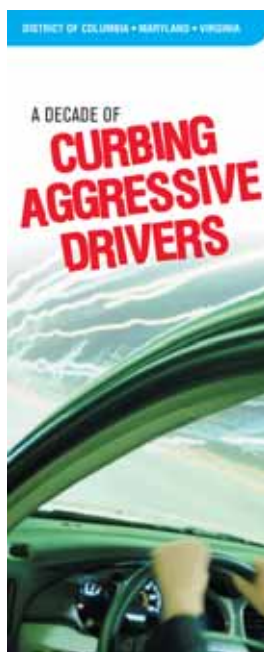
### Print/Online Coverage

- WJLA-TV CH 7 (ABC), Washington  
Local Police Have Their Eyes on Aggressive Drivers  
May 18, 2004
- WRC-TV CH 4 (NBC), Washington  
Police Begin 'Smooth Operator' Enforcement  
Program  
May 18, 2004
- The Washington Times  
Police Department Kicks Off "Smooth Operator"  
May 19, 2004
- Associated Press: WHSV-TV (ABC-3),  
WRC-TV (NBC-4), WJLA-TV (ABC-7)  
Police Targeting Aggressive Drivers this Week  
July 26, 2004
- WJZ-TV CH 13 (CBS), Baltimore  
'Smooth Operator' Targets Aggressive Drivers  
July 26, 2004
- WUSA-TV CH 9 (CBS), Washington  
'Smooth Operator' Aims to Put the Brakes on  
Aggressive Driving by Nancy Yamada  
July 27, 2004
- The Washington Times  
Drivers Getting Pressure to be Safe  
by Frank Petrigani  
July 30, 2004
- Northern Virginia Journal  
Police Attribute Lack of Major Accidents to  
Heavy Congestion  
by Drew Bush  
August 16, 2004
- Police Chief Magazine  
Greg Walker did a ride-along on June 24 with a  
Fairfax County police officer in one of their  
undercover Camaros.



### Brochures, Tip Cards and Posters

A total of 25,000 Smooth Operator brochures and 100,000 tip cards were printed and distributed to more than 100 participating agencies. More than 15,000 tip cards were requested by 27 Washington and Baltimore radio stations, who distributed them at station events, malls, county fairs, athletic events and concerts. In addition, 3,000 Smooth Operator posters were printed and distributed to participating agencies.



### Smooth Operator Website – [www.smoothoperatorprogram.com](http://www.smoothoperatorprogram.com)

During this year's campaign, a Smooth Operator program website was developed. It was created as an educational and informational tool for the program and the issue – aggressive driving. The site includes information about the Smooth Operator program, current news, research, resources and campaign materials and tips on how to stop aggressive driving.

### Smooth Operator Law Enforcement Awards Luncheon

An awards luncheon to honor law enforcement officers who participated in the 2004 Smooth Operator program was held on Thursday, October 28, 2004 at the University of Maryland Inn and Conference Center. Nearly 300 people attended the luncheon. Awards were presented to 185 officers, including four given posthumously to the families of officers killed in the line of duty. Speakers included Thomas Gianni, Smooth Operator Law Enforcement Program Coordinator for the Maryland State Highway Administration, Highway Safety Office; Assistant Chief Peter Newsham, Office of Professional Responsibility, Metropolitan Police Department; and Dr. Elizabeth Baker, Administrator, Mid-Atlantic Region of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

**All campaign materials and additional aggressive driving  
information is available at [www.smoothoperatorprogram.com](http://www.smoothoperatorprogram.com).**

