



# COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

*Commission*

*on the*

*Virginia Alcohol Safety Action Program (VASAP)*

Senator Henry L. Marsh, III  
Chairman

Debra D. Gardner  
Executive Director

## MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Mark R. Warner  
Members of the General Assembly

FROM: Senator Henry L. Marsh, III  
Chairman, Commission of VASAP

DATE: December 20, 2005

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Section 18.2-271.12 of the Code of Virginia requires that the Commission on VASAP submit to the Governor and the General Assembly and annual executive summary of the interim activity and work of the Commission. The attached report provides an overview of the Commission of VASAP activities during 2005.

Please contact my office or Debra D. Gardner the executive director of the Commission on VASAP if you have any questions.

Attachment

# Annual Executive Summary

2005

**THE COMMISSION ON**



**VASAP**

**Virginia Alcohol Safety Action Program**

## **Introduction**

The Virginia Alcohol Safety Action Program traces its roots to Fairfax County. In 1972, it became the site of one of 35 national “Alcohol Safety Action Projects” funded by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). On March 24, 1975, legislation passed by the General Assembly expanded this program statewide establishing driver education and rehabilitation programs in an effort to reduce the number of highway tragedies.

There are currently 24 Alcohol Safety Action Programs throughout Virginia. Every jurisdiction in the Commonwealth is covered. They have the responsibility of doing everything they can to lower the number of impaired drivers on our roadways. Efforts have paid off because the number of DUI deaths in Virginia continues to decline each year.

In 1986, the General Assembly formed the Commission on Virginia Alcohol Safety Action Program (Commission on VASAP). This provided for the standardization of ASAP operations, increasing the quality and equity of services to offenders statewide. Section 18.2-271.2 of the *Code of Virginia* requires the Commission on VASAP to submit to the Governor and the General Assembly an annual executive summary of the interim activity and work of the Commission. This report provides an overview of Commission on VASAP activities during 2005.

## **Mission**

To improve highway safety by decreasing the incidence of driving under the influence of alcohol and other drugs, leading to the reduction of alcohol and drug-related fatalities and crashes.

## **Objectives**

1. Deter the motoring public from driving under the influence of alcohol and other drugs.
2. Deter those arrested and convicted of driving under the influence from becoming repeat offenders.
3. Increase awareness to aid in the identification, apprehension and conviction of offenders driving under the influence of alcohol and other drugs.
4. Raise the conviction rate for offenders and the number of appropriate referrals to Alcohol Safety Action Programs.
5. Ensure appropriate probationary control of offenders.
6. Ensure the delivery of proper education and treatment services for offenders.
7. Provide statewide offender tracking services for all ASAPs.
8. Increase public awareness of the civil and legal consequences of DUI arrests, public perception of transportation crash risks and public activities to reduce DUI incidents.
9. Assess and maintain the effectiveness and self-supporting status of both the Commission and local Alcohol Safety Action Programs.

## **Programs**

VASAP has developed many educational programs designed to improve highway safety, providing a credible Alcohol Safety Action Program that responds to the needs of each locality in Virginia. Included among these are:

- Aggressive Driver Program
- Habitual Offender Restoration Reviews
- Driver Improvement
- First Offender Drug Programs
- Young Offender Program
- Relapse Prevention Education
- Adolescent Alcohol Education
- Victim Impact Panels
- Driving Suspended Program
- Community Diversion Incentive Program
- Ignition Interlock Program
- Drug Testing/Urine Screening
- Public Inebriate Program

## **Overview of the Commission**

§18.2-271.2. Commission on VASAP; purpose; membership; terms; meetings; staffing; compensation and expenses; chairman's executive summary.

A. There is hereby established in the legislative branch of state government the Commission on the Virginia Alcohol Safety Action Program (VASAP). The Commission shall administer and supervise the state system of local alcohol and safety action programs, develop and maintain operation and performance standards for local alcohol and safety action programs, and allocate funding to such programs. The Commission shall consist of 15 members that include six legislative members and nine nonlegislative citizen members. Members shall be appointed as follows: four current or former members of the House Committee for Courts of Justice, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Delegates in accordance with the principles of proportional representation contained in the Rules of the House of Delegates; two members of the Senate Committee for Courts of Justice, to be appointed by the Senate Privileges and Elections Committee; three sitting or retired judges, one each from the circuit, general district and juvenile and domestic relations district courts, who regularly hear or heard cases involving driving under the influence and are familiar with their local alcohol safety action programs, to be appointed by the Chairman of the Committee on District Courts; two directors of local alcohol safety action programs, to be appointed by the legislative members of the Commission; one representative from the law-enforcement profession, to be appointed by the Speaker of the House and one nonlegislative citizen at large, to be appointed by the Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections; one representative from the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles whose duties are substantially related to matters to be addressed by the Commission to be appointed by the Commissioner of the Department of Motor Vehicles, and one representative from the

Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services whose duties also substantially involve such matters, to be appointed by the Commissioner of the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services. Legislative members shall serve terms coincident with their terms of office. In accordance with the staggered terms previously established, nonlegislative citizen members shall serve two-year terms. All members may be reappointed. Appointments to fill vacancies, other than by expiration of a term, shall be made for the unexpired terms. Any appointment to fill a vacancy shall be made in the same manner as the original appointment.

