

# NEWS RELEASE

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## Alabama Department of Public Safety

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### **TROOPERS PREPARE FOR LABOR DAY TRAFFIC** *Enforcement Plans Include Impaired Driving Crackdown*

MONTGOMERY — Days after a week-long “Take Back Our Highways” campaign, Alabama’s state troopers are gearing up for the last major travel period of the summer season. Department of Public Safety Director Col. J. Christopher Murphy said all available troopers will be on duty, working to ensure the safety of motorists during the Labor Day holiday.

“Alabama’s troopers, along with our local law enforcement partners, have brought about positive changes in driver behavior and significantly reduced the number of crashes, deaths and injuries on Alabama’s roadways,” Murphy said. He said year-to-date trooper-reported traffic deaths have declined by 103 – a 20 percent reduction from the preceding year. “During this upcoming holiday weekend, we plan to continue this concerted effort to save lives.”

Murphy said troopers, along with local and county law enforcement and traffic safety agencies throughout Alabama, will be targeting impaired drivers as part of the national safety enforcement blitz – “Drunk Driving. Over the Limit. Under Arrest.” The enforcement and public awareness effort began last week and will continue through Labor Day, Sept. 1.

“Driving while impaired by alcohol or drugs is a crime, one responsible for hundreds of traffic deaths each year in Alabama. Troopers have zero tolerance for impaired drivers. They will search them out and place them under arrest,” said Murphy. He noted that at least four — more than half — of the seven traffic deaths reported last year in Alabama during the 78-hour Labor Day holiday were alcohol related.

Murphy said “Task Force Zero” – trooper teams that target impaired drivers – will be working during the holiday weekend, using the department’s new BAT Mobiles at selected checkpoints. The BAT Mobiles, vehicles equipped with specialized breath-testing equipment, allow on-scene processing of impaired drivers. DPS purchased the vehicles with grants awarded by Gov. Bob Riley and administered by the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs. Equipment for the vehicles was provided by the Department of Forensic Sciences.

Troopers also plan to target violations that contribute to traffic crashes, including speeding, following too closely, improper passing and failure to signal. Overtime funding provided by the Alabama Department of Transportation and ADECA will allow additional troopers to patrol throughout the holiday period.

Patrols will concentrate on heavily traveled roadways, including interstates and popular beach and vacation routes, in conjunction with Operation C.A.R.E. – Combined Accident Reduction Effort. A cooperative effort by state police nationwide, Operation C.A.R.E. seeks to promote traffic safety during holiday periods through enforcement and safety awareness.

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