Public Information and Education Division

Since 1931, the Missouri State Highway Patrol has considered educating the public to be one of its responsibilities. In the mid-1930s, the high accident toll experienced in Missouri led to the Patrol's establishment of a Safety Department. This department would eventually become the Traffic Division, then the Patrol Records Division of today. But prior to 1953, and the creation of the Public Information Office, the Safety Department filled the dual role of gathering statistics and promoting safety education.

At the same time, the Safety Department was formed, a member was sent to Northwestern University to study the problems of traffic and safety. A campaign started "to educate the driver in safe driving practices and traffic regulations". Troopers went into schools and to civic groups to teach Missouri's traffic laws and safety. "Motion pictures of safe driving" were used to teach the public.

The first safety program, adopted by the Patrol in 1935, stressed careful driving and strict adherence to the rules of the road. In 1937, the first safety officers were named. In 1940, the Safety Squadron was formed. This group toured the state working traffic by selective enforcement and promoting traffic safety. The squadron included 13 white motorcycles, one white Ford coupe with a house trailer, four white panel trucks, and two white coaches. Members of the squadron had radio communications with one another and the nearest troop headquarters.

"I think the Safety Squadron was one of the best things the Patrol ever did. Not because I was part of it, but the way they did it," said retired Sergeant Tom W. Pasley in a 2005 interview. "The 'little general' Captain Bob Moore took care of the squadron. He was the brains behind it. We could only ride the white safety squadron motorcycles when we were together as a squadron. The little general knew a lot of people and got us those motorcycles. AAA was always out there with us. There were 10 of us, the 'little general', and he had two sergeants—13 total.

Each of us worked a two-mile stretch. We did a lot of good—stopping people for every little thing. If a taillight had a chip in it, we stopped them. They probably didn't know about it. We just talked to them, wrote them a warning, and sent them on their way. You pull into town with 13 white motorcycles, and people just stand and stare at you".

By the early 1940s, the Patrol had assigned a safety officer to each troop. The 1945-1947 biennial report indicated the safety officers were assigned to the Safety Division. This division also included a central accident record bureau. The safety officers presented safety programs in their area. The Safety Department continued to track safety officer activities and have some interaction with them. In the early part of 1944, the Patrol worked with several other state agencies in sponsoring the first high school driver education program in Missouri. Safety

officers continued working closely with area schools. According to a 1966 annual report, safety officers helped inspect 6,000 school buses. That year, they also conducted 90 driver improvement schools for Missouri drivers.

It wasn't until 1953 that the Patrol created a Public Information Department within the Division of Safety and Administration. While the Safety Department retained the responsibility of the safety officers, this new department was given the responsibility of creating and distributing educational materials. The Public Information Department was tasked with compiling the annual report and other reports required as to the activities of the Patrol.

A staff writer position was created in 1964; a staff artist joined the division in 1967.

The Public Information Department would be known by several names throughout the Patrol's history. In the late 1950s, it would be the Public Information Office. In the 1960s, this office was referred to as the Public Information and Education Section. For most of the 1970s, it was called the Public Information Section. But, in 1979, the title 'Safety Education and Information Division' was adopted. This area was known as the Public Information Division in 1983 and 1984. For about three years in the late 1980s, this function was combined with research and known as the Research and Information Division. The division would be split into two functions in 1989, with the Safety and Information Division focusing on educating the public, specific reports, and the safety officer duties. The division's last name change occurred in 1991, when it adopted the name it carries today—Public Information and Education Division (PIED).

The safety officers were part of the Safety Division (the Patrol Records Division of today) from 1946 through 1978. In 1972, the Public Information Office moved to its current location. In 1979, the safety officers were reassigned to the Safety Education and Information Division. The change from one division to the other took place again in 1981, when the safety officers were reassigned to the Traffic Division. This would change for the last time in 1989, when they were assigned to the Research and Information Division. When that division was split into two separate functions, the Research Division and the Public Information and Education Division, the safety officers became public information and education officers and assigned to PIED.

One of the functions of PIED is to support the public information and education officers assigned to the troops. This support includes developing programs, assignments to statewide events (Boys State, Girls State, Missouri State Fair, etc.), media communications training, support for troop Community Alliance Programs and Student Alliance Programs, child car seat technician certification, SkillsUSA, the Constitution Project, and attending the USEOW conferences, etc. Another important function of this division is assisting troop PIEOs or coordinating assistance from other troop PIEOs during major media events and

news conferences, manhunts, extraordinary traffic crashes, serious weather situations, and criminal incidents, etc. A sampling of the types of events garnering statewide and/or national interest with which PIED has assisted include: The Alis Ben Johns manhunt in 1997, the 98-car traffic crash in the Troop C area in April 1998, the shooting at Conception Abbey in 2002, the recovery of kidnapping victims Ben Ownby and Shawn Hornbeck in 2007, the EF-5 tornado that struck Joplin, MO, in 2011, the Texas County shooting spree in 2015, the 2018 DUKW stretch Duck 07 tragedy at Table Rock Lake, the 40-vehicle crash on Interstate 57 in Charleston, MO, and the AMTRAK derailment in Mendon, MO, in 2022.

