

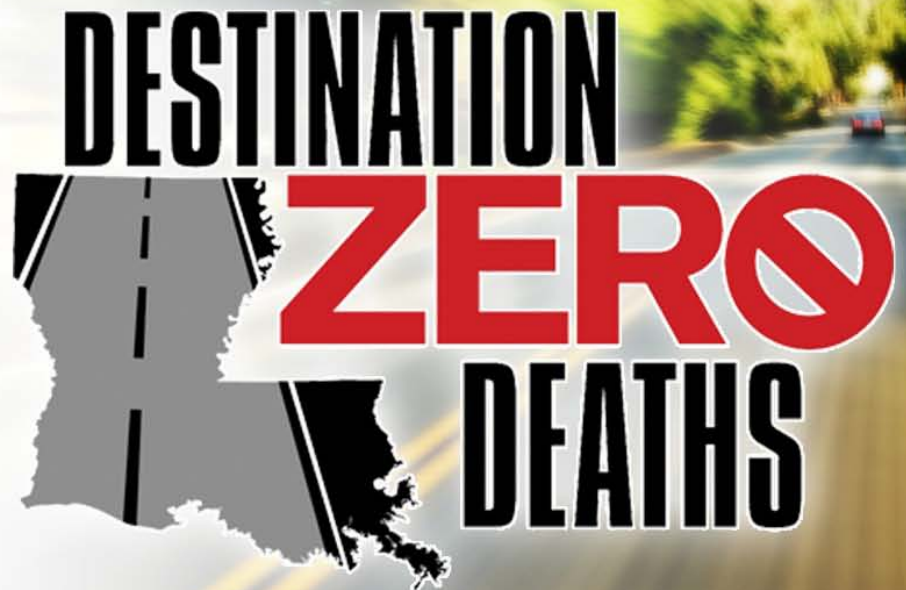
# Northeast Louisiana Region Transportation Safety Plan

*prepared by*

**Northeast Louisiana Highway Safety Partnership**

*in coordination with*

**Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development**



**DESTINATION  
ZERO  
DEATHS**

March 2017



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# 1.0 Regional and Statewide Transportation Safety Overview

## 1.1 PLAN OVERVIEW

The Northwest Louisiana Region Transportation Safety Plan (NELRTSP) is a data-driven action plan developed by the Northwest Louisiana Highway Safety Partnership (NELHSP). NELHSP partners, including representatives from the 4 Es (education, enforcement, engineering, and emergency medical services), collaborated to identify effective multimodal transportation safety solutions in the parishes of Caldwell, East Carroll, Franklin, Jackson, Lincoln, Madison, Morehouse, Ouachita, Richland, Tensas, Union, West Carroll.

Funded by the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LADOTD), this living document follows similar goals and strategies established in the statewide Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP). It primarily seeks to implement transportation safety projects at the regional and local levels. Like the SHSP, the NELRTSP's measurable goal is to reduce the number of roadway fatalities in the region by one-half by 2030. To achieve this target, noninfrastructure and infrastructure efforts will be undertaken in four emphasis areas, namely: Occupant Protection, Impaired Driving, Crashes Involving Young Drivers, and Infrastructure and Operations.

This plan also is supported by the Federal Highway Safety Administration (FHWA), Louisiana Highway Safety Commission (LHSC), and the jurisdictions in the 12 parish, northwest Louisiana region.

## 1.2 CONNECTION TO THE SHSP

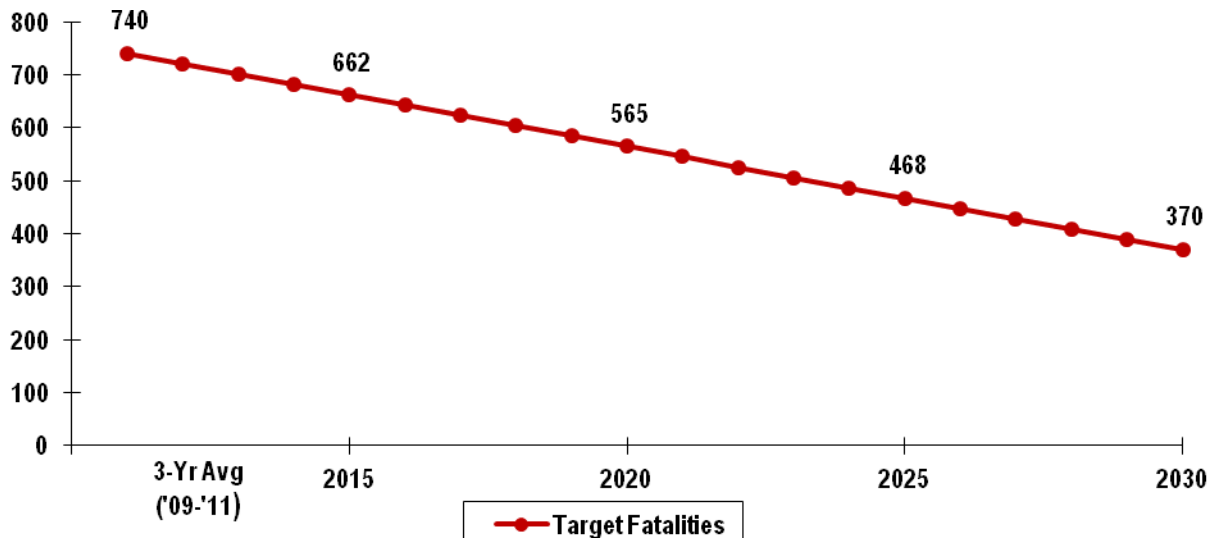
In 2006, Congress passed the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act – A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), which established the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) as a core federal program. To receive funding under this program, states were required to develop SHSPs. The SHSP is a data-driven, five-year comprehensive plan that establishes statewide goals, objectives, key emphasis areas, and proven strategies to reduce fatalities and serious injuries. The Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Act (MAP-21) doubled funding under the HSIP program, signaling a continued focus on reducing transportation-related fatalities and serious injuries. The Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act) continued essentially the same policies. Since crashes are most likely caused by a number of different factors, the strategies developed in the SHSP are a result of a number of different techniques, including engineering, education, law enforcement, and emergency medical services.

In 2006, LADOTD developed the state's first SHSP to mitigate the devastating effects of motor vehicle-related fatalities and serious injuries on Louisiana roadways.

In 2011, LADOTD completed an update to the original plan and identified the leading factors contributing to fatalities in the state, which included occupant protection, alcohol-related driving, run-off-road crashes, young drivers, and intersection crashes. To address these areas, the SHSP puts forth a number of aggressive projects and programs with the intent of reaching the new state goal: Halve fatalities by 2030.

The updated SHSP uses a baseline average of 2009 to 2011 data to calculate the necessary rate of change to achieve a 50-percent reduction in fatalities by 2030. Benchmarks for achieving this goal are illustrated in Figure 1.1.

**Figure 1.1 Benchmark to Achieve 50-Percent Reduction in Fatalities by 2030**  
*Statewide*



To reach the goal of 370 fatalities, the effort is two-fold. At the state level, LADOTD, LHSC, Louisiana State Police (LSP), Louisiana Technical Assistance Program (LTAP), and other safety stakeholders have identified and are implementing strategies in the four key emphasis areas to reduce fatalities and serious injuries. The emphasis area teams meet regularly to track implementation of the various strategies and action steps in the statewide SHSP.

At the local level, LADOTD has split the state into nine different regions (as shown in Figure 1.2), which correspond to the DOTD districts and the LSP troop commands. Each region is charged with forming a multidisciplinary or 4 E safety coalition, reviewing the regional and local crash data, and developing a continually evolving, data-driven action plan that is linked to the SHSP. During the plan development process, the regional safety coalitions meet to assess the contributing crash factors on the state and local roads in the region, select emphasis areas, and identify strategies and action steps to mitigate these issues. Often, the regional safety issues are similar to the statewide issues, so the regional teams adopt strategies and actions steps from the statewide emphasis area team action plans. They also are encouraged to identify new data-driven strategies and action steps to reduce fatalities and serious injuries in the region. Although DOTD implements a number of safety programs and projects at the statewide level, the regional plans harness local knowledge to identify what safety programs and projects will have the greatest impact on fatalities at the parish level.

