

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 2010.

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:

- Reckless/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 Service Program
- Ignition Interlock Program
- Drug Testing/Urine Screening
- DUI Court (Fredericksburg and Staunton)

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

Legislative

Senator Henry L. Marsh, III, Chairman
Delegate Salvatore Iaquinto, Vice Chairman
Delegate C. Todd Gilbert

Senator Roscoe Reynolds
Delegate Ward L. Armstrong
Delegate Jackson H. Miller

Judicial

Honorable James F. Almand
Honorable George W. Harris, Jr.

Honorable George D. Varoutsos

At-large Members

Ms. Susan E. Marchon
Mr. John L. Saunders
Sheriff Michael L. Wade

Mr. Roy-Keith Lloyd
Ms. Pat Eggleston

Commission Staff

Angela D. Coleman – Executive Director
John Kimbel – IT Administrator
Tracy Thacker – Executive Assistant

Richard Foy – Special Projects Coordinator
Keshana Lee – Accountant
Oscar Brinson – Legal Counsel

Commission Meeting Dates (2010)

Mar. 24th

June 11th

Sept. 17th

Dec. 3rd

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.

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 screen and classify offenders to determine the most appropriate education and/or treatment services needed.

In 2010, the Commission on VASAP:

- proactively assisted local ASAPs to address fiscal challenges and enhance local program services by continuing the reduction in the amount of state share fees that local programs submit to the state office (as required by § 18.2-271.1 of the Code of Virginia) from six percent (6%) to three percent (3%).
- provided services for over 71,000 citizens of the Commonwealth.
- participated as a member of a VCU Institute for Drug and Alcohol Studies epidemiology workgroup to provide substance abuse data for a SAMHSA grant.
- participated as a member of the Supreme Court's statewide Drug Court Advisory Committee, tasked with creating standards and guidelines, and reviewing and approving applications for specialty court programs.
- conducted a Case Management Conference in Virginia Beach, August 9-10, for approximately 100 case managers from local ASAPs.
- provided ongoing technical support and infrastructure for maintenance of the offender tracking system.
- worked with the Department of Motor Vehicles on matters related to restricted license orders, ignition interlock, and ASAP compliance.
- provided two facilitator training sessions in Virginia Beach (January 9th) and Salem (March 27th) on standard ASAP case management procedures and ASAP curriculum reviews and updates.
- issued new regulations governing the operation of the ignition interlock program in the Commonwealth.
- promulgated an ignition interlock guidance document for use by vendors and local ASAPs.
- produced an informational brochure for offenders assigned to the ignition interlock program.
- provided ongoing information technology support for the local ASAPs to include training in the use of the Inferno offender tracking system.
- attended the Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA) National Ignition Interlock Summit in Arlington (November 4th) and participated on the regulatory work group.
- monitored and inspected 93 ignition interlock service centers.
- participated in a NHTSA-sponsored regional ignition interlock conference in Raleigh, North Carolina, August 3-4.
- provided an ignition interlock program training session for vendors and ASAP directors.

- worked cooperatively with the executive committee of the VASAP Directors' Association and attended all of their quarterly meetings and fall and spring conferences.
- provided managerial oversight for ASAPs during the absence of local program directors.
- updated and provided a driver improvement curriculum for use by local ASAPs.
- completed the development of a new young offender curriculum.
- updated the VASAP education/intensive education curricula and facilitator manuals.
- maintained the VASAP – DMV interface for electronic submission of ASAP program data.

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 2010, the Commission on VASAP:

- partnered with the Virginia Departments of State Police, Motor Vehicles, Game and Inland Fisheries, and Alcoholic Beverage Control to plan and coordinate the 2010 Judicial Transportation Safety Conference at Virginia Beach, August 11-13.
- provided staff in many jurisdictions to assist judges and clerks of court with the processing of DUI cases.
- continued to provide support for the DUI courts in Fredericksburg and Staunton.
- produced an adult offender DUI sanctions chart and distributed it to judges and attorneys.
- sent brochures on teenage drinking and driving to Virginia juvenile and domestic relations courts for use in drivers' licensing ceremonies.
- presented legislative updates and information on ASAP policy to judges at the Judicial Transportation Safety Conference.

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 2010, the Commission on VASAP:

- provided the keynote speaker for the Southside ASAP law enforcement recognition banquet on October 22nd.
- monitored committee meetings of the General Assembly to track the introduction and passage of DUI enforcement legislation.
- sent informational materials to police departments for distribution to the public.
- attended training for law enforcement personnel and Commonwealth attorneys provided by local ASAPs.

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 2010, the Commission on VASAP:

- hosted an information and education booth at Schmooza Palooza, the Richmond Chamber of Commerce's annual picnic, at the University of Richmond on May 13th.
- hosted an information and education booth at the Judicial Transportation Safety Conference, August 11-12.
- updated and reprinted existing public information and education materials and revised the Teenage Drinking and Driving brochure to reflect changes in the law.
- displayed billboards in areas of the state where data indicates a high number of DUIs.
- expanded public information efforts by sending brochures to high schools, community colleges, universities, businesses, insurance companies, county administrators' offices, regional jails, mass transit sites, and private driving schools.
- provided curriculum materials to law enforcement agencies involved in school alcohol/tobacco prevention programs.
- provided curriculum materials for juvenile justice agencies on substance abuse prevention and education.
- provided an information booth on two occasions at the "Fridays at Sunset" festival in Richmond, July 16th and July 30th. Written prevention materials were distributed to the public on the dangers and consequences of drinking and driving.
- continued to be a member of the Highway Safety Challenge committee with VDOT, VSP, DMV and other non-profit and private sector organizations to develop innovative and effective strategies to reduce traffic fatalities by encouraging motorists to be responsible drivers.
- provided information on underage drinking and the use of tobacco for Jack and Jill of America's Annual Teen Conference (Mid-Atlantic Region).

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 2010, the Commission on VASAP:

- provided oversight for the vendor conducting financial audits of the local ASAPs.
- audited and reviewed the budgets of the 24 local alcohol safety action programs (ASAPs).
- underwent a financial audit of the state office with no findings of deficiencies.
- performed field visits of local ASAPs.
- conducted management reviews of local programs.

- attended and presented information on program operations at local policy board meetings.
- completed follow-up certification reviews of local ASAPs.
- continued the process to review and revise all VASAP regulations.
- worked to produce a human resource policy and procedure manual for local programs.
- initiated a fee review committee to standardize the application of offender fees.
- provided training on the program certification process for local ASAP directors.
- began the process for revision of the certification procedures for local programs.

2010 VASAP REFERRALS

<i>TOTAL REFERRALS BY AGE*</i>	<i>PERCENTAGE</i>
< 16	0.09%
16 – 25	37.21%
26 – 35	25.65%
36 – 45	16.98%
46 – 65	18.85%
> 65	1.22%
<i>DUI REFERRALS BY CURRICULUM**</i>	
Education	26.41%
Intensive Education	27.80%
Treatment	45.79%
Drug Education	0.00%

* “Total referrals” include all persons receiving any type of ASAP service (n = 71,882).

** “DUI referrals” include only those persons referred to ASAP as a result of a DUI conviction (n = 26,458).

As demonstrated by the above data, the Commission on VASAP continued to provide quality services to the citizens of the Commonwealth in 2010, despite a very challenging economic environment. This was accomplished without using general fund revenues. The Commission looks forward to ongoing success in 2011 as it works cooperatively with the general assembly to reduce traffic-related injuries and fatalities.