In 1976, a Photographic Unit was established in the Traffic Division. According to a 1978 annual report, this unit was very busy. The unit printed 19,400 photographs that year. This unit would be placed under the Crime Laboratory, then the Budget and Procurement Division, before being permanently assigned to the Public Information and Education Division in 2004. According to 2006 statistics, the photo laboratory printed 34,241 pictures from film and printed 34,223 digital pictures. Over the years, digital photography has become primary, and in 2021, only 657 photo prints were made. However, the photographer took 41,683 photos in 2021, in conjunction with the 90th anniversary yearbook. Engraving has been assigned to the photographer, and 469 items were engraved in 2021.

Educating The Public

As early as a 1959-1960 Missouri Manual, the “dissemination of releases and articles concerning traffic safety and activities of the Patrol through the media ...” was expected. The division also prepared safety pamphlets, folders, books, and other material in the promotion of traffic safety. The same manual indicated “articles consisting of more than 130,000 words yearly are prepared ...”

News releases and public service announcements are still a vital role of PIED. For a number of years, until 1999, these were sent to print media, radio, and television stations throughout Missouri via The Link, a wire service in Iowa Falls, IA; News Net, a wire service linked through MULES; U.S. mail; or fax machine. In 1999, the Patrol formed a partnership with Learfield Communications and began posting all news releases on Learfield’s website, while continuing to use The Link, MULES, and U.S. postal service. In 2000, the Patrol discontinued use of The Link and U.S. mail. The public information specialist sent postcards to every media outlet in the state requesting e-mail addresses, and mailing groups were created in Lotus Notes. Thus, e-mail and posting news releases on the Learfield Communications’ website became the distribution method. In February 2007, the Patrol moved its news releases to its own home page. The practice of emailing news releases evolved, and media outlets now receive an email containing a link to the news release on the Patrol’s website. Media outlets can also access the news releases directly via the Internet.

In 2010, the division helped create an NCAA Southeastern Conference PSA with states attending the annual USEOW. Colonel Ron Replogle spoke about the importance of seat belt use for a PSA in 2012. The video was recorded to bring attention to a rise in fatalities. It was a call to drivers to pay attention, obey traffic laws, and wear their seatbelt.

Members of PIED assisted with "Click It 4 Life!" seatbelt PSAs including Troop C officers and Cardinals baseball players in 2012. Cardinals players Matt Carpenter, Jon Jay, Joe Kelly, Shelby Miller, and Jason Motte stood alongside Sgt. Amy E. Reynolds, Tpr. Juston R. Wheetley, Tpr. Derek A. Mason, and Sgt. Nothum, all Troop C. The PSAs were posted on the Patrol's website.

In 2016, several Cardinals baseball players joined Corporal Juston R. Wheetley, Sergeant Al P. Nothum, and Trooper Barbara A. Collins, all Troop C, in creating public service announcements about driving and seat belt safety.

In 2018, St. Louis Blues hockey players joined Cpl. Juston R. Wheetley and Trooper Dallas Thompson, both Troop C, to create public service announcements covering several traffic safety themed topics.

In 2020, members of the XFL’s St. Louis BattleHawks filmed public service announcements with the Troop C Public Information and Education Officers (PIEO). Unfortunately, only one of them aired. The season was then canceled due to the coronavirus pandemic.

During the 2021 Mizzou Tigers football games, Patrol PSAs addressing the dangers of drinking and driving played were shown.

Throughout its existence, PIED has helped coordinate news conferences on subjects important to the Patrol and the citizens of Missouri. Topics of these news conferences have included Operation Cashcrop (1986), Operation C.A.R.E. (numerous years), Buckle Up America (1998), Missouri legislation (numerous years), and federal legislation. At a 2006 news conference, Senator Jim Talent spoke about the passing of federal meth legislation, which was inspired by similar legislation passed in Missouri a year earlier. Other press conferences have addressed traffic fatalities and public safety, and included the governor, Department of Public Safety director, and Patrol’s Command Staff.

Recent press conferences have addressed these topics:

2010 — Colonel James F. Keathley and Captain J. Tim Hull (Q/PIED) spoke at a press conference highlighting the prior year having the lowest number of traffic fatalities in 60 years. The press conference took place at New Hickory Hills Elementary School in Springfield, MO.

2016 — Colonel J. Bret Johnson, colonels from four other states, and National Highway Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA) officials held a news conference to speak about speed enforcement.

2019 — The Patrol joined Governor Michael Parson and officials from the Missouri Department of Transportation, Missouri National Guard, and local emergency services at Rosecrans Memorial Airport in St. Joseph, MO, for a press conference regarding the impact of recent flooding in northwest Missouri and related road closures.

2020 — Missouri hosted the press conference kicking off NHTSA's "Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over" at Troop A Headquarters. Colonel Eric T. Olson was one of the speakers.

2022 — The Patrol hosted NHTSA representatives and colonels from Kansas Highway Patrol, Iowa State Patrol, Nebraska State Patrol, and Arkansas State Police at a press conference in May. Each spoke about the rising traffic fatalities and the importance of the Move Over laws in place. These agencies were taking part in a joint highway safety effort. The Patrol also hosted a news conference at the Lake of the Ozarks with representatives from Mothers Against Drunk Driving. The focus of the event was on safe boating and BWI laws.

