



# The 24/7 Initiative

## A New Direction

The Ohio State Highway Patrol will celebrate its 75th Anniversary in 2008 with a new operational direction for how the organization will achieve success in traffic safety, and show value in striving to make Ohio communities a safe place for families and businesses to thrive.

The new direction, called **LifeStat: The 24/7 Initiative**, in many ways continues to strategically and operationally return the Highway Patrol to its fundamental beliefs. For nearly three-quarters of a century of service to the citizens of Ohio, and for those who use our state's roads every day, the Ohio State Highway Patrol's goal has not changed.

From those first patrolmen who rolled out of Camp Perry on their motorcycles on November 15, 1933, to today's trooper, the main goal of every Ohio State Highway Patrol employee has been, and continues to be, the reduction of death and injury on Ohio roadways through professional traffic enforcement and education.

Recently Colonel Richard H. Collins, Patrol superintendent, sat down with staff from the Flying Wheel to talk about LifeStat: The 24/7 Initiative, and his vision for the Highway Patrol into the future.



## 24/7 Initiative

**Flying Wheel:** What is LifeStat: The 24/7 Initiative?

**Colonel Collins:** The Ohio State Highway Patrol's LifeStat: The 24/7 Initiative provides a holistic view of the efforts, challenges, and accomplishments of the Division for every hour of every day. The goal of the 24/7 Initiative is to reduce serious traffic crashes and apprehend the criminal element through high-visibility, aggressive traffic enforcement and increased public awareness through the use of the media. The "24/7" moniker lets our people and the public know that we are always working to be the best we can be – 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year.

**FW:** How is LifeStat: The 24/7 Initiative different from LifeStat 1.0?

**Collins:** The 24/7 Initiative broadens the scope of the challenges and responsibilities we are facing as an agency. LifeStat 1.0 focused exclusively on the statewide reduction of traffic fatalities based on vehicle miles traveled, or VMT. The new program provides a traffic safety goal based on the past three-year average, which is both easier to explain and understand. Unlike LifeStat 1.0, the 24/7 Initiative is built to embrace criminal enforcement that results from our traffic safety programs, adding value to what troopers do every day. Also, the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system will be utilized to its fullest potential for the first time and dispatchers will be directly related to the overall success of our efforts.

**FW:** How is LifeStat: The 24/7 Initiative the same as LifeStat 1.0?

**Collins:** First, let me say that the 24/7 Initiative maintains our focus on making Ohio roads the safest possible for travel. That part of the equation does not change. What the 24/7 Initiative does is continues our long-standing philosophy of "looking beyond the traffic stop" to apprehend the criminal element on Ohio roads. We are going to combine focused traffic safety results and criminal patrol success to show the public the value our agency has in keeping Ohio safe.

**FW:** What are the significant changes being brought to the Patrol with LifeStat: The 24/7 Initiative?

**Collins:** The most obvious thing people will see is we are changing the traffic fatality goal to a four-year, 10 percent reduction by the end of 2011. As far as other changes that I think are going to make a difference, we are increasing the emphasis of criminal patrol activity, reducing case and recap paperwork, and are going to have a greater reliance on CAD data entries to support analysis and geo-mapping of traffic and criminal patrol activity.

**FW:** What are the three main modules associated with LifeStat: The 24/7 Initiative?

**Collins:** We have broken this new initiative into modules for Traffic Safety, Criminal Patrol, and Real Time Accountability for Increased Value. Also, I want to point out that Operational Dispatching is going to be integral to our success in LifeStat: The 24/7 Initiative, and there are some things I would like to say specifically about this topic when we finish discussing each of the three modules.

## Traffic Safety Module

**FW:** What is the new traffic safety goal as part of LifeStat: The 24/7 Initiative?

**Collins:** Let me first say that our ultimate goal in the Ohio State Highway Patrol is not new. Foremost, we should be working every day to reduce serious traffic crashes on Ohio roads. Now, we have a new way to measure our success toward achieving that goal, which is a four-year, 10 percent traffic fatality reduction in Ohio by the end of 2011. Our new direction for traffic safety replaces the existing fatality goal that was tied directly to the number of vehicle miles driven in the state.