### HIGHLIGHTS OF THE EVALUATION

- ✓ The Smooth Operator public awareness campaign was successful in raising awareness of aggressive driving behavior and police enforcement in both the Washington and Baltimore areas. The September survey showed that recognition of the Smooth Operator message increased 19 percentage points to 78 percent in the Washington area, while it increased 14 percentage points to 67 percent in the Baltimore area.
- ✓ Public awareness of the truck and bus message increased 11 percentage points between April and September in both markets.
- ✓ Although 63 percent of drivers had heard about police efforts to crack down on aggressive drivers, only 31 percent reported seeing police stop motorists.
- ✓ Drivers whipping in and out of traffic and speeding were observed by respondents to be the most dangerous aggressive driving behaviors.
- ✓ Among drivers who admit to driving aggressively, excessive speed, entering an intersection on a yellow light and speeding up to get through a light were the leading dangerous behaviors.
- ✓ While drivers observed that aggressive driving behaviors by people in personal vehicles were the most serious, awareness of speeding by trucks and buses increased 7 percentage points between April and September.
- ✓ Those surveyed reported strong and widespread support for the use of cameras and other technologies to catch aggressive drivers and those committing other violations.
- ✓ Motorists believed that aggressive drivers were more of a threat to them than terrorists.

### EVALUATION OF THE 2004 SMOOTH OPERATOR PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

Riter Research, Inc. of Easton, Maryland, conducted a telephone survey of licensed drivers between the age of 18 and 54 who lived in the Washington, Baltimore or Salisbury areas. The benchmark survey of 395 licensed drivers was conducted in April, before the beginning of the first public awareness campaign. A post-campaign survey of 403 licensed drivers from the same areas with the same demographics was conducted in late August and early September.

#### Survey Results

##### Campaign Awareness in DC Metro and Baltimore

Different budgeting levels in the DC Metro area and Baltimore translate into different results in each market. DC Metro and Baltimore are broken out separately in order to better evaluate the results.

##### Unaided Awareness of Public Service Messages

- ✓ The level of awareness of public service messages / advertising which address driving behavior / concerns increased between May and September.

Smooth Operator 2004 - DC Metro Market	May '04	Sept. '04	Change
Unaided recall of driving behavior messages			
% Who recall any messages about driving behavior	37%	48%	+11%

Smooth Operator 2004 - Baltimore Market	May '04	Sept. '04	Change
Unaided recall of driving behavior messages			
% Who recall any messages about driving behavior	30%	40%	+10%

##### Unaided Content Recall of Public Service Messages on Driving Behavior

- ✓ Respondents were asked what driving behavior messages they had seen or heard. Among those who recalled seeing or hearing any message, they were asked what the message was about. Between the pre and post measurements, the number of respondents who said "aggressive driving" increased significantly.

Smooth Operator 2004 - DC Metro Market	May '04	Sept. '04	Change
Unaided recall of driving behavior messages			
% Who recall messages about aggressive driving	38%	66%	+28%

Smooth Operator 2004 - Baltimore Market	May '04	Sept. '04	Change
Unaided recall of driving behavior messages			
% Who recall messages about aggressive driving	34%	52%	+18%

## Campaign Recognition

- Overall aided awareness for the Smooth Operator Campaign increased significantly in the Washington DC Metro area and Baltimore. Recall of any of the four messages and police efforts to crack down on aggressive drivers increased in both DC and Baltimore.

Smooth Operator 2004 - DC Metro Market	May '04	Sept. '04	Change
Aided recall of aggressive driving messages			
% Who recall message about office behavior relating to driving (TV spot)	15%	23%	+8%
% Who recall hearing child talking about aggressive driving (General radio spot)	16%	20%	+4%
% Who recall message about driving around trucks and buses (Commercial Vehicle radio spot)	18%	29%	+11%
% Who recall "Aggressive driving is contagious, catch it you're caught." (Slogan on all executions)	25%	47%	+22%

Smooth Operator 2004 - Baltimore Market	May '04	Sept. '04	Change
Aided recall of aggressive driving messages			
% Who recall message about office behavior relating to driving (TV spot DID NOT RUN IN BALTIMORE)	NA	NA	
% Who recall hearing child talking about aggressive driving (General radio spot)	10%	18%	+8%
% Who recall message about driving around trucks and buses (Commercial Vehicle radio spot)	14%	24%	+10%
% Who recall "Aggressive driving is contagious, catch it you're caught." (Slogan on all executions)	19%	38%	+19%

## Aided Content Recall of Messages on Aggressive Driving

- Motorists were read advertising scripts and message descriptions and asked if they recalled hearing and/or seeing one message on aggressive driving.

