

Appendix A: Authority

Title 23, United States Code, Chapter 4, Section 403 gives the Secretary authorization to use funds appropriated to carry out this section to conduct research and development activities, including demonstration projects and the collection and analysis of highway and motor vehicle safety data and related information needed to carry out this section, with respect to all aspects of highway and traffic safety systems and conditions relating to - vehicle, highway, driver, passenger, motorcyclist, bicyclist, and pedestrian characteristics; accident causation and investigations; and human behavioral factors and their effect on highway and traffic safety, including distracted driving. [See 23 U.S.C. 403(b)(1)(A)(i), 23 U.S.C. 403(b)(1)(A)(ii), 23 U.S.C. 403(b)(1)(B)(iii)].

Sec. 401. Authority of the Secretary

The Secretary is authorized and directed to assist and cooperate with other Federal departments and agencies, State and local governments, private industry, and other interested parties, to increase highway safety. For the purposes of this chapter, the term "State" means any one of the fifty States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Sec. 403. Highway safety research and development

(a) Defined Term. - In this section, the term "Federal laboratory" includes -

- (1) a government-owned, government-operated laboratory; and
- (2) a government-owned, contractor-operated laboratory.

(b) General Authority. -

(1) Research and development activities. - The Secretary may conduct research and development activities, including demonstration projects and the collection and analysis of highway and motor vehicle safety data and related information needed to carry out this section, with respect to -

(A) all aspects of highway and traffic safety systems and conditions relating to -

(i) vehicle, highway, driver, passenger, motorcyclist, bicyclist, and pedestrian characteristics;

(ii) accident causation and investigations;

(iii) communications; and

(iv) emergency medical services, including the transportation of the injured;

(B) human behavioral factors and their effect on highway and traffic safety, including -

(i) driver education;

(ii) impaired driving; and

(iii) distracted driving;

(C) an evaluation of the effectiveness of countermeasures to increase highway and traffic safety, including occupant protection and alcohol- and drug-impaired driving technologies and initiatives;

(D) the development of technologies to detect drug impaired drivers;

(E) research on, evaluations of, and identification of best practices related to driver education programs (including driver education curricula, instructor training and certification, program administration, and delivery mechanisms) and make recommendations for harmonizing driver education and multistage graduated licensing systems; and

(F) the effect of State laws on any aspects, activities, or programs described in subparagraphs (A) through (E).

(2) Cooperation, grants, and contracts. - The Secretary may carry out this section -

(A) independently;

(B) in cooperation with other Federal departments, agencies, and instrumentalities and Federal laboratories;

(C) by entering into contracts, cooperative agreements, and other transactions with the National Academy of Sciences, any Federal laboratory, State or local agency, authority, association, institution, or person (as defined in chapter 1 of title 1); or

(D) by making grants to the National Academy of Sciences, any Federal laboratory, State or local agency, authority, association, institution, or person (as defined in chapter 1 of title 1).

(c) Collaborative Research and Development. -

(1) In general. - To encourage innovative solutions to highway safety problems, stimulate voluntary improvements in highway safety, and stimulate the marketing of new highway safety related technology by private industry, the Secretary is authorized to carry out, on a cost-shared basis, collaborative research and development with -

(A) non-Federal entities, including State and local governments, colleges, universities, corporations, partnerships, sole proprietorships, organizations, and trade associations that are incorporated or established under the laws of any State or the United States; and

(B) Federal laboratories.

(2) Agreements. - In carrying out this subsection, the Secretary may enter into cooperative research and development agreements (as defined in section 12 of the Stevenson-Wydler Technology Innovation Act of 1980 (15 U.S.C. 3710a)) in which the Secretary provides not more than 50 percent of the cost of any research or development project under this subsection.

(3) Use of technology. - The research, development, or use of any technology pursuant to an agreement under this subsection, including the terms under which technology may be licensed and the resulting royalties may be distributed, shall be subject to the provisions of the Stevenson-Wydler Technology Innovation Act of 1980 (15 U.S.C. 3701 et seq.).

(d) Title to Equipment. - In furtherance of the purposes set forth in section 402, the Secretary may vest title to equipment purchased for demonstration projects with funds authorized under this section to State or local agencies on such terms and conditions as the Secretary determines to be appropriate.

(e) Prohibition on Certain Disclosures. - Any report of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, or of any officer, employee, or contractor of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, relating to any highway traffic accident or the investigation of such accident conducted pursuant to this chapter or chapter 301 may only be made available to the public in a manner that does not identify individuals.