**FW:** What are the benefits of the new traffic safety goal?

**Collins:** The new goal is finite, and assures that every employee is focused on his or her primary duty of reducing traffic-related deaths in Ohio. The 10 percent reduction in traffic fatalities by the end of 2011 provides clarity and assures we are moving forward in reducing traffic-related deaths in the state. In the past, minor adjustments needed to be made due to the lag in the reporting of vehicle miles traveled. The new goal assures a more timely resolution in reporting progress.

I think there was some confusion and frustration with the original LifeStat 1.0 goal because it was tied directly to the number of vehicle miles driven in a given area. This goal often appeared unattainable in some smaller, rural counties

in the state. By basing the revised goal on the District three-year average, a fairer and balanced distribution of the proposed reductions in traffic fatalities is established.

I also want to note that District staff is being given an unprecedented level of flexibility and tools to reach the goals, with an increased emphasis on local-level solutions to meet the fatality reductions set forth by the Division.

**FW:** What resources are available to field commanders and personnel through the Office of Strategic Services to aid in reaching the new traffic safety goal?

**Collins:** Over the last several years, the Office of Strategic Services has provided an increased number of products to assist the field in the prevention of traffic crashes. OSS staff will continue to provide support through GIS mapping, statistical analysis, research, and media relations. District and Post commanders are encouraged to contact OSS for assistance in developing new initiatives to increase traffic safety in their jurisdictions.

**FW:** What is the value of the Traffic Safety Module that you want Patrol personnel to understand?

**Collins:** The Traffic Safety Module provides a more holistic understanding of the job of the Ohio State Highway Patrol and assures that traffic safety remains at the forefront of our mission. The module provides a clear, absolute goal for each employee to work towards, and assures that the entire agency remains focused on reducing traffic-related deaths in all areas of the state.



### Criminal Patrol Module

**FW:** What is the criminal patrol goal as part of the LifeStat 24/7 Initiative?

**Collins:** We are going to utilize our effective traffic enforcement to apprehend criminals on Ohio roads. The Criminal Patrol Module provides an avenue for us to report successes associated with identifying and apprehending criminals. The ability to analyze and capture all the illegal activity is a major challenge for the Patrol, but improvements in data collection will benefit both our field operations and investigative services functions. These improvements will allow us to effectively communicate all the popular yet under-reported services that are being provided to the citizens of the state.

**FW:** How do you expect this goal will be achieved?

**Collins:** The Criminal Patrol Module requires improvements in data capture in both our CAD and Records Information Management System (RIMS). Some minor adjustments in reporting will allow us to capture vital information which will help improve operations and allow us to communicate our successes more effectively to the public.

Over the last several years, location-based information has improved our ability to target high crash areas of the state through improved data capturing and the introduction of GIS mapping. In 2006, these resources along with the incredible efforts of our troopers culminated in the safest Ohio roads in the past 70 years.

Similar to our increased ability to identify high crash areas more effectively, the introduction of location-based criminal information will assist us in aggressively pursuing areas of increased illegal activity. While we have successfully utilized a limited number of short-term Multi-Agency Police Saturations to increase traffic safety and maximize criminal patrol operations in areas of the state, the ability to geo-locate all our criminal arrests will assist us in criminal enforcement efforts. Troopers, during routine patrols, will now have the ability and emphasis to more effectively focus on Ohio roads that are utilized by criminals.

**FW:** What specific improvements are related to the CAD system?

**Collins:** We are improving our data capture capabilities. Through the improvement of data capture in the CAD system, we can move away from the traditional "pen and paper" data collection and reporting systems for specific areas within Patrol operations.

The fundamental basis for the collection of all Patrol activity is quickly moving towards the CAD system. Every CAD entry will have a unique incident number that references all of the activities associated with a particular event.

