Washington Operation Lifesaver

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Operation Lifesaver, Inc. - National Organization

• Its mission “to end collisions, deaths and injuries at highway-rail grade crossings and on railroad property through a nationwide network of volunteers who work to educate people about rail safety.”

• Started in Idaho in 1972, reducing crossing fatalities fell by 43% in one year and it quickly spread to other states.

• In 1986, National OLI was created to support the efforts of the states.

• Provides states with:
  • Logos, images, videos, and materials for spreading consistent message.
  • Standardized training program for authorized volunteers.
  • Competitive grant program

• Issues nationwide press releases and advertising.

•Coordinates Rail Safety Week.
Operation Lifesaver Structure in Washington State

• Washington Operation Lifesaver (WAOL) started in 1984.
• 1996 – became independent 501(c)(3) non-profit.
• The Executive Committee consists of members from UTC, WSP, WSDOT, Amtrak, Sound Transit, BNSF, Union Pacific, OSPI, FRA, Traffic Safety Commission, and two railroad employee unions.

• UTC provides support:
  • WAOL state coordinator & co-coordinator are UTC employees.
  • UTC employees manage supplies, submit OLI grant applications, coordinate volunteers and events, and complete administrative tasks (annual report, internal audit, IRS tax filings, etc.).
  • UTC communications staff maintains social media (Facebook/Twitter).
  • Truck and costs for transporting WAOL exhibit trailer statewide.
WAOL Structure

• WAOL funding
  • Class 1 railroads in WA – BNSF Railway and Union Pacific Railroad.
  • WSDOT – for operations along Amtrak Cascades corridor.
  • Several shortlines.
  • OLI competitive grant program and private fundraising

• In 2019
  • Operating under new OLI partnership agreement.
  • Private grant applications begin (non-agency committee members).
  • Expand social media outreach.
  • Continue to expand innovative ways to deliver safety message such as geo-fencing.
WAOL Activities

• WAOL program – 3 e’s
  • In 1984, crossing incidents = 143 and pedestrian incidents = 32.
  • By 2017, crossing incidents = 29 and pedestrian = 14.
  • Combination of Education, Engineering and Enforcement.

• In 2018:
  • WAOL had 26 active volunteers making 547 presentations. Also spent more than 400 hours at special events. (Outreach to more than 61,000 people).
  • Facebook and Twitter activity made more than 67,000 impressions.
  • Geofencing activity in designated areas around special events delivered impressions to more than 1.9 million people (BNSF grant)
Questions?

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