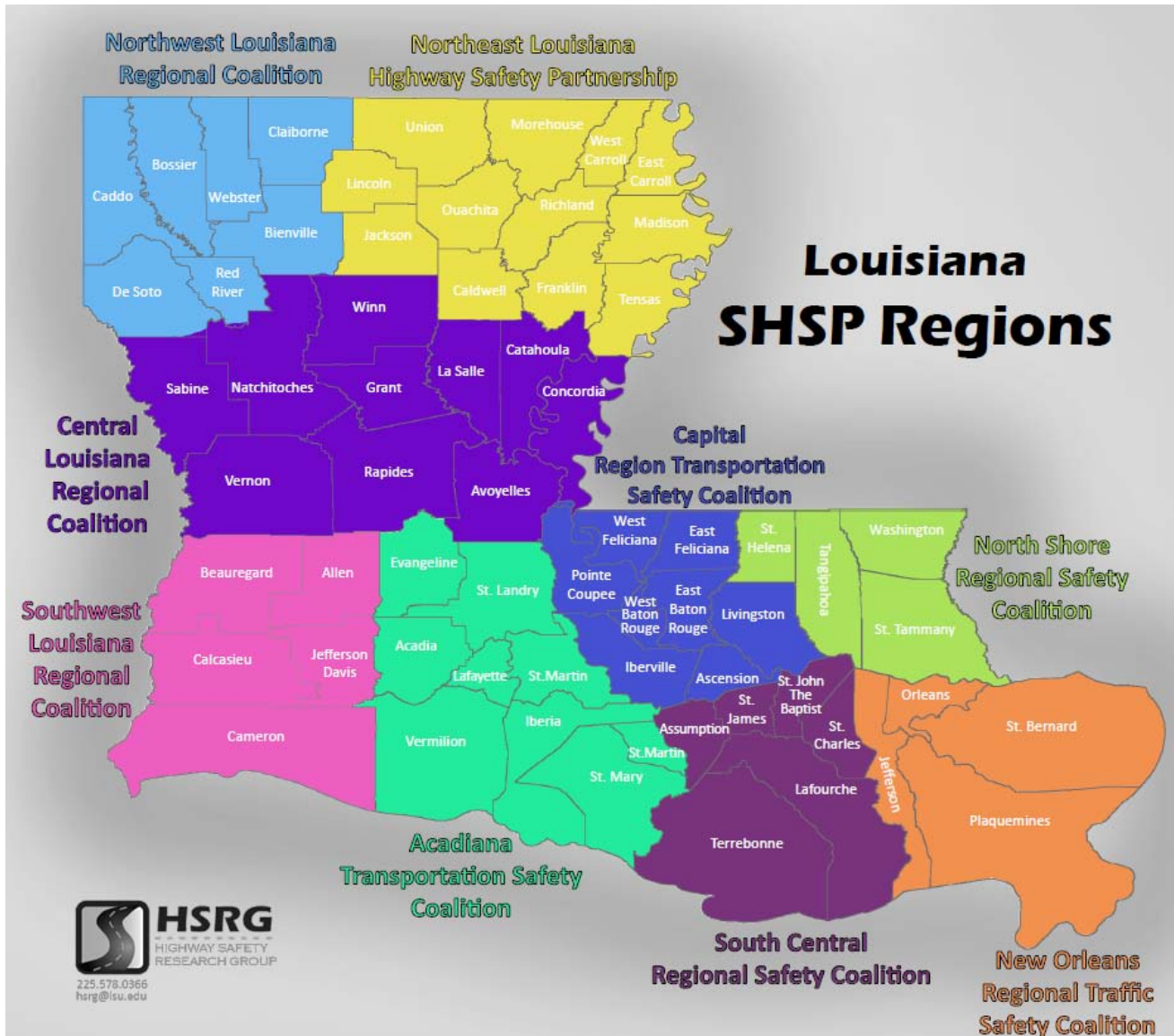
The benefits of this regional approach to safety planning include:

- The strategies and actions in the SHSP are being implemented at the regional level. Broader implementation ensures better opportunities to reduce fatalities and serious injuries.
- DOTD is in a better position to understand and potentially fund regional safety priorities.
- The regional teams have new opportunities to receive funding for the critical safety needs in a region.

- The regional teams have better access to and a better understanding of crash data. They also are better connected to safety stakeholders and partnerships.

The coalitions are led by an MPO in the region, as is the case with the Monroe MPO (North Delta Regional Planning and Development District (NDRPD)). The involvement of the NDRPD is important to ensure that the results of plans are linked to the Monroe Urbanized Area Metropolitan Plan and included in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Figure 1.2 Regional Safety Coalitions



## 1.3 REGIONAL SAFETY COALITION MEMBERS

In the northwest Louisiana region, the stakeholder partnership that developed this plan is comprised of a diverse group of safety stakeholders representing the MPOs, federal/state highway safety agencies, law enforcement, health professionals, EMS personnel, policy-makers, bicycle and pedestrian advocates, educators, and youth and local community residents.

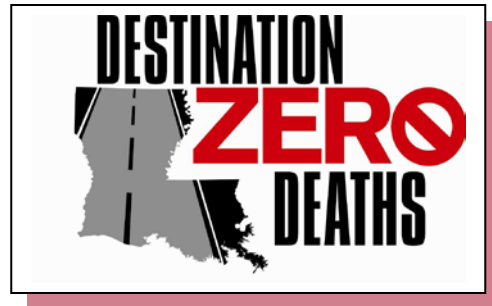
The stakeholders who drafted the contents of the plan and will oversee its development, implementation, and evaluation include:

- LADOTD, LHSC, NDRPD, LSP Troop F, City of Monroe, City of West Monroe, Caldwell Parish, East Carroll Parish, Franklin Parish, Jackson Parish, Lincoln Parish, Madison Parish, Morehouse Parish, Ouachita Parish, Richland Parish, Tensas Parish, Union Parish, West Carroll Parish, FHWA, Children's Coalition, Life Phases, West Monroe Police Department, Ouachita School Board, Town of Richmond, Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness, LSU AgCenter, Bastrop Police Department, Air Evac, Ouachita Parish Police Jury, Caldwell Police Jury, Morehouse Parish Sheriffs Office, Louisiana Department of Health, Union Pacific Rail Road, Union Parish School Board, Monroe Police Department, Louisiana House of Representatives, AmericHealth Caritas Louisiana, Monroe Police Department, Saint Francis College, University of Louisiana Monroe, East Hodge, Union Parish Police Jury, NWLA Transportation Safety, LERN, LA Tech, Gleenwood Medical, Union Parish Sheriffs Office, and Nurse Family Parntership.

## 2.0 Vision, Mission, Goals, and Performance Measures

### 2.1 VISION AND MISSION

The vision of the NELRTSP is to reach destination zero deaths on roadways in the northeast Louisiana region. The mission is to reduce the human and economic toll on the region's surface transportation system due to traffic crashes through widespread collaboration and an integrated 4 E approach. The coalition intends to continually revise and implement this plan to bring about a program of priorities designed to reduce the incidence of traffic crashes within the northeast Louisiana region.



### 2.2 GOAL

One reason for developing the NELRTSP is to align the region with the statewide safety goals. The goal of the SHSP and the NELRTSP are to **halve fatalities by 2030**. The NELRTSP uses a baseline average of 2009 to 2013 data to calculate the rate of change to achieve a 50 percent reduction in fatalities by 2030. Figure 2.1 shows the benchmarks for achieving this goal. Although this goal will not change from year to year, the annual reduction rate needed to achieve the goal could vary based on each year's progress. Serious injuries sustained in motor vehicle crashes also make up a significant portion of the human and economic toll in the region. Figure 2.2 illustrates the benchmarks for reducing serious injuries by 50 percent by 2030.

Figure 2.1 Benchmark to Achieve 50-Percent Reduction in Fatalities in Northeast Louisiana Region by 2030

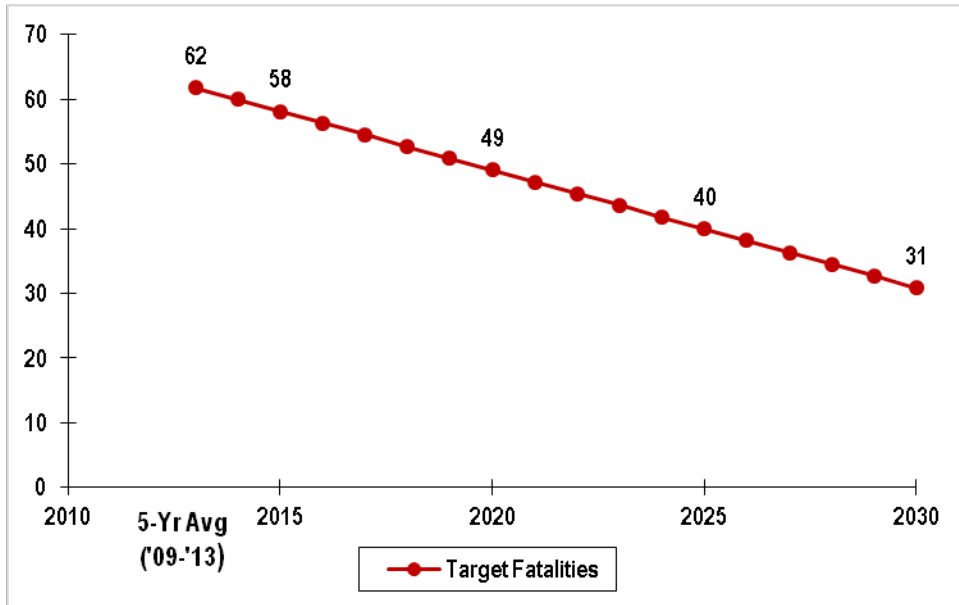
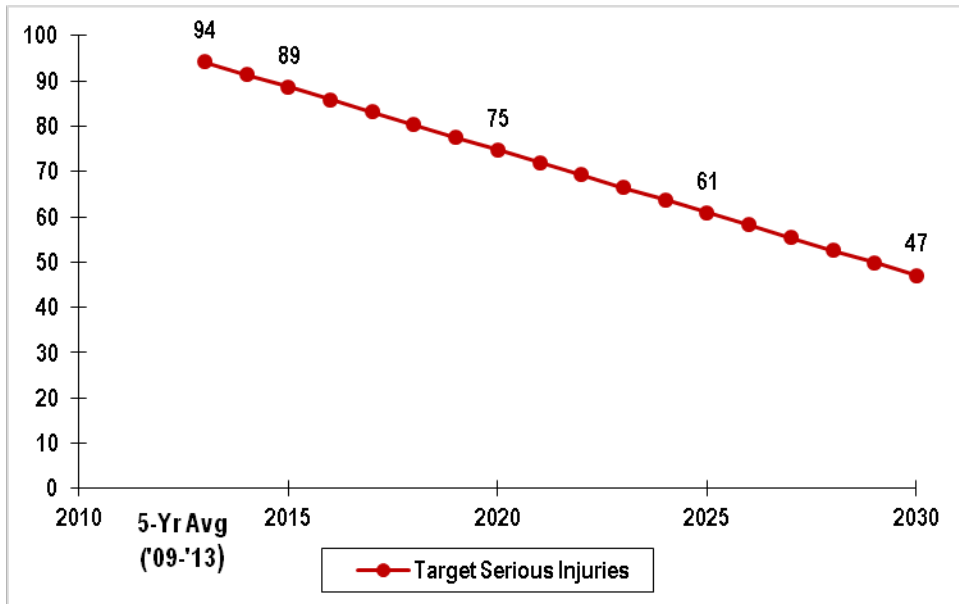


Figure 2.2 Benchmark to Achieve 50-Percent Reduction in Serious Injuries in Northeast Louisiana Region by 2030



### 2.3 PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The performance measures used to track progress toward reaching the goal of cutting fatalities in half by 2030, include: 1) the annual number of motor vehicle-related fatalities and 2) the annual number of serious injuries. The

same metrics will be used to track performance measures for each emphasis area, including Occupant Protection, Impaired Driving, Young Drivers, and Infrastructure and Operations. For purposes of this plan, the interim targets are established in a linear fashion; however, in reality the correct estimates are probably a nonlinear function because the advances will be more difficult to achieve in the latter years. In future analysis, a more statistical approach to setting interim targets will be developed.