We are also using the location-based information captured by the CAD incident numbers for showing Signal 75 (Felony Warrants) and Signal 76 (Misdemeanor Warrants) dispositions, criminal activity entered via CAD ORC field which helps standardize specific enforcement recaps.



**FW:** What new resource information will be available to support the Criminal Patrol Module?

**Collins:** As with any new initiative, we plan to disperse quality information to the field for use as tools to increase our success. We are looking to develop a 24/7 report, similar to the LifeStat weekly reports, that provides succinct and poignant snapshots of both information and intelligence usable by the field.

We want to recap significant stolen vehicle arrests by Troopers, and also provide brief descriptions of the techniques utilized to recover stolen vehicles. Hopefully this will act as a motivational tool to reignite our Blue Max program. I think this information can be combined with LEADS generated hot sheet information of stolen vehicles by county to provide timely, useful information to the field.

We can also include brief search and seizure updates, hidden compartment techniques or any other pertinent information that is specific and relative to the changing criminal behavior patterns in the state. This information is important because most of the homicides that the larger cities are asking for help with are committed with weapons smuggled in to their cities via the interstates from other areas of the country.

**FW:** What is the value of the Criminal Patrol Module that you want Patrol personnel to understand?

**Collins:** The Criminal Patrol Module is going to bring some basic changes in the capturing of data to help improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our Troopers. By utilizing the CAD Incident Number across a number of different platforms,

we will be able to include more spatial analysis of crime patterns as they unfold across the state.

Improvements in data collection in both RIMS and CAD will help OSS and other GHQ Units provide more useful products to the field as well as the media. We are also committed to providing more resource information that I believe will help reinvigorate Troopers in the field towards LifeStat: The 24/7 Initiative as well as expand the criminal patrol program to allow felony warrant apprehensions to be quantified.

I really believe the Criminal Patrol Module provides an opportunity to expand the reporting of Patrol successes related to stopping the criminals on Ohio roads.

## Real Time Accountability & Increased Value Module

**FW:** What is the real time accountability and increased value goal as part of LifeStat: The 24/7 Initiative?

**Collins:** We are going to reduce the time spent on redundant and archaic data reporting systems. I hope that comes as welcomed news to our people all across the state.

In an effort to reduce our redundant data reporting systems, this module focuses on improving time management through more efficient operating principles.

I know a significant amount of resources are currently used on administrative paperwork.



## **24/7 Initiative**

This module is designed to increase productivity by eliminating unnecessary reporting tasks. The ability to streamline current operations will allow for more time to be spent improving traffic safety and eliminating the criminal offenders from Ohio roads.

**FW:** How do you expect this goal will be achieved?

**Collins:** Through accurate collection of data using available technologies, a Trooper's valuable time can be better spent on proactive law enforcement activities. CAD was designed with the premise that it would be a centralized point of information that is "live linked" to officer activity for safety, service and speed. There is an under-used capability to gather more information in our cars on the MCT and via dispatchers in lieu of performing time consuming tasks.

We are eliminating some activity recaps, and some misdemeanor cases all together. Let me list for you what we are eliminating. The paper HP-17 Activity Recap, paper Holiday Recap, 48-Hour Tow / Vehicle Impoundment Cases, Minor Misdemeanor Drug Cases, Misdemeanor and Felony Warrant Cases, Misdemeanor Drug Paraphernalia Cases, and Misdemeanor Open Container Cases.

**FW:** What new training is going to occur to ensure data is entered consistently?

**Collins:** Training is going to be key to ensure that the data gets entered in a consistent method so it can be used during statistical analysis. We will provide training to ensure uniform data entry. This proactive investment in our human resources will be a testament to our capabilities when an analysis is computed.

There will be instruction provided at Trooper and Sergeant In-Service for review of the data capture within the MCT and how their work helps every aspect of the Patrol's growth, justification, and public value. Dispatchers also will be trained on the new data capturing nuances to ensure a good check and balance between the Troopers and the collection point in CAD.

**FW:** What is it about the Real Time Accountability and Increased Value Module that you want Patrol personnel to understand?

