

This committee includes several specialized fields, inasmuch as traffic safety transcends the interest of more than any one single committee. Recently, we added the chairman of the committees on roadside development, construction, and bridges and structures to make the special committee even more effective.

It was this special committee, together with four traffic engineers assigned as special observers, that made an inspection trip and study a year ago that resulted in the publication of the AASHO "Yellow Book" entitled "Highway Design and Operation Practices Related to Highway Safety."

We are sure that you are familiar with this publication. It includes the observations and recommendations of those who took part in the study. It was not balloted upon as an AASHO standard, but was issued as a committee report for the purpose of furnishing a checklist or guide in coordinating safety design features and for improving operation to enhance traffic safety.

It has been used to spearhead stepped-up activity in the safety program.

The association has printed and distributed 20,000 copies. We made these available, free of cost, to toll road authorities, consulting engineers, foreign governments, automobile clubs, county officials, city officials, Federal agencies, and, of course, to all of the State highway departments and the Bureau of Public Roads in rather large numbers.

We might say, also, that for the past 6 years we have requested that appropriate AASHO committees include at least one subject on traffic safety in their programs at our annual meetings.

We, of AASHO, appreciate the opportunity of appearing before your committee today. We are pleased that your committee has given of its time and talents to study the whole matter of traffic safety.

Our statement is somewhat comprehensive and lengthy, but due to the importance of the subject matter and the primary responsibility that the State highway departments have in highway safety, we ask your patience as we present it as we believe the information that we have to present is important, and has not been presented by other witnesses.

We also wish to state, at this time, that not all roads and streets in the United States are under the jurisdiction of the State highway departments and, of course, we cannot accept the responsibility for all highway mishaps, but are completely willing to be answerable for those things that are our responsibility.

We feel that all too often there is a tendency, when traffic safety matters are discussed, to automatically and immediately blame State highway departments in large part.

There is without question emotion, hysteria, and sensationalism in the safety field, but if these serve a useful purpose, then we have no objection.

Thirty years ago, when there were only 30 percent as many motor vehicles in the United States as now, almost 40,000 people were being killed on the Nation's streets and highways. Yet, the State highway departments were unable to get any effective public support for a comprehensive and continuing traffic safety program or to get people to be very safety conscious.