Two companion documents to the plan include: 1) detailed emphasis area action plans that identify the steps necessary to implement each strategy or countermeasure, the action step leader, an activity description, resources required, and status/output measures and 2) an Excel tracking tool used to review annual progress towards the performance measures and to demonstrate progress on each of the action items in the plan.





# 3.0 Problem Identification and Emphasis Area Selection

## 3.1 EMPHASIS AREA SELECTION

The NELHSP based selection of the SHSP emphasis areas on the following factors:

- The availability of robust 2009 to 2013 baseline year data, which clearly defines the problem and contributing crash factors (the source for all the data shown in this Plan is the Louisiana State University Highway Safety Research Group (HSRG) Reports – Traffic Data, 2015);
- The identification of programs and projects with the greatest potential for improving safety; and
- The ability of the region to access resources for implementing proven effective countermeasures.

The northeast Louisiana region has made some progress in lowering fatalities and serious injuries over the last seven years. Table 3.1 depicts the overall number of fatalities and serious injuries in the region between 2009 and 2015. The overall number of fatalities and serious injuries has declined 28 percent from 2009 to 2015. Fatalities have declined by 17 percent, while serious injuries decreased by 31 percent during the same period.

**Table 3.1 Fatalities and Serious Injuries in Northeast Louisiana Region**  
*2009 to 2015*

Year	Fatalities	Serious Injuries	Fatalities and Serious Injuries
2009	60	80	140
2010	60	86	146
2011	73	100	173
2012	49	98	147
2013	67	107	174
2014	65	114	179
2015	77	74	151

Figure 3.1 illustrates the number of fatalities and serious injuries in the northeast Louisiana region by parishes. Ouachita leads the region, followed by Lincoln, Morehouse and West Carroll. Table 3.2 shows the populations for each parish, which helps explain why the fatality and serious injury numbers for these three parishes are often the highest by emphasis area.

Figure 3.1 Fatalities and Serious Injuries by Parishes in Northeast Louisiana Region 2009 to 2015

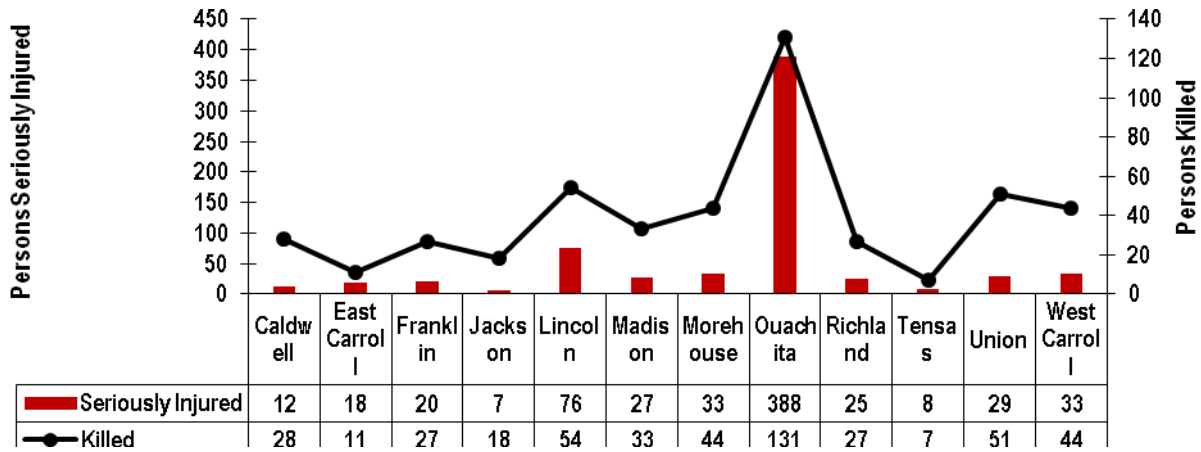
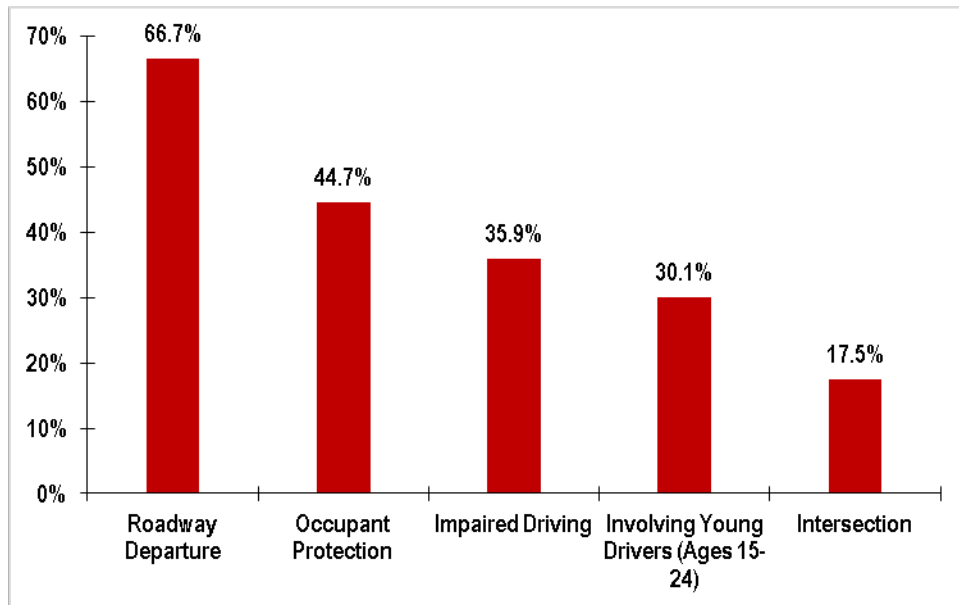


Table 3.2 Population by Parish in Northeast Louisiana Region 2010 U.S. Census

Parish	2010 Census Population
Caldwell	10,132
East Carroll	7,759
Franklin	20,767
Jackson	16,274
Lincoln	46,735
Madison	12,093
Morehouse	27,979
Ouachita	153,720
Richland	20,725
Tensas	5,252
Union	22,721
West Carroll	11,604

Figure 3.2 shows the leading factors contributing to fatalities in the region, including roadway departure crashes, no use restraints (e.g. seat belts or child safety seats), impaired driving, young drivers, and intersection crashes. The reason the percentages do not add up to 100 percent is because most crashes involve more than a single factor. For example, the primary cause of a crash may be attributed to an impaired driver, but the car also could have run off the road. The police report would make note of both these factors, so the crash would be counted in both categories.

**Figure 3.2 Contributors to Fatalities as Percent of the Total Problem in Northeast Louisiana Region 2009-2013**



Based on analysis of the 2009 to 2013 baseline data and other considerations, the agencies recommended focusing attention, energy, and resources on five emphasis areas:

1. Infrastructure and Operations (Roadway Departure and Intersections)
2. Occupant Protection
3. Impaired Driving
4. Young Driver Crashes

The remainder of this section discusses each emphasis area, including the goal established for the emphasis area and proposed strategies.

## 3.2 INFRASTRUCTURE AND OPERATIONS

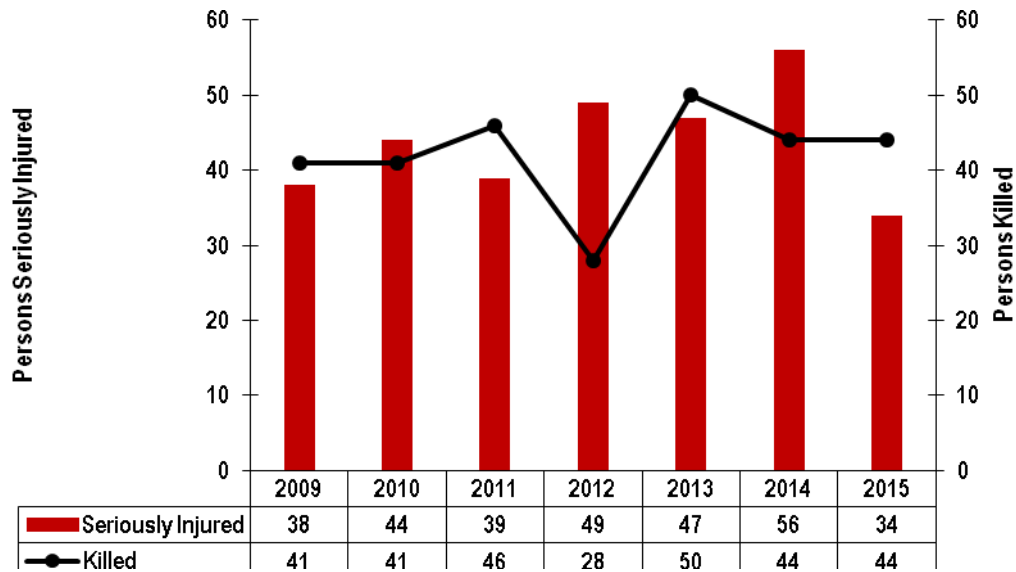
Louisiana experiences a high incidence of roadway departure and intersection crashes. Contributing factors often include loss of control, misjudging a curve, attempting to avoid a collision with an animal, alcohol use, distracted driving, and aggressive driving. Intersections have a high-crash potential given the many conflict points between vehicles and other road users, such as pedestrians and bicyclists. However, intersection-related crashes tend to be less deadly than roadway departure crashes, primarily due to the lower speeds.