In 2022 and 2023, the Recruiting and Community Outreach Division (RCOD) hosted a career fair at General Headquarters and PIED took part. The division provided personnel at the event, and the graphic artist created floor display banners or table covers for several divisions to use at their information tables. The event showcased the many job opportunities at the agency.

RCOD and PIED worked together to create advertising campaigns, and the graphic artist created a billboard to assist in recruiting new commercial vehicle officer candidates.

Traffic Safety Initiatives

In the late 1960s, the division began issuing "media cards". These press cards identified the bearer as a member of the media; they did not give security clearance. In 1971, 1,500 press cards were issued. The division issued 276 media cards in 2016. This practice was discontinued in 2017.

A "practice courtesy" campaign was launched in 1970. Five hundred billboards placed throughout the state urged drivers to practice courtesy. The Missouri Outdoor Advertising Association provided the billboards as a public service. In addition, special informational materials were distributed to the media about this campaign.

Each year, from 1970 to 1973, a special color slide was created and disseminated to all Missouri television stations. The slide contained a traffic safety message and was presented to the public by television stations.

Some of the media campaigns created by PIED through the years include:

"Everyone Has A Future In Safe Driving" (1971)

“Safe Driving Begins With A Safe Vehicle” (1972)
“Slow Down—Save Gas” (1973)
“Emergency Help CB Channel 9” (1975-76)
“Drive 55—Why Not?” (1977)

In 1986, country singer Jeanne Pruitt recorded traffic safety messages. Six years later, in 1992, the Oak Ridge Boys appeared in Branson, MO, to promote the “Buckle Up Missouri” campaign. The Missouri Division of Highway Safety sponsored the country music group taking part in this event. The public service announcements were released statewide.

In 1979, a place mat was designed and produced. This colorful item displayed information on traffic safety and first aid. It was distributed to restaurants throughout the state.

Two special video projects were created in 1983. The first coincided with the current media campaign entitled “If You Drink And Drive In Missouri, We’ll Show You Some New Bars”. The second video was for use in the Safety Education Center. This video explained how Patrol personnel use the Patrol’s computer system to identify stolen cars and/or wanted criminals on the highways.

Three public service announcements were recorded onto video in 1984. Two announcements addressed child safety restraints, and one dealt with the importance of wearing seat belts. These announcements were given to all Missouri television stations.

1-800-525-5555 (New emergency number, 1988)
Project Help (Salvation Army assisting motorists, 1989)
“Do You Know Your Limit? We Do!” (late 1980s)
“Buckle Your Bod!” (early 1990s)
“YOBU!” (You Otto Buckle Up! 1995)
“Fatal Choices” (with video, 1996)
Buckle Up! Life Jackets and Seat Belts Save Lives! (A joint effort of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Missouri State Water Patrol, and Missouri State Highway Patrol in 1999.)
“Click It or Ticket” (beginning in 2003)
“Stop the Knock” (with video, 2001)
“It’s My Life” (with video, 2005)
“Move Over”
“I’m Saving Lives. Help Wanted.” (October 2007 through December 2008)
“How To Save A Life” (with video, 2008)
"Permanent" (with video, 2010)
"Click It For Life (2012)
"Gone Too Soon" (with video, 2013)
"Don't Violate The Trust" (with video, 2016)
“If I Could Just Go Back ...” (with video, 2019)

In 2010, the division facilitated a partnership between the Patrol, Con-way Freight, and Roush/Fenway Racing for an anti-texting while driving safety campaign. A press conference in St. Louis announced campaign, which included placing a decal on the hood of the car driven by racecar driver Colin Braun. After the race in St. Louis, the car's hood was given to the Patrol and placed in the Safety Education Center.

The Patrol and the Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) hosted a Distracted Driving Summit on February 16-17, 2012, at the Capital Plaza Hotel, in Jefferson City, MO. Eighty-one people attended. As part of the summit, attendees were divided into two groups—education and enforcement. Division members were part of the education group, which developed a PowerPoint presentation shared with all attendees.

In 2021, the Patrol launched a traffic safety initiative (Show-Me Zero) in conjunction with MoDOT and local law enforcement to bring attention to the importance of obeying the speed limit and concern for a rise in traffic fatalities.

In May 2023, PIED welcomed the Recruiting and Community Outreach Division, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, and MoDOT to host the inaugural Missouri Equity and Engagement Traffic Safety Summit in Jefferson City, MO. The event proved to be a tremendous success and approximately 35 community leaders throughout the state met to discuss ideas to make the state and its roadways safer.

In 2023, the division designed materials for the “Get It Together” seat belt campaign. A newly designed billboard provided a life jacket safety message for travelers on U.S. Highway 54 traveling to Lake of the Ozarks.

Traffic Safety Videos

“Fatal Choices” (1996)
Stop the Knock” (2001)
“It’s My Life” (2005)
“How To Save A Life” (2008)
“Aggressive Driving” (Internet release, 2009)
“Graduated Driver’s License” (Internet release, 2009)
“Run Off Road Recovery” (Internet release, 2010)
“Instant of Choice” (Safety Education Center kiosk, 2010)
“AMBER Alert System” (Missouri AMBER Alert web site, 2010)
“Permanent” (2010)
"My Last Text"
"Gone Too Soon" (2013)
"Don't Violate The Trust" (2016)
“If I Could Just Go Back ...” (2019)

In 2009, PIED and Training Division (TND) worked together to create a short video about aggressive driving. The video was made available on the Patrol's website.