Smooth Operator 2004 - DC Metro Market	May '04	Sept. '04	Change
Aided recall of campaign			
% Who recall messages about aggressive driving	59%	78%	+19%

Smooth Operator 2004 - Baltimore Market	May '04	Sept. '04	Change
Aided recall of campaign			
% Who recall messages about aggressive driving	53%	67%	+14%

## Heard About Police Efforts

- Between April and September, the public was more aware about police efforts to crackdown on aggressive driving through news stories and advertising.

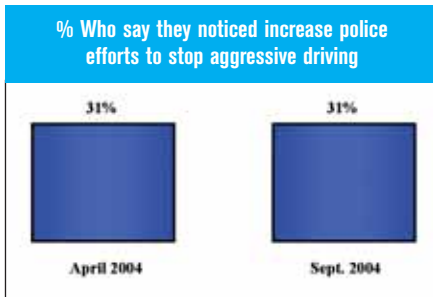
Smooth Operator 2004 - DC Metro Market	May '04	Sept. '04	Change
Aggressive driving enforcement messages			
% Who recall message about police efforts to crackdown on aggressive driving (PR and paid media)	56%	63%	+7%

Smooth Operator 2004 - Baltimore Market	May '04	Sept. '04	Change
Aggressive driving enforcement messages			
% Who recall message about police efforts to crackdown on aggressive driving (PR and paid media)	48%	63%	+15%

## SURVEY RESULTS FOR ALL MARKETS COMBINED

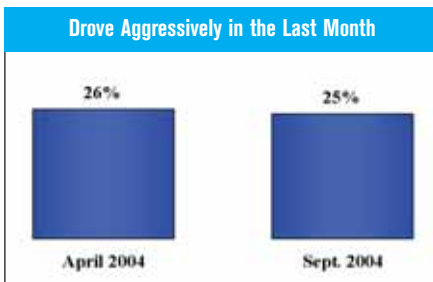
### Noticed Police Enforcement

- While driver heard about police efforts to crackdown on aggressive drivers, this did not translate to increased observations of police 'stepped up efforts' to stop aggressive driving.



### Aggressive Drivers

- Most motorists do not see themselves as driving aggressively during the past 30 days in spite of the observations that nearly all drivers report they violated at least one or more traffic violations (speeding, tailgating, cutting in front of another car, etc.) that define aggressive driving.



### Aggressive Driving in Area

- Motorists do not see aggressive driving in the area to be improving.

AGGRESSIVE DRIVING IN AREA		
	April 2004	Sept. 2004
Better	5%	7%
Same	54	46*
Worse	39	44*

### Serious Problems Facing Motorists

Drivers generally identify personal vehicles to be a more serious problem than commercial vehicles. Out of 16 unsafe driving behavior, the top 11 concerns all involve personal vehicles.

- Between April and September 2004, there were five (5) areas that drivers report driving behavior declining, specifically:

RATED 'EXTREMELY' / 'VERY SERIOUS' PROBLEM		
	April 2004	Sept. 2004
Drivers who whip in and out of lanes to get ahead	62%	68%*
Use of cell phones by drivers	65	64
Drivers who show disregard for anyone else on the road	56	61
Speeding by personal vehicles	54	63*
Aggressive driving by personal vehicles	57	58
Drivers who change lanes without signaling	55	53
Drivers of personal vehicles who tailgate	48	54*
Drivers who run red lights / stop signs	50	49
Drivers in personal vehicles who drive aggressively around trucks	46	50
Drunk drivers	47	48
Motorcyclists who weave in/out of lanes to get ahead	35	45*
Speeding by trucks and buses	33	40*
Tailgating by trucks / buses	33	36
Unsafe street crossing by pedestrians	34	34
Aggressive driving by trucks / buses	33	35
Cars / motorcycles who cannot see because of a blind spots	29	31

- Drivers who whip in and out of lanes to get ahead (62% to 68%)
- Speeding by personal vehicles (54% to 63%)
- Driving of personal vehicles who tailgate (48% to 54%)
- Motorcyclists who weave in and out of lanes to get ahead (35% to 45%)
- Speeding by trucks and buses (35% to 40%)

### Serious Problems Facing Motorists Enforcement Using Cameras and Other Technologies

- Since 2003, there continues to be public support to use video cameras and other technologies to catch aggressive drivers. The use of technologies for enforcement of other violations was unchanged.
- The vast majority of motorists support the use of cameras and other technologies to catch (a) aggressive drivers, (b) speeders, and (c) drivers who run red lights / stop signs. In contrast, motorists in the survey are divided on the use cameras to catch seatbelt violators.

