

## **DID YOU KNOW???**

### **I-95 CHALLENGE – ENFORCEMENT FOR INTERSTATE SAFETY**

The number of deaths occurring on US highways is staggering – somewhere around 33-35,000 every year, the equivalent of a small city. In this world of high-speed interstate highways, fast cars, impatient drivers always in a hurry, the Florida Highway Patrol (FHP) partnered with federal, state, and local law enforcement to create an education and enforcement program to improve transportation safety on Interstate 95 from Miami, Florida to Houlton, Maine, covering nearly 2,000 miles.

The high visibility enforcement surge began in March, 2015, and will end this December. Each state (16 in total) along I-95 actively engaged in the enforcement effort and worked alongside their local agencies that have jurisdictions along the I-95 corridor. These supplemental forces, some of which don't actively patrol the interstates as part of their usual responsibilities, served to emphasize awareness of the widespread campaign.

I-95 is the primary north-south corridor for large trucks and buses, which are overrepresented in fatal crashes across the US. Four of the 10 states with the highest commercial motor vehicle fatalities (Florida, Pennsylvania, Georgia, and New York) lie along the I-95 corridor. Those of you that travel to and from Florida generally do not enjoy driving on I-95.

The "I-95 challenge", as described in the July issue of "The Police Chief" magazine, began in March and consisted of a heavy commercial vehicle focus for three days followed by an intensified focus on all traffic for three additional days. During the six-day enforcement period, troopers issued more than 9,000 traffic citations, including almost 900 citations issued to commercial motor vehicles for moving violations.

A second enforcement cycle was conducted in August and the final cycle will be in December of this year. The enforcement cycles consist of publicity to raise public awareness and increase trooper visibility as well as heavy enforcement. Drivers generally reduce their speed and pay greater attention to their driving when they see law enforcement traveling on the road or actively engaged in traffic enforcement. When troopers, deputies, or officers are visible to the public, it has a greater the impact on compliance. The sustained high visibility enforcement delivered the message that traffic safety is important. It also emphasizes that operating a motor vehicle is a task requiring the driver's full attention and that the lives of everyone on the highway are valuable and worth the effort that law enforcement officers put forth to protect and save lives.

I want to thank Lt. Colonel Kelly Hildreth, Florida Highway Patrol and "The Police Chief" magazine for information contained in this article. The "I-95 challenge" shows how law enforcement along the corridor is working together to drive the number of traffic deaths and injuries down. We sure hope they succeed.

For more information on traffic law and traffic safety, visit the Traffic Safety Board web site at: [www.franklincony.org](http://www.franklincony.org) and go to Traffic Safety Board under "Departments". Visit us on Facebook as well. You may also contact me by email at: [dwerner151@verizon.net](mailto:dwerner151@verizon.net) or call me at 483-1882.