B. The Commission shall meet at least four times each year at such places as it may from time to time designate. A majority of the members shall constitute a quorum. The Commission shall elect a chairman and vice-chairman from among its membership.

The Commission shall be empowered to establish and ensure the maintenance of minimum standards and criteria for program operations and performance, accounting, auditing, public information and administrative procedures for the various local alcohol safety action programs and shall be responsible for overseeing the administration of the statewide VASAP system. Such programs shall be certified by the Commission in accordance with procedures set forth in the Commission on VASAP Certification Manual. The Commission shall also oversee program plans, operations and performance and a system for allocating funds to cover deficits that may occur in the budgets of local programs.

C. The Commission shall appoint and employ and, at its pleasure, remove an executive director and such other persons as it may deem necessary, and determine their duties and fix their salaries or compensation.

D. The Commission shall appoint a Virginia Alcohol Safety Action Program Advisory Board to make recommendations to the Commission regarding its duties and administrative functions. The membership of such Board shall be appointed in the discretion of the Commission and include personnel from (i) local safety action programs, (ii) state or local boards of mental health and mental retardation and (iii) other community mental health services organizations. An assistant attorney general who provides counsel in matters relating to driving under the influence shall also be appointed to the Board.

E. Legislative members of the Commission shall receive compensation as provided in § [30-19.12](#). Funding for the costs of compensation of legislative members shall be provided by the Commission. All members shall be reimbursed for all reasonable and necessary expenses as provided in §§ [2.2-2813](#) and [2.2-2825](#) to be paid out of that portion of moneys paid in VASAP defendant entry fees which is forwarded to the Virginia Alcohol Safety Action Program.

F. The chairman of the Commission shall submit to the Governor and the General Assembly an annual executive summary of the interim activity and work of the Commission no later than the first day of each regular session of the General Assembly. The executive summary shall be submitted as provided in the procedures of the Division of Legislative Automated Systems for the processing of legislative documents and reports and shall be posted on the General Assembly's website.

## **Commission Members**

Senator Henry L. Marsh, III, Chairman  
Senator Kenneth T. Cuccinelli, II  
Delegate Ward L. Armstrong  
Delegate Robert B. Bell  
Delegate Robert Hurt  
Delegate Ryan T. McDougle  
Honorable Archie Elliott, Jr.

Honorable Robert B. Spencer, Jr.  
Honorable George D. Varoutsos  
Mr. Clifford Hoffman  
Ms. Susan E. Marchon  
Sheriff Michael L. Wade  
Ms. Joanne Maxwell  
Ms. Pat Eggleston

## **Commission Staff**

Debra D. Gardner – Executive Director  
Angela Coleman – Field Services Supervisor  
John Kimbel – IT Administrator  
Oscar Brinson – Legal Counsel

Tracy Thacker – Executive Assistant  
Richard Foy – Technical Instructor  
Keshana Lee – Fiscal Technician

## **Commission Meeting Dates**

March 18, 2005

June 30, 2005

September 23, 2005

December 9, 2005

## **Advisory Board**

The Commission on VASAP, as mandated by the Code of Virginia, has an appointed advisory board which makes recommendations to the Commission regarding its duties and administrative functions. The VASAP Advisory Board met on the following date:

September 14, 2005

## Component Area Activities

In keeping with VASAP's mission to improve highway safety, the VASAP system operates within five component target areas.

### Case Management/Offender Intervention

Persons referred to ASAP are monitored by case managers who assess and classify offenders to determine the most appropriate education and/or treatment services needed.