**Collins:** The main thing we are going to be able to do with this module is establish the total accountability of the work that our agency does, which we could not really quantify through our old methods. We have taken an inventory of the numerous tools available to our current operations, and looked for ways we can use those tools more effectively. I am confident that by implementing the changes we have in mind we can save Troopers a lot of time as well as increase the quality of our services. I hope the changes we are making to the holiday recap and minor misdemeanor cases will come as terrific news to our field personnel.

Once again, I want to emphasize the CAD, and correct data entry into CAD, are the keys to our success. Our use of the CAD and location based information paints a clear picture of the Highway Patrol value. We are creating the best environment possible for the field so that motivation and productivity run high, which means we are saving time and creating value by instilling a future philosophy of technology that is built on our traditional foundation.

I also want to say that by capturing all of the

criminal information we are providing services statewide to Ohioans that are not provided by any other agency, and through the hard work of our Troopers we will be able to paint a picture for the media, legislature, and general public of how the Ohio State Highway Patrol helps secure safety both directly and indirectly through the services that we provide.

## Operational Dispatching

**FW:** You mentioned at the beginning that you wanted to talk about Operational Dispatching. What is Operational Dispatching?

**Collins:** Operational Dispatching is a realignment of dispatching resources to maximize the use of our personnel, equipment, and communications operations. Personnel are not being eliminated, but rather shifted into a larger work group of dispatchers to ensure proper coverage, better working conditions, and to avoid duplication of efforts.

**FW:** What are the benefits of Operational Dispatching from conventional dispatching at each post?

**Collins:** One of the benefits with Operational Dispatching is that our dispatchers become part of a larger work group, which will improve working conditions. When a dispatcher is part of a shift with multiple dispatchers working in a communications center setting, reasonable use of leave, work assignments, and a more cohesive operation can be achieved.

Another benefit is coordination of communi-

cation. As post personnel work across post and district lines more frequently, coordinated dispatcher operations are necessary to ensure officer safety and efficient communications support.

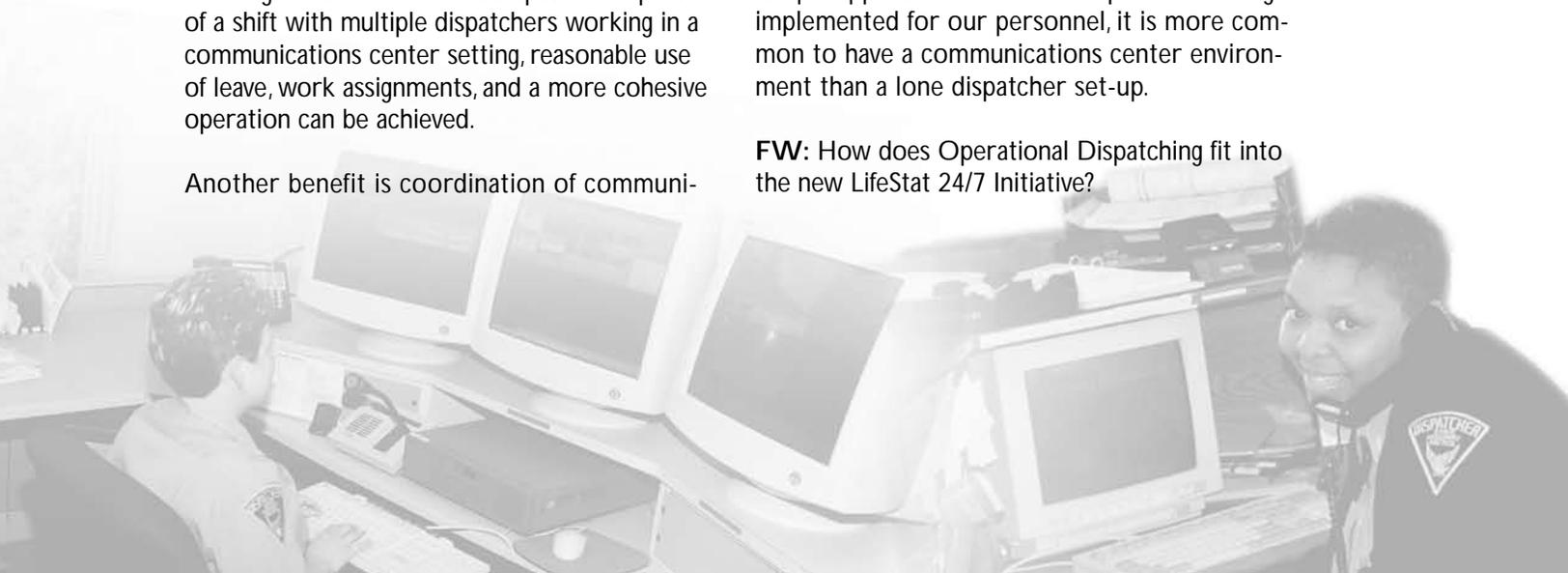
**FW:** Why are we moving to Operational Dispatching?