### 3.2.1 Roadway Departures

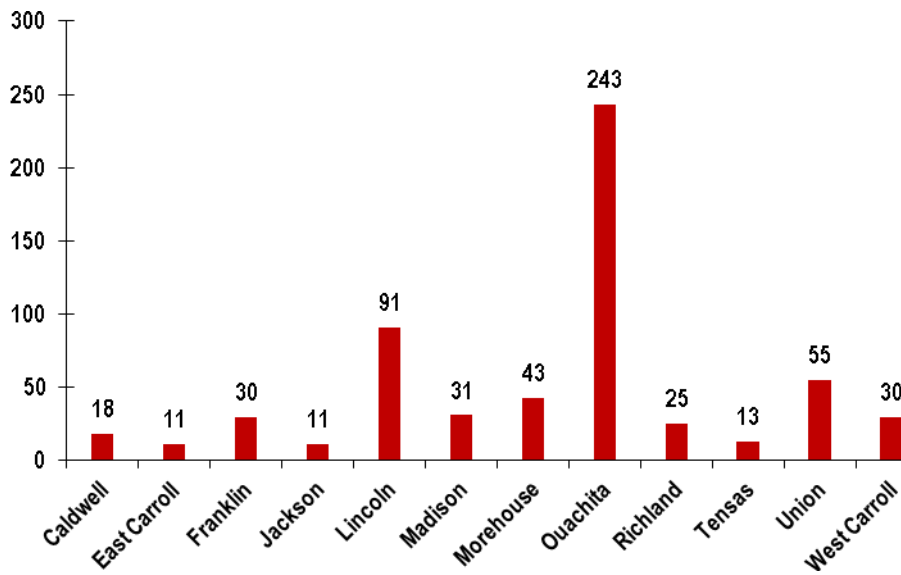
In the northeast Louisiana region, 66.7 percent of fatalities were attributed run-off-the-road incidents. Between 2009 and 2015, roadway departure fatalities and serious injuries fluctuated, with a low of 28 fatalities in 2012 and 34

serious injuries in 2015. Overall, between 2009 and 2015, serious injuries decreased 11 percent and fatalities increased seven percent, as shown in Figure 3.3. Parishes experiencing the highest number of combined fatalities and serious injuries as a result of roadway departure crashes include Ouachita, Lincoln, and Union as shown in Figure 3.4.

**Figure 3.3 Roadway Departure Fatalities and Serious Injuries in Northeast Louisiana Region 2009 to 2015**



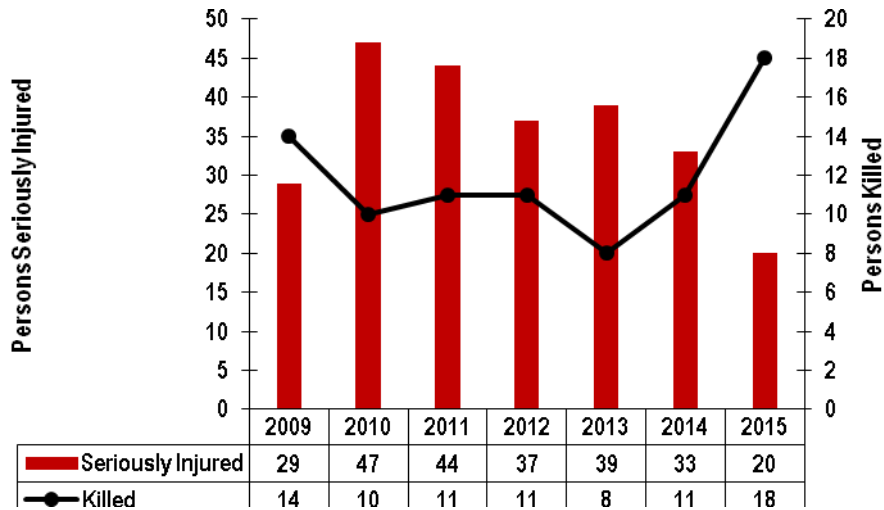
**Figure 3.4 Roadway Departure Fatalities and Serious Injuries by Parish in Northeast Louisiana Region 2009 to 2015**



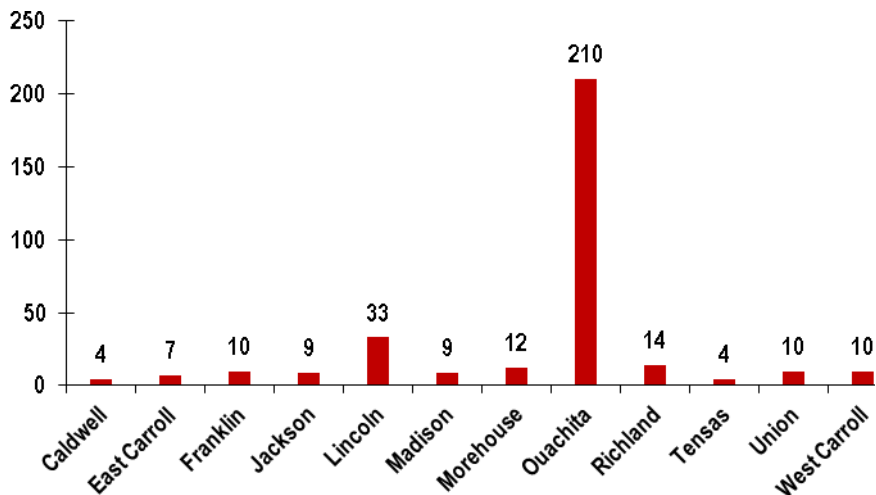
### 3.2.2 Intersections

Between 2009 and 2015, 17.5 percent of the total fatalities were attributed to intersection crashes. Serious injuries have slowly decreased over these seven years with a low of 20 in 2015. Between 2009 and 2015, serious injuries at intersections have decreased by 31 percent. Over the same timeframe, fatalities have fluctuated with a low of eight in 2013 (Figure 3.5). Figure 3.6 shows the parishes with the highest number of combined fatality and serious injuries at intersections, including Ouachita, Lincoln, and Richland.

**Figure 3.5** Intersection Fatalities and Serious Injuries in Northeast Louisiana Region  
2009 to 2015



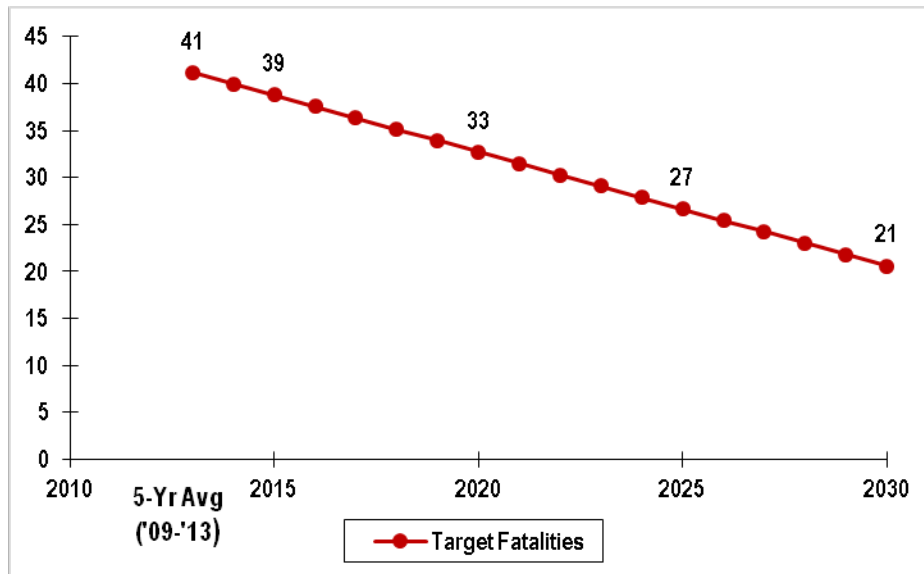
**Figure 3.6** Intersection Fatalities and Serious Injuries by Parish in Northeast Louisiana Region  
2009 to 2015



### 3.2.3 Goals

The goal for the Infrastructure and Operations Emphasis Area is to reduce roadway departure and intersection fatalities and injuries by 50 percent by 2030. Figures 3.7 through 3.10 show the benchmarks to achieve these goals.

**Figure 3.7** Benchmarks to Achieve a 50-Percent Reduction in Roadway Departure Fatalities in Northeast Louisiana Region by 2030



**Figure 3.8** Benchmarks to Achieve a 50-Percent Reduction in Roadway Departure Injuries in Northeast Louisiana Region by 2030

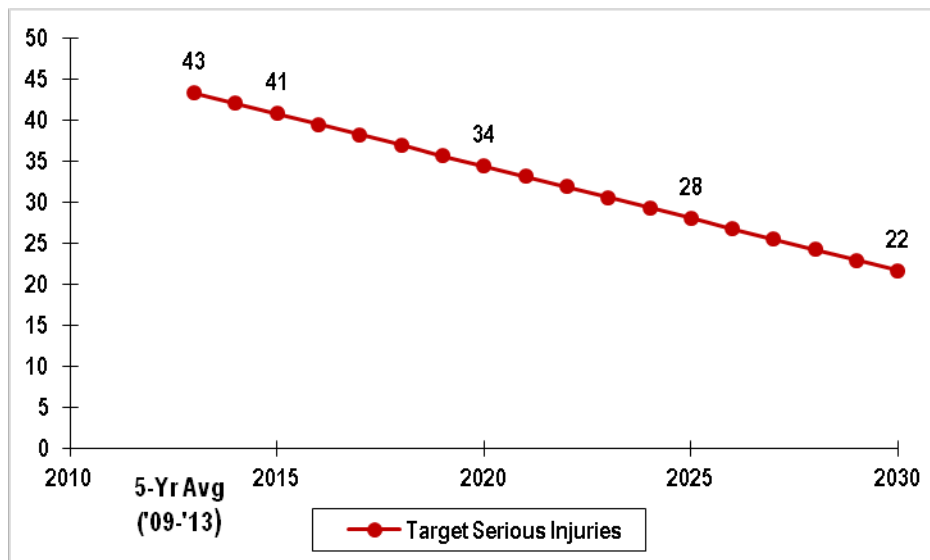


Figure 3.9 Benchmarks to Achieve a 50-Percent Reduction in Intersection Fatalities in Northeast Louisiana Region by 2030