Also in 2009, PIED worked with TND and the Department of Revenue to create a video about Missouri's Graduated Driver License law. This video was aimed at teenagers and their parents. It was available for schools to use on their in-house cable systems, driver's education courses, and through the Internet via the Patrol's, Missouri Department of Revenue, and Missouri Coalition for Roadway Safety websites. In addition, the video could be viewed in the waiting room of Missouri's 20 busiest driver examination stations.

A 2010 video by PIED and TND, "Run Off Road Recovery", explained what drivers should do if the wheels of their vehicle drop off the edge of the roadway. This video was released via the Internet, also. An "Instant Of Choice" video was added to a new kiosk display in the Patrol's Safety Education Center. This video is a powerful example of what can happen if a person chooses to drink and drive.

The "AMBER Alert System" video explained how the system works and its success. This video was an Internet release on Missouri AMBER Alert website.

The Patrol released a traffic safety video, "Permanent", in May 2010. "Permanent" showed viewers the unchangeable results and effects of aggressive driving and traffic crashes. Also, in 2010, the Patrol assisted AT&T with the creation of a "My Last Text" video. This relatively new phenomenon of texting was taking a driver's attention away from the full-time job of driving.

In April 2013, the division released a new traffic safety program for teenage and adult drivers entitled, "Gone Too Soon". The 15-minute video, a collaboration of PIED and the Patrol's Audio-Visual Unit, used photographs, music, and testimonials from victims and family members. Roush-Fenway Racing driver Carl Edwards spoke to the audience in the video about the importance of paying attention when driving. The video focused on risky behaviors behind the wheel, such as: drinking and driving, failure to use occupant restraints, inattentive driving, texting, and speeding. The Patrol partnered with Ameren Missouri, Bloomsdale Excavating Co. Inc., Missouri Farm Bureau, Operation Lifesaver, and State Farm Insurance to cover the video's production costs.

PIED released its new traffic safety video, "Don't Violate The Trust", in April 2016. The video was a collaborative effort among the Patrol, State Farm, KCP&L, Ameren Missouri, Farm Bureau, Operation Lifesaver, and Bloomsdale Excavating Co. Inc. Additional sponsors include Citizens Electric Corporation, Belgrade State Bank, Sam Scism Ford Lincoln, Crown Motors, First State Community Bank, The Builders' Association, and Mr. Ronald D. Reeder.

PIED released a new traffic safety video, "If I Could Just Go Back ..." in October 2019. The video was a collaborative effort among the Patrol, State Farm, Evergy,

Farm Bureau, Operation Lifesaver, and Bloomsdale Excavating Co. Inc. Additional sponsors include the family and friends of the late Mr. Dave Mudd, Missouri Electric Cooperatives, and The Builders' Association.

Publications

Since its creation, the division has been tasked with brochures on a variety of subjects. Topics range from bicycle safety, personal safety, driving safety, and crime prevention, to recruiting and Patrol services. These brochures are available to the public free of charge. In 1978, booklets of safety games and puzzles were created for the first time. Updated over the years, these types of publications are popular with children. Coloring books have also been created. Revising and updating Patrol brochures is a yearly project for PIED and occurs for each brochure when legislative changes or time calls for it. In 2010, brochures/publications covered 166 topics.

PIED is responsible for coordinating the publication of an annual report each year. Divisions and troops submit information pertinent to their areas. PIED employees assemble it into one report and are responsible for its distribution.

An official publication entitled Patrol News was prepared and sent to each employee of the Patrol beginning in July 1966. This monthly magazine kept personnel informed as to what happens in the department. In 2004, due to rising costs, the Patrol News became a bi-monthly publication. A special section of the Patrol News was created for the July/August 2006 issue. The insert was 12 pages in length, including its own front cover, and contained only stories related to law enforcement memorial events in Missouri and Washington, D.C. This insert was found in the middle of the issue and designed so it could be printed as its own publication if needed. Beginning in 2007, issues were posted to the Internet, and readers were given the option of reading the Patrol News online in full color. Beginning January 2022, new additions to the "mailing list" could only receive the online version via an email (with a link) as a cost-saving measure. The Patrol News started printing in full color in April 2023.

The Patrol has celebrated many years of service and protection. At the direction of the superintendent, a division has been tasked with creating a yearbook to mark special anniversaries of the Patrol. Yearbooks have been created in 1963, 1971, 1981, 1987, 1991, 1996, 2001, 2006, 2011, 2016, and 2021, and 2026. Since 1981, PIED has been charged with creating and distributing the yearbooks. The Patrol's 75th anniversary provided a variety of additional projects for PIED. In 2006, in addition to a yearbook, the division was responsible for updating and printing the Patrol's history, and creating a book containing interviews with retirees entitled "To Serve and Protect". Also, for the first time, the Patrol's history included a section entitled, "Roll Call" with tributes to the 27 officers killed in the line of duty since the Patrol's creation. In 2016, along with the yearbook and updated history book, the division updated and released the "Roll Call" book, which included tributes to 31 officers killed in the line of duty. Agency growth and

longevity led to the history being published separately from the anniversary book beginning in 2001. That same year, the Patrol's history changed from "A Brief Historical Review" to "A Journey Through Patrol History". For the 90th anniversary, the history book was refreshed and heavily edited, with many stories and photos added.