In 2005, the Commission on VASAP:

- provided services for over 49,000 citizens of the Commonwealth.
- initiated revisions to the instructor guides for the Intensive Education and Drug Education curriculums.
- provided grants to the three ASAP regions for clerical, case management, driver improvement and law enforcement training.
- served on the Substance Abuse Services Council with other state agencies to establish uniform assessment tools and statewide substance abuse standards and treatment definitions.
- conducted a system-wide Super Conference in Portsmouth, August 15-17, for approximately 250 members of all local ASAPs.
- attended the annual meeting of the National Organization of State Impaired-Driving Programs (NOSIP) in Florida.
- served on the Virginia Safety Management System (SMS) project committee, the Traffic Records Electronic Data System (TREDS) committee, and the CODES Advisory Group, groups assembled for the purpose of improving the quality, timeliness and interagency linkage of transportation safety data.
- participated as a member of the Supreme Court's advisory committee that is creating standards and guidelines for specialty courts.
- observed DUI court operations in Staunton, Virginia.
- provided ongoing technical support and infrastructure for maintenance of the offender tracking system.
- provided comprehensive substance abuse training with a specialty ASAP track for approximately 40 ASAP directors and case managers at the Summer Institute on Addiction Studies at the College of William and Mary.
- implemented recommendations from the Substance Abuse Services Council Annual Report (to the Governor and the General Assembly) to include: (1) placing a high priority on hard core drunk drivers and repeat offenders; (2) promoting and providing training in the use of the Substance Abuse Subtle Screening Inventory (SASSI) and the Addiction Severity Index (ASI); (3) establishing uniform, statewide substance abuse standards and treatment definitions for use by service providers, and (4) identifying programs and evaluations that have documented success.
- instituted a study on alcohol monitoring devices and new urine screening technology (EGT).

## 2005 VASAP REFERRALS

<b><i>TOTAL REFERRALS BY AGE*</i></b>	<b><i>PERCENTAGE</i></b>
< 16	0.12%
16 – 25	38.21%
26 – 35	24.64%
36 – 45	19.99%
46 – 65	15.94%
> 65	1.10%
<b><i>TOTAL REFERRALS BY RACE*</i></b>	<b><i>PERCENTAGE</i></b>
African American	20.87%
Asian	1.87%
Caucasian	68.86%
Hispanic	7.55%
Other	0.85%
<b><i>TOTAL REFERRALS BY GENDER*</i></b>	<b><i>PERCENTAGE</i></b>
Male	75.37%
Female	24.63%
<b><i>DUI REFERRALS BY CURRICULUM**</i></b>	<b><i>PERCENTAGE</i></b>
Education	23.15%
Intensive Education	31.12%
Treatment	45.73%

\* “Total referrals” include all persons receiving any type of ASAP service.

\*\* “DUI referrals” include only those persons referred to ASAP as a result of a DUI conviction.

### Adjudication

VASAP, prosecutors, and the courts work together to ensure the efficient processing of those convicted of driving under the influence and referred to VASAP for probation.

In 2005, the Commission on VASAP:

- presented an overview of ASAP services to over 150 persons at the judicial training conference in Virginia Beach, August 17-19. This presentation was highlighted by personal appearances of actual ASAP clients, some of whom were DUI recidivists.
- continued to provide support for Virginia’s only two DUI courts in Fredericksburg and Staunton.
- sent the executive director to meet with the Legislative Service Agency (LSA) Directors of the Southern Legislative Conference in Asheville, North Carolina.



### Enforcement

VASAP enhances law enforcement efforts to reduce alcohol and other drug-related crashes by providing training to detect and apprehend those driving under the influence.

In 2005, the Commission on VASAP:

- trained approximately 100 officers, from over 35 different law enforcement agencies, in DUI detection and standardized field sobriety testing (SFST).
- trained approximately 40 DUI enforcement instructors.
- monitored committee meetings of the General Assembly to track the introduction and passage of DUI enforcement legislation.
- attended the Virginia Beach DUI Enforcement Conference, March 21-23.

### Public Information/Education

VASAP helps reduce the number of impaired driving injuries and fatalities by increasing public awareness through education, and by encouraging responsible decision making. Each program conducts local public information efforts with training and support materials from the Commission.

In 2005, the Commission on VASAP:

- exhibited at the Virginia State Fair which was attended by over 260,000 people, September 22 – October 2.
- hosted an information and education booth at the Judicial Training Conference, August 17-19.
- updated the adult offender DUI sanctions chart and distributed it to judges and attorneys.
- updated the juvenile “use and lose” sanctions chart and distributed it with accompanying brochures to juvenile courts in the Commonwealth.
- sent brochures to high schools and community colleges for special events (e.g., Operation Prom, etc.)
- wrote and distributed a new brochure entitled “Drinking, Driving, and Getting Arrested in Virginia.”
- created and launched the “Choose to be Free” campaign aimed at the prevention of alcohol and tobacco use among middle school students.

### Evaluation/Certification

The Commission on VASAP is responsible for periodically evaluating and recertifying each ASAP to ensure that services in the communities are effective, consistent, and appropriate.

In 2005, the Commission on VASAP:

- audited and reviewed the budgets of the 24 local alcohol safety action programs (ASAPs).
- performed field visits of local ASAPs.
- conducted certification reviews of all ASAP programs in the Battlefield and Blue Ridge regions.