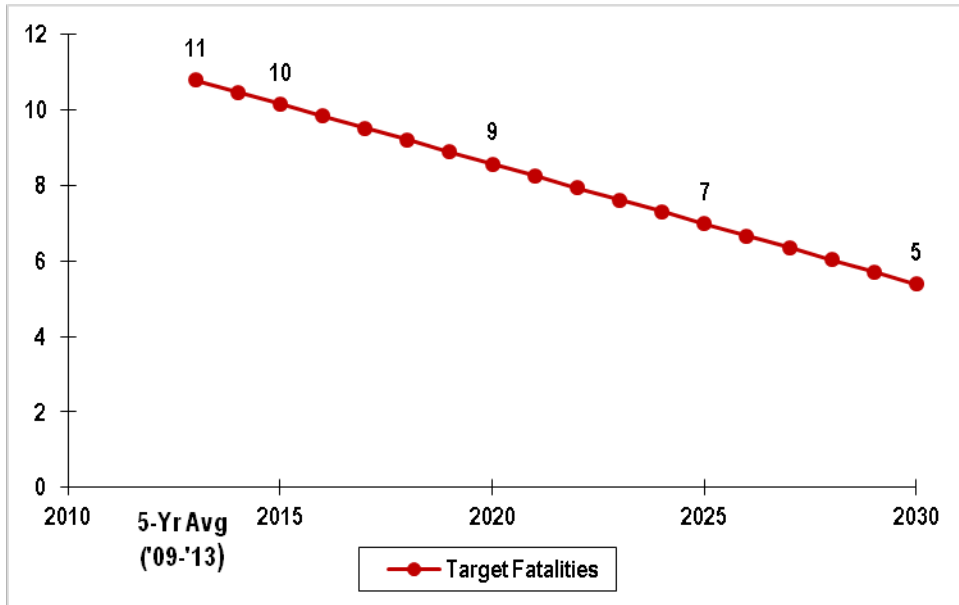
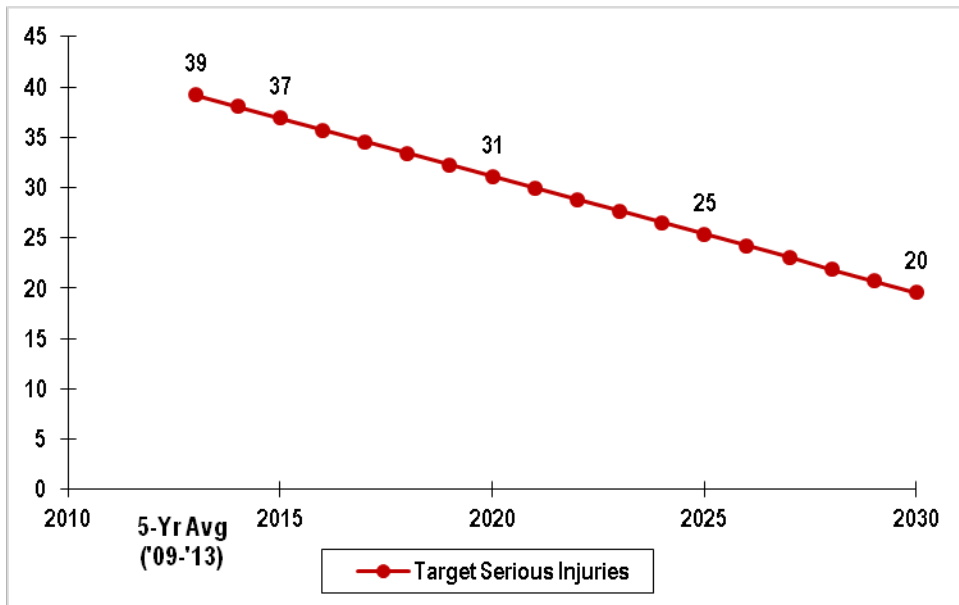


Figure 3.10 Benchmarks to Achieve a 50-Percent Reduction in Intersection Injuries in Northeast Louisiana Region by 2030



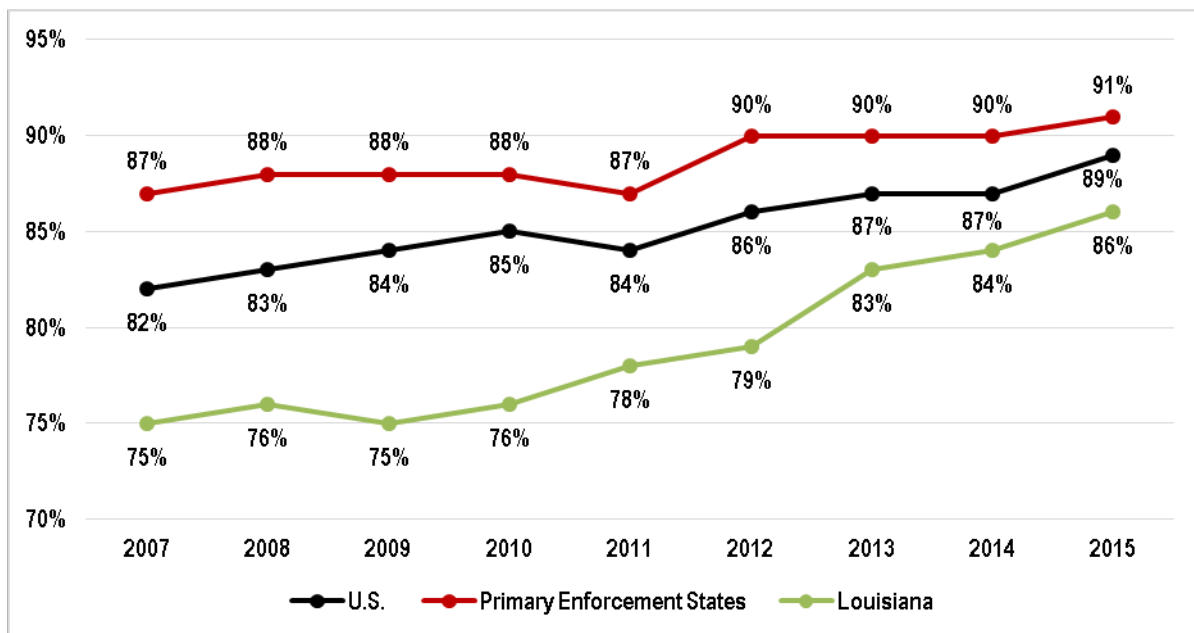
To achieve these goals, the NELHSP Infrastructure and Operations Emphasis Area Team identified the following three strategies:

1. Identify high crash locations and/or safety concerns and develop a strategy for project implementation based on crash data findings, best practices in traffic safety, and availability of funding sources;
2. Reduce the number of roadway departure accidents by integrating safety into engineering and construction projects, particularly for improvements to horizontal curves in both urban and rural areas;
3. Increase safety at roadway intersections, while improving mobility and connectivity; and
4. Improve pedestrian safety by providing safe and accessible routes for pedestrians and bicyclists.

### 3.3 OCCUPANT PROTECTION

Louisiana enacted primary enforcement legislation in 1995, which allows law enforcement officers to stop and ticket a driver if they observe a safety belt violation. Louisiana’s safety belt use falls below the average for primary enforcement states, as well as the national average for all states (Figure 3.11). From 2007 to 2015, the safety belt use national average and primary enforcement state average mostly increased each year, while Louisiana remained largely unchanged from 2007 to 2010 but steadily increased 11 percentage points from 2010 to 2015.

**Figure 3.11 Observed Safety Belt Use**  
2007 to 2015



Despite the statewide issues, the northeast Louisiana region has seen slight decreases in unbelted fatalities and slight increases in unbelted serious injuries. Serious injuries have trended up from a low of 11 in 2009. Figure 3.12





shows that, between 2009 and 2012, fatalities dropped by 45 percent but have trended up since. Unbelted driving crashes predominantly occur in Ouachita, but multiple parishes, including Lincoln and Franklin also experience issues, as shown in Figure 3.13.

Figure 3.12 Unrestrained Fatalities and Serious Injuries in Northeast Louisiana Region, 2009 to 2015