In 1995, the AAMVA Public Affairs and Consumer Education Competition Region III recognized the division. PIED was named a winner in the electronic communication category for its "Executive Summary". This electronic report included news briefs on the various divisions at General Headquarters (the Executive Summary was discontinued in 2000).

In 1998, PIED employees designed a "punch-out patrol car" and K-9 trading cards. These giveaway items are given to children visiting the Safety Education Center and those attending programs presented by PIOs.

With each traffic safety video, the graphic artist has designed logos for use with printed materials and giveaway items. For example: pens and magnetic photo frames ("How To Save A Life"); mechanical pencils, pens, and air fresheners ("Permanent"); T-shirts and color changing cups ("Gone Too Soon"); and stress baseballs/footballs and tumblers ("Don't Violate The Trust"), and so forth.

In 2018, new brochures included "The Opioid Epidemic & Missouri" and "Substance Use Disorders". Seventeen brochures were reviewed and updated during 2020. The division produced a new brochure titled, "Human Trafficking: It's Real & It's Happening In Missouri".

Displays and Museums

Displays are one way the Patrol has educated the public on a variety of issues. As early as the Missouri State Fair in 1956, the Patrol had a "talking car" exhibit. This was the forerunner of "Otto—The Talking Car". It consisted of a face placed in front of a 1956 Ford patrol car. A spinning wheel with traffic safety questions was used in conjunction with the talking vehicle. The car would answer the questions on the wheel. This vehicle had long lips, large eyes and eyebrows, and wore a large, black hat. The eyes moved horizontally, and the upper lip moved up and down. This display lasted four years, until deterioration of the hat material forced an end to its career.

At the 1961 State Fair, safety officers used the SAF-T-VAC exhibit to talk to the public about safety. In 1966, the Patrol purchased an 18-foot commercially built exhibit trailer to take to fairs and events. This trailer acquainted people with the Patrol and served to attract qualified individuals to seek employment. This trailer was followed by a custom made 10-foot, self-contained exhibit, which could be used at smaller functions involving less space.

A custom-built 10 by 50-foot mobile education exhibit became part of the Patrol's display facilities in 1967. The exhibit was taken to many fairs and special events

throughout the state. The exhibit informed the public about the services performed by the Patrol and various safety topics. Hundreds of thousands of people visited the exhibit that year.

A newly improved exhibit, “Otto—The Talking Car” was introduced at the State Fair in 1969. Otto’s face was oval, and he wore a campaign style hat. His eyes closed/opened, his door opened, his horn honked, his wheels turned, and his lower lip moved as he speaks. Thousands of people talk to Otto about traffic safety at the fair each year. In 1982, Otto was placed in the Patrol’s Safety Education Center, where he is on display throughout the year. However, he still travels to Sedalia, for the Missouri State Fair.

A new Patrol display trailer became operational in 1974. This trailer was made available to troops for fairs and other group events. Topics on display included recruit training, trooper activities, and some historical information.

The Missouri State Highway Patrol Museum opened in 1973. This first Safety Education Center was located in two rooms in the south wing of the Waggoner Building at General Headquarters. Displays about transportation, history of law enforcement and the Patrol, and safety topics were part of this museum. Twelve additional exhibits were added to the center in 1974. It closed in December 1980.

In 1982, the current Safety Education Center opened its doors. Located in the basement of the Waggoner Building, this center included retired patrol vehicles, information on various divisions and the Patrol’s history, and interactive displays on a variety of safety topics. A display of the agency’s fallen heroes adorned one wall. Groups scheduling a tour watch an age-appropriate safety video. Over 13,000 visitors come to the center each year.

In 1985, the Missouri Division of Highway Safety presented a battery-powered robot to the Patrol. The troop safety officers used this robot throughout the state. The robot wore a campaign hat.

Rollover simulators designed and built by employees in the Patrol’s Motor Equipment Division were assigned to public information and education officers beginning in 1993. These were assigned to every PIEO by the late 1990s. The current rollover is a pickup truck cab on a trailer. Dummies in the cab help show the importance of using seat belts. When the officer turns on the rollover, the cab spins, simulating a rollover in a vehicle. Without seat belts, the dummies fly out of the cab; with seat belts, they remain secure within. This display remains popular.

The Mobile Safety Education Center debuted at the Missouri State Fair in August 1998. This education trailer was the result of private donations from several companies. The center, a 40-foot sport trailer, was handicap accessible and reminded people of the importance of safety—bicycling, walking, driving, railroad, seat belt, etc.—through a variety of displays. This trailer was used at events throughout the state until its retirement in 2005.

In 1999, the 1959 Dodge patrol car was taken out of the Safety Education Center, repaired, and sent out on the road to participate in car shows and parades. It has also been a popular attraction at the Missouri State Fair.

