DEPARTMENT OF CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY PATROL

INFORMATION BULLETIN

June 27, 1995

SUMMARY OF 1994 CALIFORNIA SCHOOL BUS COLLISION DATA

The following is a summary of California school bus collision data for the 1994 calendar year. This data reflects those collisions which occurred while school buses were transporting one or more students to or from school, or school-related activities. School pupil transportation agencies may use this information to identify primary collision factors and direct their training resources accordingly. This data should assist school pupil transportation agencies in reducing the incident of school bus involved collisions and ensure the safe transportation of California's school pupils.

SYNOPSIS

In 1994, 22,881 school buses were operated in California, an increase of 248 over the 1993 total. There was also an increase of 35 school bus collisions in 1994 over the previous year. In 1993, school bus drivers were at fault in 41% of school bus involved collisions. For the 1994 calendar year, that percentage dropped to 39%, a two percent reduction.

In calendar year 1994, California school buses were involved in six fatal collisions. No fatal injuries were suffered by passengers of a school bus.

- The first collision occurred on January 11th, when the driver of a vehicle traveling eastbound drifted into the westbound lane and struck a school bus head-on. Six kindergarten-4th grade students received minor injuries.

- The second collision occurred on January 12th, when a school bus struck and killed a pedestrian (non-student) attempting to cross the Pacific Coast Highway. The pedestrian failed to utilize a marked crosswalk.

- The third collision occurred on March 7th, when a vehicle traveling approximately 65 miles per hour crossed over the double yellow lines and struck a school bus head-on. The driver of the errant vehicle was killed instantly. The sole passenger on the bus sustained a minor injury.

- The fourth collision occurred on September 9th, when a vehicle driven by a 17-year old female struck the left rear of a stopped school bus. The impact inflicted fatal injuries to the right rear-passenger and serious injuries to the left rear-passenger and the driver of the other vehicle. Thirty-six passengers in the school bus sustained minor injuries.

- The fifth collision occurred on October 7th, when the driver of a school bus transporting 41 students failed to see an adult pedestrian crossing the street in the marked crosswalk. The school bus knocked the pedestrian down and drove over him, inflicting fatal injuries.

- The sixth collision occurred on December 9th, when a school bus transporting 16 elementary school children struck a pregnant pedestrian in the crosswalk. She and her six month fetus received fatal injuries after being run over by the school bus.

The total number of injury collisions rose two percent in 1994. However, this calendar year marked a continued decrease in the number of pupil passengers injured, and revealed a reduction of .4 % in the total number of collisions per miles traveled.

School Bus Drivers At Fault. School bus driver error was the primary collision factor for 874 (39 %) school bus collisions, a reduction of 2 percent from the previous year. Of this total, 634 (73 %) occurred in type-1 school buses and 240 (27 %) occurred in type-2 school buses.

Other Causes. Other drivers were responsible for causing 1,077 (49 %) school bus collisions, an increase of 2 percent from the previous year. Collisions resulting from causes other than the driver accounted for 258 (12 %) of the school bus collisions, an increase of one percent from the 1993 calendar year.

Table 1 reflects the totals of injury and property damage collisions. It also illustrates the total number of collisions, school buses operated, and miles traveled by school buses for the 1994 calendar year and the two preceding years.

Table 2 reflects the most frequently reported primary collision factors (PCF) in school bus collisions. In 1994, improper turning, unsafe speed, and unsafe start and backing ranked as the three highest PCFs.

Table 3 reflects the breakdown of school buses by type, category of operator and the number of buses and mileage versus collisions. This provides an accurate picture of each operator's collision rate.

Table 4 reflects types of school buses and their percentage of accidents occurring in several categories.

Table 5 reflects the months of peak school bus collision activity. Historically, the months of May and October have the highest collision rates. In the calendar year of 1994, the months of May and September witnessed the highest incidence of school bus accidents.

TABLE 1: CALIFORNIA SCHOOL BUS INJURY COLLISIONS STATISTICS

BY CATEGORY

1992 TO 1994

CATEGORY	1992	1993	1994
Fatal Traffic Collisions	3	3	6
Pupil Passengers Killed	1	0	0
Pupil Pedestrian Killed	0	0	0
Injury Collisions Percentage of Change	523	495 (-5.35%)	505 (+2.02%)
Pupil Passengers Injured	749	745	700
Pupil Passengers: Severe Injuries Moderate Injuries Possible Injuries	 3 114 632	 1 127 617	 0 85 615
Property Damage Collisions Percent of Change	1,878	1,676 (-10.76%)	1,698 (+1.31%)
Total Collisions Percent of Change	2,404	2174 (-9.56%)	2,209 (+1.60%)
Total School Buses Percent of Change	22,240	22,633 (+1.76%)	22,881 (+1.09%)
Total Mileage Percent of Change	303,443,781	288,537,478 (-4.91%)	310,405,620 (+7.57%)

TABLE 2: PRIMARY COLLISION FACTOR OF SCHOOL BUS COLLISIONS

1994

Primary Collision Factor (PFC)	Type-1 School Bus	Type-2 School Bus	Total
Improper turning	339	108	447
Unsafe speed	283	141	424
Unsafe start/backing	200	119	319
Car right-of-way	106	49	155
Changing lane	100	32	132
Improper passing	105	19	124
Wrong side of the road	39	18	57
Traffic signal/signs	37	16	53
Unknown causes	40	12	52
Following to close	12	6	18
Pedestrian violation	11	5	16
Brakes	5	3	8
Pedestrian right of way	5	1	6
Hazardous parking	4	2	6
Other hazards	296	96	392
TOTAL	**1582**	**627**	**2209**

TABLE 3: SCHOOL BUSES, MILEAGE COLLISIONS

1994

Type-1 School Buses

Category	Buses	Miles	Collisions	Collisions/ 1 M Miles
Public School	12,109	140,992,179	935	6.63
Contractor	3,692	64,215,559	606	9.44
Private School	674	6,288,538	41	6.52
TOTAL	**16,475**	**211,496,276**	**1,582**	**7.48**

Type-2 School Buses

Category	Buses	Miles	Collision	Collisions/ 1 M Miles
Public School	2,255	30,247,603	225	7.44
Contractor	3,791	65,016,894	369	5.68
Private School	360	3,644,847	33	9.05
TOTAL	**6,406**	**98,909,344**	**627**	**6.34**

TABLE 4: TYPE OF ACCIDENT

1994

Category	Type-1 School Bus	Type-2 School Bus	Total Accidents
Other Motor Vehicles	982 (62%)	437 (69.6%)	1419 (64.2%)
Parked Motor Vehicles	186 (11.7%)	96 (15.3%)	282 (12.7%)
Fixed Object	172 (10.8%)	41 (6.5%)	213 (9.6%)
Non-Collision	167 (10.6%)	32 (5.1%)	199 (9%)
Other Object	30 (1.8%)	3 *	33 (1.4%)
Pedestrians	18 (1.1%)	5 *	23 (1%)
Animals	17 (1.0%)	4 *	21 *
Bicyclist	7 *	6 *	13 *
Motor Vehicle Other Road	3 *	3 *	6 *
Train	0	0	0
TOTAL	**1582**	**627**	**2209**

*Less than one percent of the total.

TABLE 5: COLLISIONS BY MONTH OF CALENDAR YEAR 1994

Month	Accidents	Month	Accidents
January	202	July	66
February	222	August	51
March	220	September	238
April	224	October	237
May	260	November	203
June	133	December	153

ENFORCEMENT SERVICES DIVISION

OPI: 062
DISTRIBUTION: 3A E S(Subscription - School Bus Mailing List)