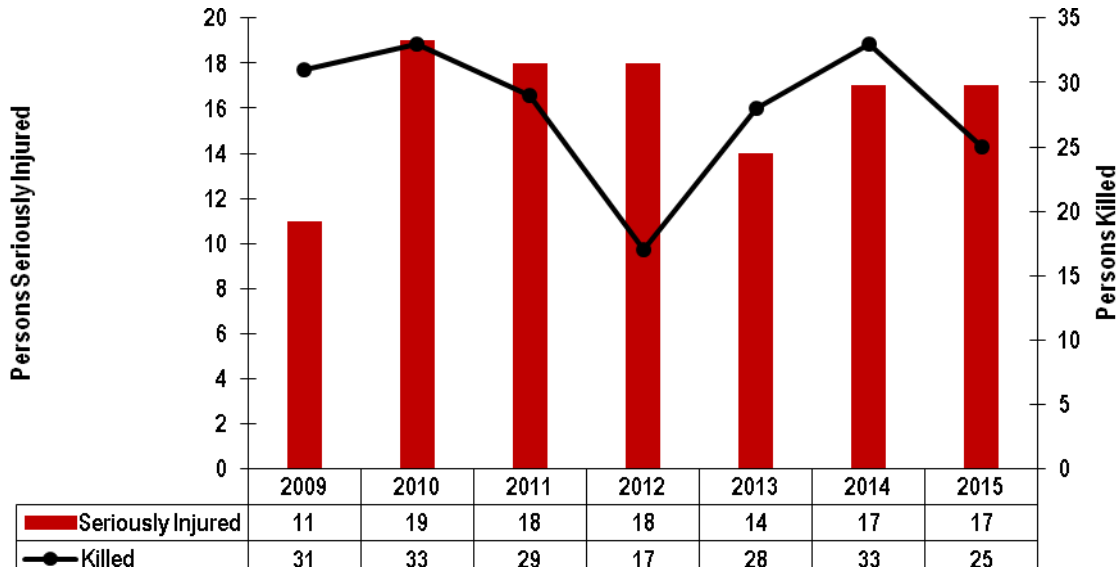
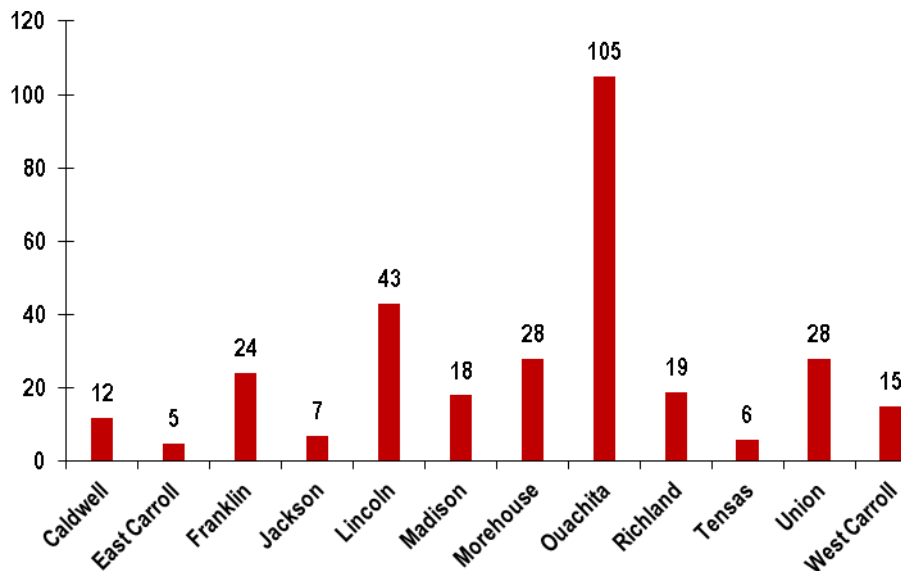


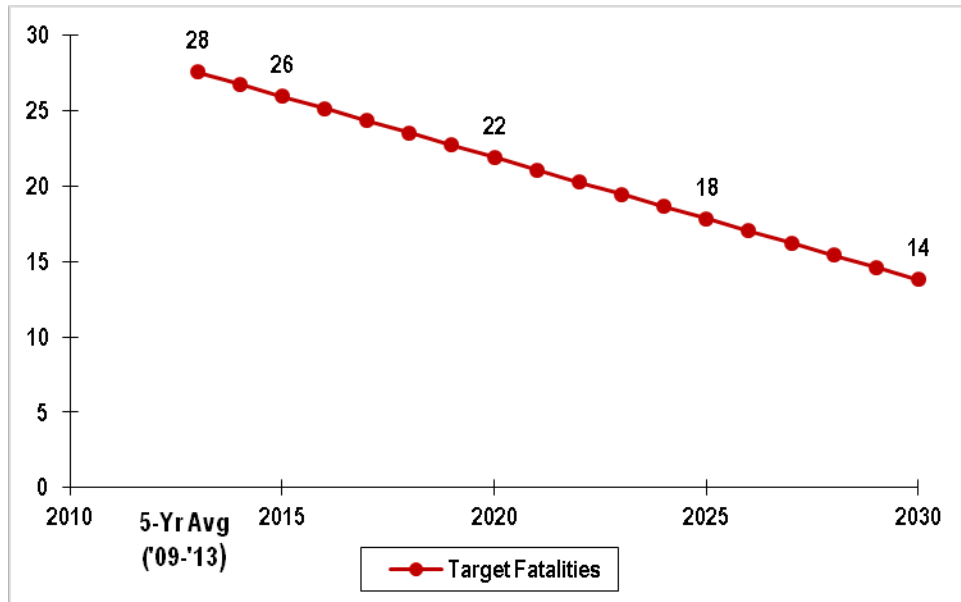
Figure 3.13 Unrestrained Fatalities and Serious Injuries by Parish in Northeast Louisiana Region 2009 to 2015



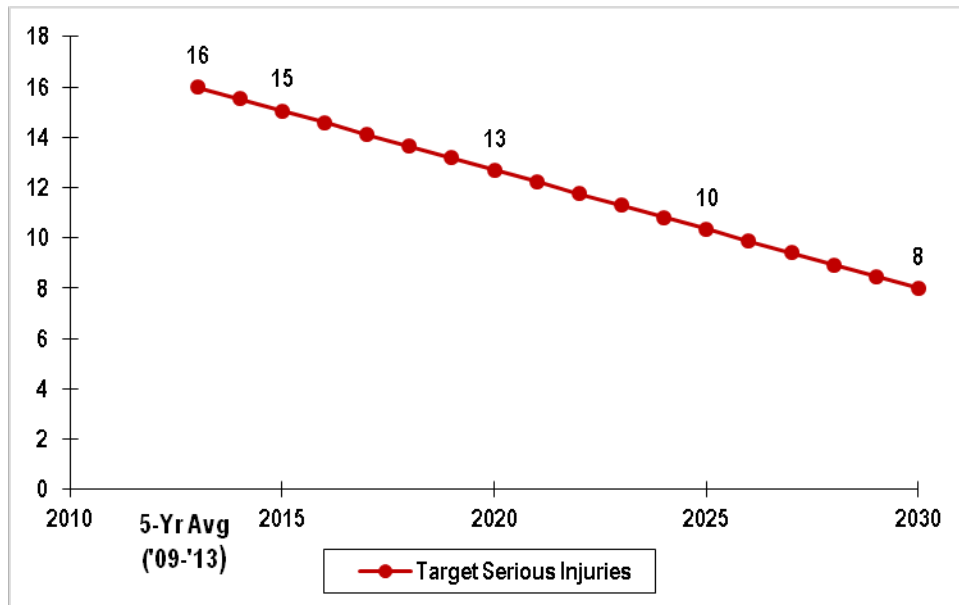
### 3.3.1 Goal

The goal for the Occupant Protection Emphasis Area Team is to decrease unbelted fatalities and injuries by 50 percent by 2030 and increase the safety belt use rate. Figures 3.14 and 3.15 illustrate the benchmarks to achieve these goals.

Figure 3.14 Benchmarks to Achieve a 50-Percent Reduction in Unrestrained Fatalities in Northeast Louisiana Region by 2030



**Figure 3.15 Benchmarks to Achieve a 50-Percent Reduction in Unrestrained Injuries in Northeast Louisiana by 2030**



To achieve these goals, the NELHSP Occupant Protection Emphasis Area Team identified the following three strategies:

1. Encourage use of effective, data-driven seatbelt enforcement.
2. Expand outreach, marketing, and training opportunities on occupant protection.
3. Expand training opportunities for occupant protection practitioners.
4. Identify funding opportunities.

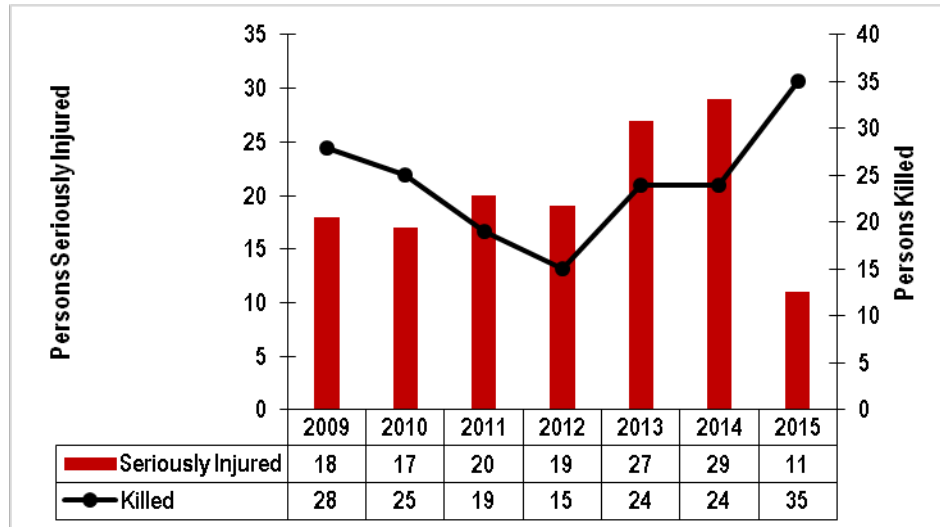
### 3.4 IMPAIRED DRIVING

Louisiana exceeded the national average for the percent of alcohol-related fatalities from 2006 through 2014. Impaired driving also is one of the leading cases of fatalities in the northeast Louisiana region. The crash data show that alcohol-related fatalities accounted for 36 percent of fatalities between 2009 and 2013, exceeded only by roadway departure and unrestrained fatalities. Evidence of other substances in the blood, including drugs and prescription medications, is also a concern in Louisiana. Complete data are not available to understand the full extent of drugged driving, but statewide strategies are exploring drugged driving issues and needs. Strategies to address these issues will eventually be incorporated into the regional plans.