PIED helped coordinate the acquisition of nine “convincers” for the Patrol. The “convincer” simulated a five-mile-per-hour crash, showing the occupant how seat belts can help protect people. The Coalition for Roadway Safety, working in conjunction with the Missouri Safety Center at Central Missouri State University, purchased the “convincers”. The “convincer” was manufactured by AMI at Kansas State University. By August 2006, PIEOs at all nine troops had a “convincer” in their possession. In 2007, three additional seat belt convincers were acquired, also through Blueprint funding, bringing the total to 12. Every troop had one; Troops A, C, and D had two.

PIED acquired two additional Simulated Impaired DriviNg Experience (SIDNE) vehicles in 2007 through Missouri Coalition For Roadway Safety (Blueprint) funding. The SIDNEs were assigned to Troops D and F. These SIDNE go-carts were battery-powered and could switch from normal to impaired mode (Troops A and C received SIDNE vehicles previously).

At the end of 2007, the Patrol began assigning four-wheel drive Chevrolet pickup trucks to the 12 PIEOs. The trucks performed the practical purpose of towing exhibits and hauling equipment but also served as an example of the importance of wearing seat belts in pickup trucks as well as passenger cars.

A racecar hood was suspended from the ceiling of the Safety Education Center in 2010. The hood sports an anti-texting while driving logo. The vehicle it belonged to was driven by racecar Driver Colin Braun. It was donated to the Safety Education Center after a race in St. Louis.

To mark the merging of the Missouri State Water Patrol into the Missouri State Highway Patrol, a boat was added to the Safety Education Center in 2011.

The Safety Education Center's history wall was refurbished with new carpet in 2012. A project to redo all the copy and photos occurred in 2012-2013. Related items were grouped, and a new printer made the display sharper. A bomb suit was added to the uniform display in 2012.

The Patrol's Safety Education Center was re-named to the Colonel Alvin R. Lubker Memorial Safety & Education Center. This change was effective December 22, 2012. Throughout his career, Col. Lubker promoted his belief that education and enforcement were a vital part of highway safety. Col. Lubker and his wife, Marva, donated several items—including a 1931 Ford Roadster known as "Otto—the Talking Car"—to the Safety Education Center, which opened in 1982 (Col. Lubker died November 13, 2012).

New displays were added to the Colonel Alvin R. Lubker Memorial Safety & Education Center in 2015. A distracted driving simulator combined texting and

driving to show how dangerous it was. A grant from the Missouri Blueprint for Safer Roads Coalition made this display possible. The display was retired after several years. Milo Range places visitors ages 18 and older into a trooper's shoes. This interactive display provides realistic situations requiring the visitor to make a judgment call. The Ford Mustang patrol vehicle was removed from the Safety & Education Center and taken to State Fair Community College in Sedalia, MO, where it was being restored for appearances in parades and car shows. The 1988 Mustang was refurbished and back on the road in 2024.

In 2016, new displays in the Alvin R. Lubker Memorial Safety & Education Center included: The Criminal Justice Information Services Division updated its AFIS display, and the boat was replaced by a dock and personal watercraft display. The impaired driving/seat belt display was added to the center.

The Crime Laboratory Division updated its display in 2017.

In 2018, A new display illustrating the different weapons carried by members of the Patrol was added after the agency acquired the 1931 Smith & Wesson .38-caliber revolver. Mr. & Mrs. Stan Czeck of Pennsylvania donated this piece of history to the center. The revolver has Mo.S.H.P. 4 on the backstrap of the grip, and was carried by Capt. A.D. Sheppard, a member of the Patrol's First Recruit Class.

Wood cut-out patrol vehicles provided youngsters with a photo opportunity at the 2018 Missouri State Fair. One of the vehicles, a patrol car, is currently on display in the Safety & Education Center.

In 2019, division members updated the Training Division, Gaming Division, Aircraft Division, Division of Drug & Crime Control, motor equipment, and impaired driving displays. Two small tables were added to the Safety & Education Center near the curator's desk. The tables have plexiglass engravings of the Patrol patch, a trooper's campaign hat, and Otto—The Talking Car. By placing a piece of paper over one of the images and using a crayon, children can rub the image onto the paper to take with them as a memento of their visit.

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, the center was closed to the public for much of 2020. Division members created a display to tell the story of the Patrol's handling of the 1954 prison riot in Jefferson City. Another new display highlighted career opportunities within the agency. Six directional speakers were installed to help contain the sound of multiple video displays. A bicycle previously used to patrol the Missouri State Fair was added to the museum. The various mannequins displayed in a glass case were taken out and placed throughout the museum. In December, the museum was updated with new carpet, ceiling tiles, and paint.

Updates to the museum continued in 2021. Floor displays were rearranged, metal railings replaced the old, much wider barriers around the vehicles, and K-9 Rommel received a smaller display case. The 1959 Dodge returned to the

museum after many years in parades and on display at events. The Patrol Bomb Squad loaned its Vanguard Mark I robot to the division for display. A new tabletop display highlighted the Driver Examination Section of the Driver & Vehicle Safety Division. Also, the Communications Division updated its static historical display by adding an interactive radio and short videos about employees' duties.

In 2022, a display honoring Tpr. James D. Ellis, who died while serving in World War II, adorned a pillar. Another pillar celebrated Patrol employees who serve in the U.S. reserves. The Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Division display and ballistic vest display were both updated.