**Collins:** Along with the benefits I just mentioned, we are moving in this direction to utilize the technology as a solution to assist our personnel in their daily duties. Technology can be overwhelming, but when used to its maximum potential, our dispatchers will be able to complete their duties in a more efficient and effective manner, while also experiencing better working conditions.

There have been some concerns voiced about increased travel times for dispatchers that live near a post where the dispatching function is being moved to another location. Although this does occur, plans are always scrutinized to make as minimal of an impact as possible. The ability to use leave in a reasonable fashion and the reduction of mandatory overtime should compensate for those affected by additional travel time.

Operational Dispatching also brings us in-line with the majority of dispatching operations around the country. Although we have our own unique application of this concept as it is being implemented for our personnel, it is more common to have a communications center environment than a lone dispatcher set-up.

**FW:** How does Operational Dispatching fit into the new LifeStat 24/7 Initiative?



**Collins:** Operational Dispatching allows for maximization of dispatching and equipment resources. Our dispatchers are on duty 24/7 to support our field units in their enforcement and safety efforts on the road. As each district initiates an Operational Dispatching plan, it is important to remember every district has its unique challenges, and equipment will be allocated in a way that makes sense based upon geography, post operations, personnel travel times, and as always, to support top of the line officer safety.

**FW:** Where are we currently with the implementation of Operational Dispatching?

**Collins:** All districts have been authorized to work through the proper channels to move into Level 2 and Level 3 of their plans. This simply means that dispatching operations can be transferred temporarily during times when dispatching coverage is needed. Each level specifically outlines what support is needed at the post transferring dispatching operations to another post.

District Two has been authorized to pilot Operational Dispatching Level 4. This is the stage that actually combines dispatching locations to achieve the maximization of our resources. As District Two completes this process, Level 4 will be approved for other districts. It is important to remember that each district will have a unique plan developed with their area, operations, and personnel in mind.

It is also important to remember that difficult issues will arise as with all new programs. Open communication, using the chain of command, and patience as difficulties are worked out are all necessary if this initiative is going to be successful.

**FW:** What is the ultimate plan for Operational Dispatching within the Patrol?

**Collins:** The ultimate plan is for the Ohio State Highway Patrol to have an efficient dispatching environment that uses our technology, equipment, and personnel to its maximum potential and ensure the professional operations in support of our troopers in the field. This plan is designed and intended to increase the professionalism, working conditions, and operational effectiveness of our communications system.

Let me end with this: What we envision today may look somewhat different two years from now. This is a dynamic process. Changes should be expected as this is rolled out statewide. The district plans that have been submitted are starting points. The end product may look the same or altogether different. Operational, personnel, facility, and technological issues play a role in what changes occur.

## Wrap-up

**FW:** What do you expect will be the result of the entire LifeStat: The 24/7 Initiative?

**Collins:** Quite simply, I expect the result will be a diverse, effective, economical, and valuable resource that provides timely, accurate information to create a well-balanced law enforcement agency and a safer Ohio.



The  
24/7  
Initiative