STEP 77 TRAFFIC INITIATIVE

Capt. Jim McGann
What is STEP 77?

**Sheriff's Targeted Enforcement Project 77** – Radio Signal Code for Traffic Offense
UPD has 64 deputies (13 of which are supervisory) tasked with patrol of 1,000-plus square miles and serving 100,000-plus residents.

UPD budget is $4,535,438 with only $180,000 allotted for overtime.

In 2017, UPD answered 88,482 calls for service – 3,671 of them were traffic crashes, 2,330 were traffic complaints and 11,328 were deputy initiated traffic contacts. (19% of workload dedicated to traffic)

In 2018, UPD answered 86,609 calls for service – 3,593 of them were traffic crashes, 2,071 were traffic complaints and 13,785 were deputy initiated traffic contacts. (22% of workload dedicated to traffic)
UPD Command Staff utilized the SARA (Scan, Analyze, Respond, Assess) process and established problem solving policing principles, in an effort to reduce traffic crashes and related events. Additionally, staff partnered with locally based advocates committed to highway safety and the Sheriff’s Office chaired the newly formed Community Traffic Safety Team.
Traffic crash data from October 4, 2017 through March 31, 2018 was extracted and critically analyzed in detail giving consideration to:

- High incidence crash intersections
- Law enforcement contacts
- Traffic fatalities
- Calls for service related to traffic incidents
Targeted Intersections

- US 27 and 98/66, including S. George Blvd. (Sebring)
- US 27 and SNL Blvd. /Valerie Blvd. including Ponce De Leon/Tanglewood (Sebring)
- US 27 and SR 64 (Avon Park)
- US 27 and Thunderbird Rd. (Sebring)
- US 27 and New Life Way/Bayview St. (Sebring)
- US 27 and Hal McRae including Marble (Avon Park)
- US 27 and College Drive (Avon Park)
- US 27 and Lake Josephine Drive (Sebring)
- US 27 and Stryker Rd. including Shop 16 (Avon Park)
Strategy

- Division-wide participation with an increased emphasis at directed patrols in high-incidence traffic crash locations.
- Four-hour directed traffic enforcement overtime details scheduled twice weekly at these locations.
- Unoccupied marked patrol cars strategically positioned throughout the county.
- Utilization of locally based highway safety advocates (CTST).
- Supervisory accountability for the operational implementation of reduction efforts.
Results: Overview

- **20.4%** reduction in traffic crashes overall.
- **33%** decrease in traffic fatalities in targeted enforcement areas.
- **8%** increase in traffic stops compared to the same time period in 2017-2018.
- **44%** increase in citations compared to the same time period in 2017-2018.

*Note: Data from Sebring and Lake Placid Police Department jurisdictions excluded from results.*
Results: Traffic Contacts Increased

2017-2018 Traffic Contacts
- 1,366 citations
- 2,355 written warnings
- 2,807 verbal warnings
- 65 DUIs
- 6,593 Total

2017-2018 Traffic Contacts
- 2,326 citations
- 3,085 written warnings
- 1,649 verbal warnings
- 30 DUIs
- 7,090 Total
Results: Crashes Decreased

Crash Reduction by Intersections

- US 27 & 98/66 – 36%
- US 27 & Valerie/SNL – 25%
- US 27 & SR 64 – 25%
- US 27 & Thunderbird – 50%
- US 27 & New Life Way – 36%
- US 27 & Hal McRae – 29%
- US 27 & College Drive – 25%
- US 27 & Lake Josephine – 0%
- US 27 & Stryker/Walmart – 30%

39% decrease in crashes at targeted intersections
In an effort at objective comparison and to ensure the traffic crash reduction was not due to regional trends, staff analyzed crash data from Desoto County Sheriff’s Office, Florida Highway Patrol Troop F (the troop responsible for Highlands County), Polk County Sheriff’s Office, and Sebring Police Department over the same time period:

- DeSoto County Sheriff – 76% increase in crashes
- Polk County Sheriff (has full-time traffic unit) – .3% increase in crashes
- Hardee County Sheriff – 12.5% decrease in crashes
- Sebring Police Department – 6% increase in crashes
- FHP Troop F – 13% decrease in crashes
Questions?