In 2023, the Division of Drug & Crime Control display was updated. A "hats of the Patrol" display and new highway sign display were created. A mannequin wearing the Class B uniform was added to the display of uniforms. The theater projector was replaced with a laser projector.

Awards

PIED is responsible for coordinating the Patrol's Annual Awards Ceremony, which began in 1991. Certificates, plaques, and medals are created each year for award recipients. In 1993, the Patrol's awards ceremony was joined with The MASTERS annual meeting, allowing members of The MASTERS to share in congratulating those employees and retirees recognized. Types of awards presented included Citation of Valor, Meritorious Service Award, Lifesaving Award, Memorial Award, Officer of the Year Award (added in 1998), Civilian of the Year Award (added in 2002), and the Purple Heart Award (first presented in 2006). 2008 was the 75th anniversary of the death of Sergeant Benjamin O. "Ben" Booth. To recognize his sacrifice, the Patrol's Officer of the Year Award was renamed the Benjamin Oliver Booth Officer of the Year Award. In 2013, the Career Milestone award was created to recognize troopers who made over 1,000 driving while intoxicated arrests in their career. In 2017, the Civilian of the Year Award became the Matilda "Tillie" Sonnen Civilian of the Year award to honor the Patrol's first civilian employee, who served for 40 years.

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, the Patrol and The MASTERS did not host an annual award ceremony/banquet in 2019 and 2020. The awards for both years were presented April 10, 2021, at a Facebook live event where only recipients, a handful of employees and command staff, and The MASTERS Board of Directors were present. On April 30, 2022, the Patrol awards ceremony and The MASTERS banquet returned to being an in-person event.

The division also fills requests for promotion certificates, work recognition awards, certificates of appreciation, and Honorary Trooper awards.

Colonel Sandra K. Karsten and the Patrol's Command Staff welcomed the agency's Top 10 Enforcers to General Headquarters on April 3, 2018. These

employees attended a luncheon and accepted congratulations for their outstanding work in 2017. The Top 10 Enforcers included the top 10 troopers statewide in DWI arrests, felony arrests, controlled substance arrests, and the top trooper statewide in BWI arrests. This is the first such recognition luncheon held. PIED personnel created the certificates and organized the event.

In 2023, Public Information Specialist III Cheryl D. Cobb was awarded the Superintendent's Award for Excellence in Public Service Award for her 30 years of dedicated service. During that time she served as editor of over 200 editions of the Patrol News.

Public Information Specialist III Meghan E. Clouse was awarded the 2022 Matilda "Tillie" Sonnen Civilian of the Year award for her part in helping a citizen experiencing a mental health episode. She was also awarded the February 2023 Department of Public Safety Non-Sworn Team Member of the Month and the March 2023 State Team Member of the Month for her actions.

Programs

Since the creation of a public information and education division, the director of the section coordinated national programs at the state level and acted as a liaison between the Patrol and Missouri Safety Council, other state agencies, and civic groups. Officers have assisted with Missouri Boys State, Missouri Girls State, Operation Lifesaver (Trooper on the Train), Trooper On A School Bus, Share-A-Bear (in cooperation with Shoney's Incorporated), D.A.R.E. (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) from 1989-1992, when the program transferred to the Training Division, etc.

The division disseminated information concerning the S.T.E.P. (Statewide Traffic Enforcement Program) and Operation C.A.R.E (Combined Accident Reduction Effort) awareness programs beginning in 1981. Since that time, the Patrol has been actively involved in both. Members of the Patrol have served Operation C.A.R.E. by accepting positions on the executive board. Missouri hosted the national Operation C.A.R.E. conference in Branson, MO, in 1997. (In 2017, Operation C.A.R.E. administrators updated their organization's name to Operation Crash Awareness and Reduction Effort. The Patrol remains an active partner in this program.)

In the fall 1993, the Patrol began a program of town hall meetings to be held in each of the troops over that next year. Troop A began the program with a town hall meeting in each county within the troop over the summer. Officers were on hand to field questions from the public; explain special equipment or units, such as the K-9 unit or the Special Emergency Response Team (SERT); and show a slide presentation outlining the Patrol's history, services, and capabilities. These "meetings" were open and free to the public. Local officers assisted safety officers in answering questions after a slide presentation. Town hall meetings

were held throughout the state. Town hall meetings were held for a few years before being discontinued.

From 1996 through 1998, the Patrol sponsored a Boy Scout Crime Prevention Program each year. Participating units looked at their community and designed crime prevention programs. These programs were submitted to a committee charged with selecting the winning programs. Winners traveled to General Headquarters with Patrol members from their area for a tour, demonstrations, to present their program, and for a banquet.

In 1997, the Patrol joined the Division of Highway Safety in the National Buckle Up America campaign. This program stressed the importance of wearing a safety belt. The division coordinated a media event at Troop H, St. Joseph, to promote this program.

PIEOs have visited schools and civic groups throughout the Patrol's history. Programs have addressed personal safety, traffic safety, Patrol history, state laws, and the dangers of illegal drugs. A new program addressing "church security" was made available in 2010.