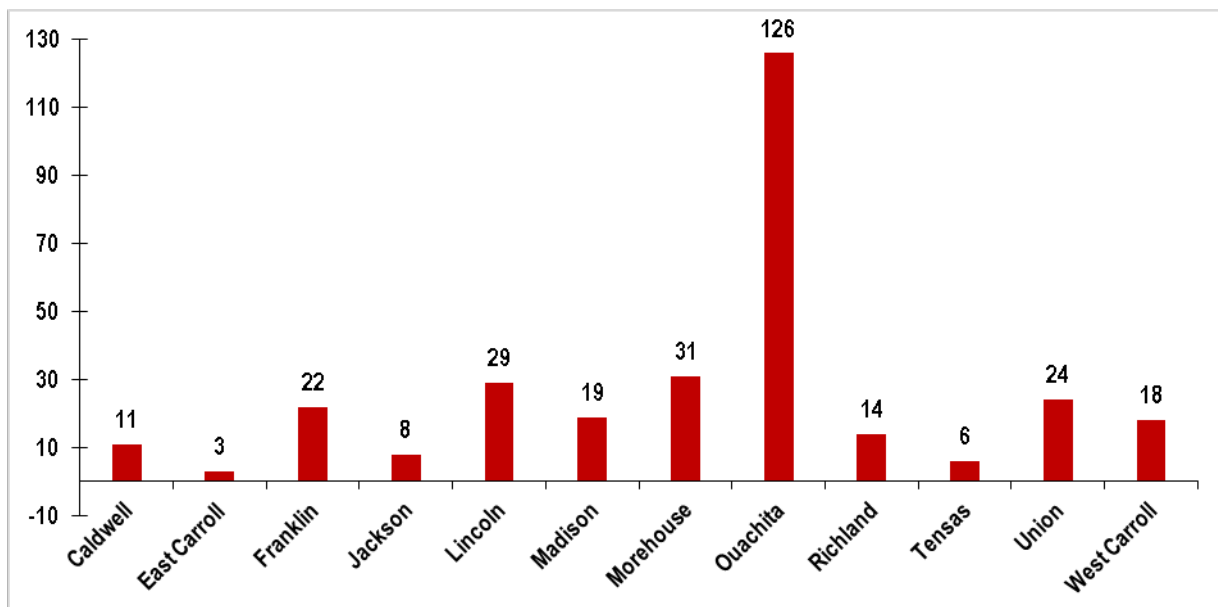
Despite the high percentages, progress has been made to lower alcohol-related fatalities and serious injuries. Figure 3.16 shows the total number of alcohol-related fatalities and serious injuries between 2009 and 2015 in the Northeast Louisiana region. In 2015, serious injuries in the region hit an all-time low over the seven-year time frame; and although fatalities decreased between 2009 and 2012, they increased by 133 percent from 2012 to 2015. The region has experienced a spike in fatalities since the 2012 low of 15. Figure 3.17 illustrates the breakdown of total

impaired driving fatalities and serious injuries by parishes between 2009 and 2015. Ouachita leads the region, followed by Morehouse and Lincoln.

**Figure 3.16 Impaired Driving Fatalities and Serious Injuries in Northeast Louisiana Region, 2009 to 2015**



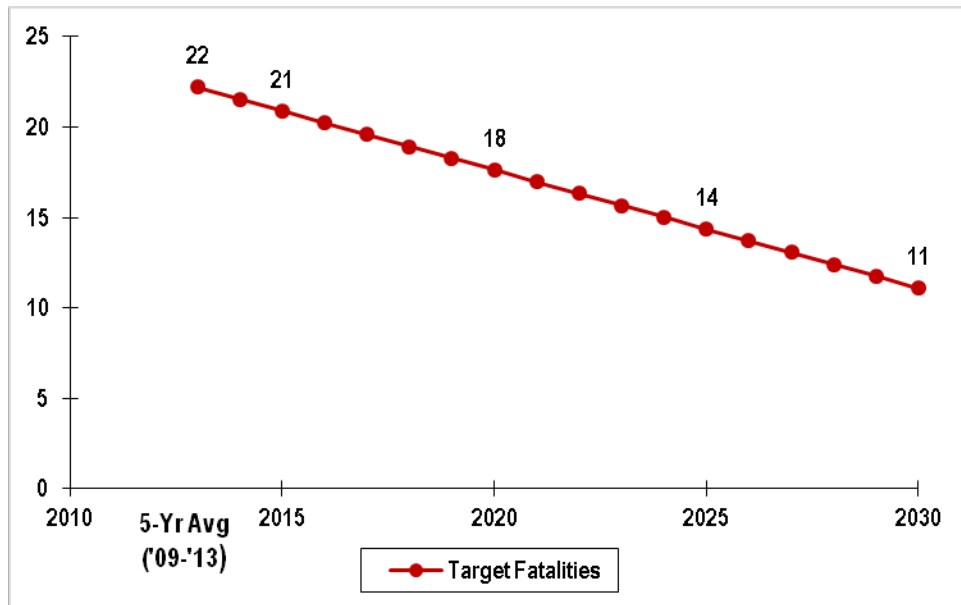
**Figure 3.17 Impaired Driving Fatalities and Serious Injuries by Parish in Northeast Louisiana Region, 2009 to 2015**



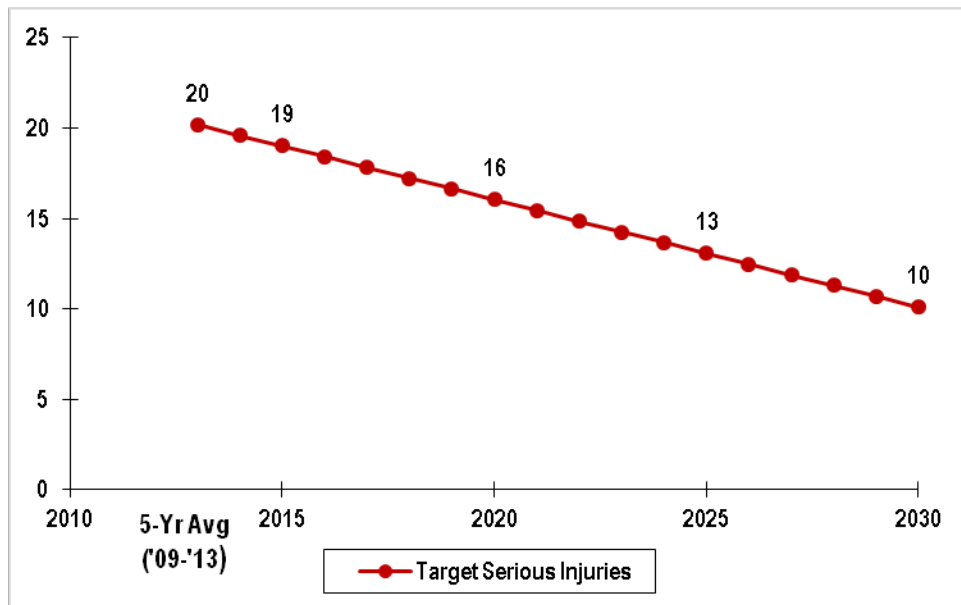
### 3.4.1 Goal

The goal for the Impaired Driving Emphasis Area Team is to reduce alcohol-related fatalities and injuries by no less than 50 percent by 2030. Figures 3.18 and 3.19 show the benchmarks for fatalities and injuries.

**Figure 3.18** Benchmarks to Achieve a 50-Percent Reduction in Impaired Driving Fatalities in Northeast Louisiana Region by 2030



**Figure 3.19** Benchmarks to Achieve a 50-Percent Reduction in Impaired Driving Injuries in Northeast Louisiana Region by 2030



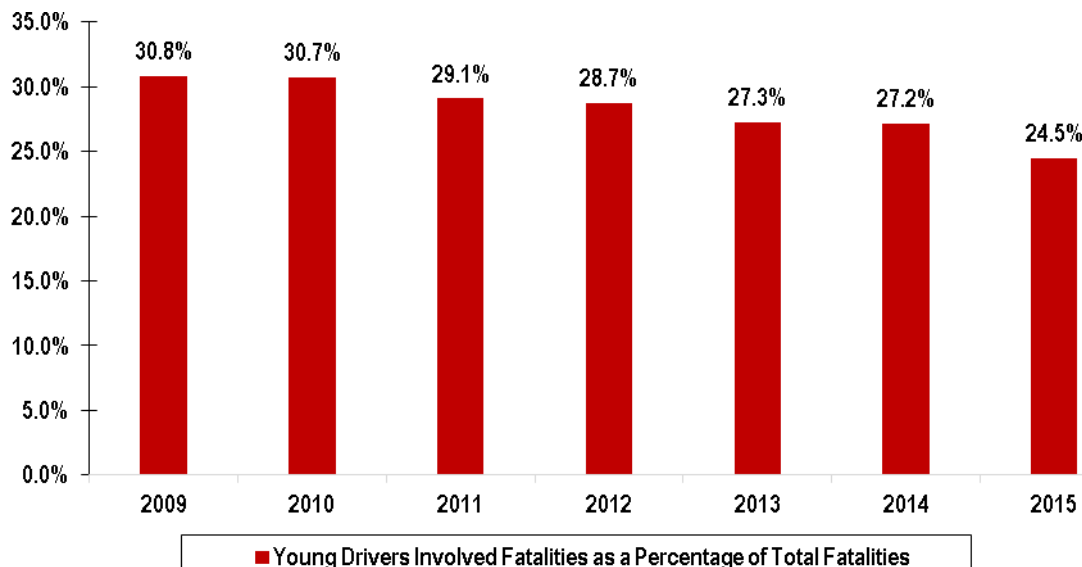
To achieve these goals, the NELHSP Impaired Driving Emphasis Area Team identified the following three strategies:

1. Increase basic training opportunities for local law enforcement agencies and advanced training for state troopers.
2. Increase impaired driving prevention and public education programs in the Northeast Region.
3. Increase the number of impaired driving related high-visibility enforcement activities in the Northeast Region.

### 3.5 CRASHES INVOLVING YOUNG DRIVERS

Like most states, Louisiana's young drivers are over-represented in fatal crashes. In 2010, young drivers (15 to 24 years old) accounted for 30.7 percent of fatalities, but only 14.5 percent of licensed drivers. Figure 3.20 shows this breakdown for 2009 to 2015.