USE OF TECHNOLOGY		
	2003	2004
Red lights/ Stop signs	74%	74%
Aggressive Drivers	74%	64%
Speeders	65%	62%
Seatbelts	51%	50%

### Driving Behavior

- Motorists report driving behavior to be unchanged in 9 out of 10 categories. The only notable change that drivers reported were that they were more apt to 'speed up' to make a light.

### What is Feared the Most... Aggressive Drivers or Terrorism

Three out of four motorists say they consider aggressive drivers to represent a greater danger to them than terrorists; this is unchanged over the past 12 months.

SELF DRIVING BEHAVIOR OF MOTORISTS DURING PAST MONTH		
	April 2004	Sept. 2004
Exceed the speed limit by at least 10 miles per hour to get somewhere	54%	57%
Enter an intersection after the light turned yellow	52	58
Speed up to make a light	44	51*
Drive at least 15 miles over the speed limit where speed limit was 55 or more	31	31
Drive in a way someone might call aggressive driving	26	26
Refuse to let someone merge into traffic	13	16
Tailgate another vehicle	10	10
Cut in front of another car	9	10
Drive through a red light	5	6
Drive on the shoulder to pass	5	5

## SPONSORING ORGANIZATIONS

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

## PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS

- AAA Mid-Atlantic
- CompassionPower
- Federal Highway Administration
- Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration
- Insurance Institute for Highway Safety
- Inova Fairfax Hospital
- Maryland Department of Transportation
- National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
- Virginia Department of Transportation

## PARTICIPATING LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

- Aberdeen Police Department
- Alexandria Police Department
- Allegany County Sheriff's Office
- 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
- Bel Air Police Department
- Berlin Police Department
- Calvert County Sheriff's Office
- Cambridge Police Department
- Carroll County Sheriff's Office
- Cecil County Sheriff's Office
- Charles County Sheriff's Office
- Chevy Chase Village Police Department
- Crisfield Police Department
- Cumberland Police Department
- Denton Police Department
- Town of Dumfries Police Department
- Easton Police Department
- Edmondston Police Department
- Elkton Police Department
- Fairfax County Police Department
- Fairfax County Sheriff's Office
- Fairfax City Police Department
- Falls Church City Police Department
- Falls Church Sheriff's Office
- Fairmont Heights Police Department
- Fort Myers Military Police
- Frederick City Police Department
- Frederick County Sheriff's Office
- Fruitland Police Department
- Gaithersburg Police Department
- Garrett County Sheriff's Office
- Greenbelt Police Department
- Hagerstown Police Department
- Hampstead Police Department
- Harford County Sheriff's Office
- Havre de Grace Police Department
- Town of Herndon Police Department
- Howard County Police Department
- Hurlock Police Department
- Kent County Sheriff's Office
- Laurel Police Department
- Loudoun County Sheriff's Office
- Manassas City Police Department
- Manassas National Battlefield Park Police
- Maryland State Police
- Maryland Natural Resources Police Department
- Maryland Transportation Authority Police Department
- Metropolitan Police Department
- Montgomery County Police Department
- Ocean City Police Department
- Ocean Pines Police Department
- Pentagon Police Department
- Pocomoke City Police Department
- Prince George's County Police Department
- Prince William County Police Department
- Queen Anne's County Sheriff's Office
- Ridgely Police Department
- Rock Hall Police Department
- Salisbury Police Department
- Smithsburg Police Department
- St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office
- Spotsylvania County Police Department
- Stafford County Sheriff's Office
- Sykesville Police Department
- Talbot County Sheriff's Office
- Thurmont Police Department
- University Park Police
- United States Park Police
- Vienna Police Department
- Virginia State Police Department
- Washington County Sheriff's Office
- Westminster Police Department
- Wicomico County Sheriff's Office
- Worcester County Sheriff's Office