



July 23, 2010

To Our Highway Safety Partners in Law Enforcement:

Since 2005, Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) have had to submit paper crash reports to the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT), which were then manually keyed and converted into electronic crash reports (O.C.G.A. §40-9-31). In order to improve timeliness, accuracy and efficiency, GDOT has been working diligently over the past several years to allow LEAs to submit crash reports electronically.

GDOT is pleased to announce it is now fully able to receive crash reports electronically through a system called GEARS (Georgia Electronic Accident Reporting System). LEAs producing electronic crash reports will now be able to electronically submit them to GDOT after their data has been properly mapped to the State system, tested and verified.

In an effort to ease transition into GEARS, GDOT has contracted with Open Portal Solutions, Inc. (OPS). Crash report data continues to be the property of GDOT; however, the system and web service will be maintained and operated by OPS. The states of Kentucky, Indiana, Washington and Tennessee have all used electronic crash reporting maintained by OPS with great success. Under this partnership, OPS, acting as an agent of GDOT will be in contact with every LEA. Below is a brief overview of some of the many benefits this partnership with OPS can offer LEAs in the ways they generate, submit and use crash data:

- 1) **Free Software.** LEAs that do not currently have an electronic crash reporting option can receive software, implementation, training, and on-going technical support that will allow them to electronically capture and submit crash reports to the State - *all at no charge*. This field crash reporting application is called the GEARS Client (aka NE Crash) and it is configured to meet all of the State of Georgia requirements for data collection and data validation.
- 2) **Increased Resources.** LEAs which already have an electronic crash reporting system in place will now have the ability to transmit crash reports to the State electronically, thereby reducing the time and resources currently involved in submitting the reports. Some coordination will first need to take place between OPS and that respective LEA's vendor.
- 3) **Free Access to GDOT's System.** All LEAs will have free access to GDOT's online Records Management System (RMS) via a web portal (www.gearsportal.com). This will provide them with the ability to retrieve crash reports, run queries, map crashes, and to generate various reports & extracts tailored to the LEA's specific needs.
- 4) **Transition Period.** Although GDOT anticipates that the benefits of utilizing the GEARS Client will lead to all LEAs submitting crash reports electronically, LEAs will continue to be able to produce and submit manual crash reports.

GDOT is excited about this important step in the future of crash reporting and the progress made with the help of OPS to benefit LEAs and their crash reporting responsibilities. GDOT eagerly anticipates that your agencies will take full advantage of these *no cost* services. We appreciate your service to the citizens of Georgia and look forward to working with all LEAs on this project. Should you have any questions or concerns, or if you would like to be given more comprehensive information, please contact Norm Cressman, GDOT Crash Reporting Manager, via email at ncressman@dot.ga.gov, or phone, 404-635-8131.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Vance".

Vance C. Smith, Jr.
Commissioner

VCS:NC:crm

cc: Gerald M. Ross, P.E., Deputy Commissioner/Chief Engineer
Keith Golden, Director of Permits and Operations
Norm Cressman, Crash Reporting Manager