**Figure 3.20 Young Drivers (Age 15 to 24) Involved Fatalities as Percent of Total Fatalities**  
*Statewide, 2009 to 2015*



In the northeast Louisiana region, young drivers accounted for 30.1 percent of the fatalities between 2009 and 2015. In spite of some fluctuations from 2009 to 2015 years, Figure 3.21 shows that fatalities have decreased by 23 percent and serious injuries by 26 percent. Figure 3.22 shows that, although each parish has issues with young driver fatalities and serious injuries, Ouachita far exceeds the others with a combined total 181 between 2009 and 2015.

Figure 3.21 Young Driver Fatalities and Serious Injuries (Ages 15 to 24) in Northeast Louisiana Region 2009 to 2015

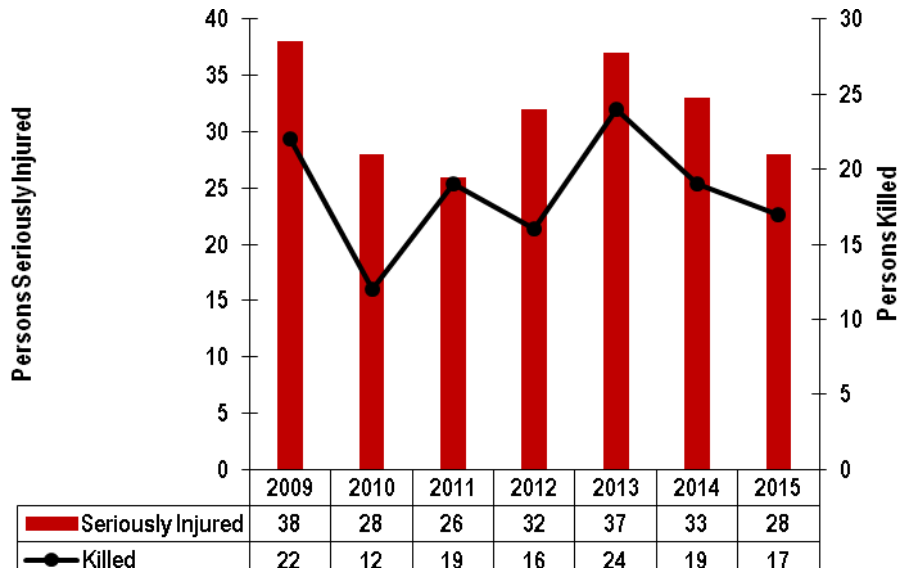
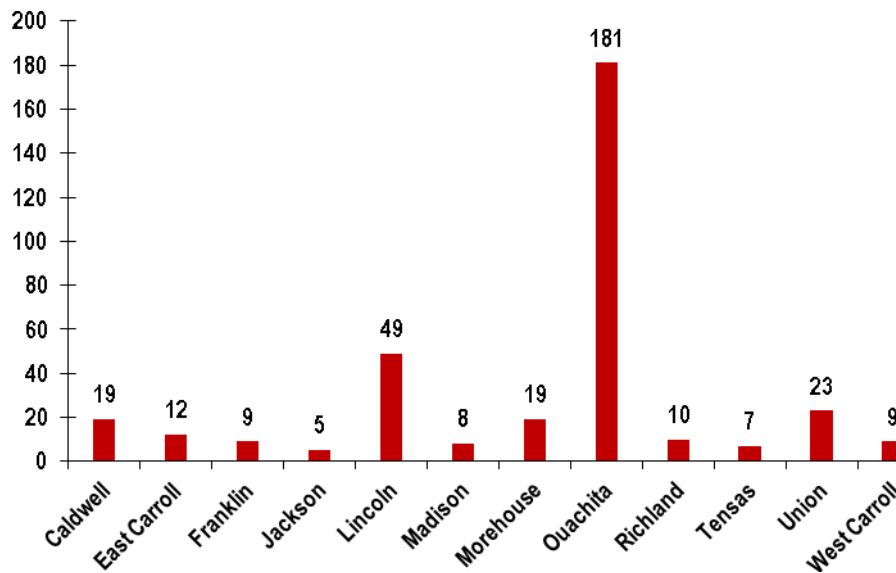


Figure 3.22 Young Driver Fatalities and Serious Injuries by Parish in Northeast Louisiana Region 2009 to 2015



### 3.5.1 Goal

The goal for the Young Drivers Emphasis Area team is to reduce fatalities involving young drivers by 50 percent by 2030. Figures 3.23 and 3.24 illustrate the benchmarks for this goal.



Figure 3.23 Benchmarks to Achieve a 50-Percent Reduction in Fatalities Involving Young Drivers in Northeast Louisiana Region by 2030

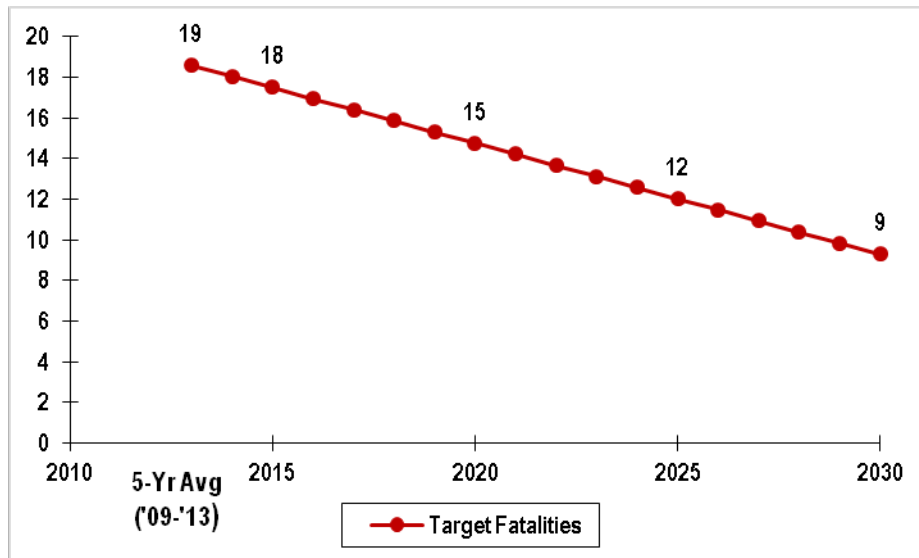
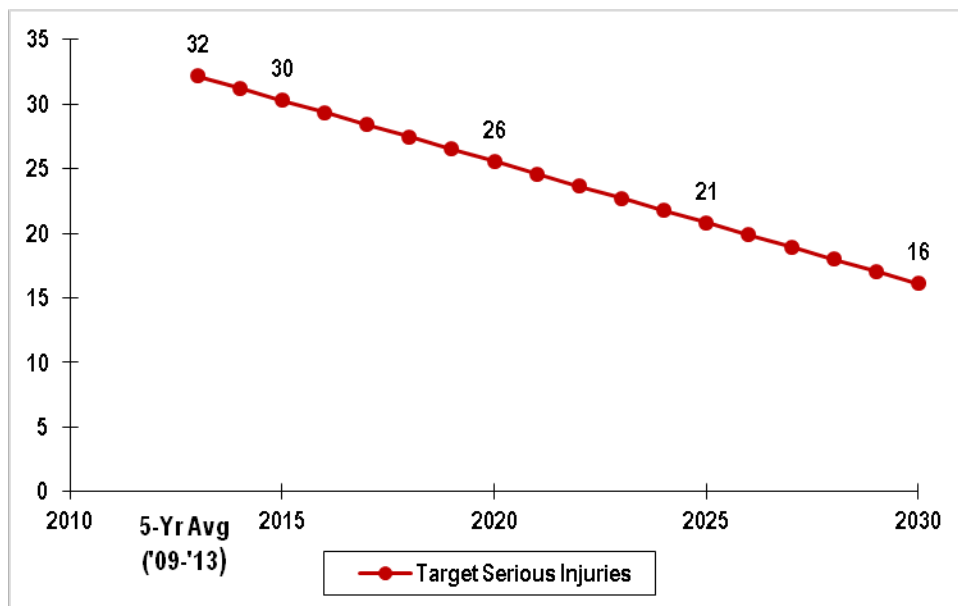


Figure 3.24 Benchmarks to Achieve a 50-Percent Reduction in Injuries Involving Young Drivers in Northeast Louisiana Region by 2030



To achieve these benchmarks, the NELHSP Young Driver Emphasis Area Team identified the following two strategies:

1. Implement various educational or virtual programs/activities in at least one new school each year.
2. Implement educational programs at three universities in Northeast Louisiana to target ages 18-24.



3. Create and implement public information campaign for middle and high schools.





# 4.0 SHSP Management, Implementation, and Evaluation

## 4.1 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE REGIONAL SAFETY COALITIONS

Upon completion of NELRTSP development, responsibilities shift to management, implementation, and evaluation of the plan. Moving forward, key partnership responsibilities include:

- Continuation of regular (quarterly or monthly) meetings to review program and project activities
- Annual review of crash data to reevaluate the regional transportation safety problems
- Annual evaluation of strategies, programs, and projects in the plan to determine effectiveness
- Annual update of the regional action plans
- Updates on progress to the statewide emphasis area team leaders

## 4.2 SAFETY PROGRAM AND PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

Effective implementation of the NELRTSP vision, goals, and emphasis area strategies requires extensive coordination and cooperation among regional stakeholders. Partnership members should meet biannually, at a minimum, to discuss the following objectives:

- Review implementation progress and performance in the emphasis areas
- Provide assistance to overcome barriers and solve problems
- Measure performance on SHSP-related campaigns, trainings, and other programs
- Provide guidance on future programs and activities

## 4.3 EVALUATION

The evaluation of the NELRTSP will study both process and outcome measures to determine if the planned projects and programs are being implemented and affecting the number of motor vehicle-related fatalities and serious injuries. The regional emphasis area team leaders will report progress on action steps identified in the regional safety action plans quarterly through the use of a tracking and monitoring tool. Using this tool, it is possible to monitor performance and more global process performance measures, such as the number of countermeasures underway, completed, or not started. Regional partnership leaders will give progress reports at the biannual implementation team meetings.