In 1999, Troop D presented a Community Alliance Program to the public. This new public relations program was like a citizens' academy. The mission of this program was to familiarize participants with Patrol operations and procedures through recruit-style, classroom training, practical exercises, and personal interaction with members and employees of the Patrol. The Community Alliance Program proved to be a tremendous success, so all troops began offering these programs. Community Alliance Programs are either two Saturdays or evening classes taking place weekly for five to six weeks. Beginning in 2000, Community Alliance Programs have been held in every troop biennially. In 2007, a Student Alliance Program took place in Troop A and Troop F. This program is similar to the Community Alliance Program except that the participants are juniors and seniors from area high schools. Troops alternate between the two alliance programs each year. A University Alliance Program takes place in several community colleges as part of their criminal justice curriculum.

Since its inception in 1985, the Patrol has supported the Law Enforcement Torch Run. Currently, the director of PIED coordinates volunteers to run in the Torch Run and the sale of Torch Run T-Shirts to help raise money for Missouri's Special Olympians. Divisions and troops select a representative to serve as sales coordinator for its area. The director also helps coordinate volunteers to attend the games and assist in presenting medals to athletes.

The division became heavily involved in the Constitution Project in 2014. This competition teaches high school students about the judicial process as they play the roles of crime scene investigators, journalists, or lawyers in staged scenes. The final competition took place at General Headquarters and the Missouri Supreme Court building in Jefferson City in October. (The Constitution Project

originated in Texas County before becoming a statewide program in 2013.) This program continues to grow, and a college version occurred for the first time in spring 2016. Finals for the competition are still held in Jefferson City.

PIED was again instrumental in setting up the state finals for the Constitution Project 2017. The crime scene was created on location at the old Missouri State Penitentiary. Members from several troops, Division of Drug and Crime Control (DDCC), and PIED coordinated the event.

Beginning in 2018, the Patrol assisted with Skills USA's state competition. On April 6, 2018, PIED arranged the crime scene and criminal justice scenario competition segments. This program fosters personal, workplace, and technical skills grounded in academics. Employees assigned to DDCC, PIED, Career Recruitment Division, Crime Laboratory Division, and Troops B, F, and I facilitated the program and served as judges. Eighteen teams from 11 schools took part in the crime scene investigation competition, where students investigated a crime scene, wrote their report, then took a written test. Nineteen students took part in the individual competitions that involved two different traffic stops, a minor traffic crash, a Terry stop, an emotionally disturbed person, and a missing person call.

In 2018, new PIEO presentations included "Tragic State & The Way Forward" regarding Missouri's opioid crisis, "Human Trafficking", and "Missouri Active Shooter & Threat Mitigation".

Uniformed Safety Education Officer Workshop

Since the late 1960s, troopers from around the country have gathered for the Uniformed Safety Education Officer Workshop (USEOW). This workshop is an opportunity to share safety presentations and ideas. Officers compete by presenting a safety program or public service announcement (television and radio) to the attendees. Each state has one vote to determine the winner. In addition to the competitions and networking, each host plans activities in the evening to highlight their geographical area.

PIED hosted the USEOW for the first time in 1971. At that time, the conference was held at the Patrol's Law Enforcement Academy, at General Headquarters, Jefferson City, MO.

In June 1988, Missouri hosted the 21st annual USEOW, held May 15-19, in Branson, MO. The Patrol welcomed 139 officers from 19 states and the province of Ontario.

In 1995, the Patrol's PIEOs took second place at the USEOW held in San Antonio, TX (according to the Patrol News article at the time, the first-place state, Alabama, took the award by a narrow margin, and "We were robbed").

Missouri hosted this conference again in 1998, when it was held in St. Louis. Seventeen state police/patrol agencies sent 76 officers. During the conference, retired Sergeant Ron Jones was voted into the USEOW Hall of Fame.

After Hurricane Katrina hit the Gulf states, Mississippi asked the Missouri/Kansas team to take over hosting the 2006 USEOW. In six months, the two organizations planned the conference, which took place in June at the Great Wolf Lodge in Kansas. One hundred fifty-two people from 18 states attended. The Patrol hosted USEOW again in 2010, at the Drury Inn in St. Louis. Attendees came from 12 states and numbered 116.

The division worked with PIEOs in the NCAA's Southeastern Conference to create a public service announcement. Most of the filming took place during the annual USEOW, which was held in Mississippi this year. State law enforcement agencies from Mississippi, Texas, Alabama, Kentucky, and Tennessee recorded their part of the announcement while attending the conference. Lt. John J. Hotz, (Q/PIED) and Capt. J. Timothy Hull (Q/PIED) added their messages after returning to Missouri; Georgia submitted its part of the PSA after the conference. This PSA used the excitement of the move to the SEC to remind everyone that it's important to buckle up, watch their speed, pay attention, and to drive sober. The PSA, which begins with footage from a Mizzou football game, was shown before home games in Columbia, MO. It was also provided to all SEC football programs.

Officers from several states created joint PSAs while attending the USEOW in Kansas City, KS, in 2014. Troopers promoted the “Drive To Zero” traffic crashes campaign and the “Move Over” law in the PSAs.

Captain John J. Hotz (Q/PIED) and Sergeant Shawn M. Griggs (Q/DDCC) represented the Patrol at the 52nd USEOW in June 2019. The Texas Department of Public Safety's Highway Patrol Division served as hosts for the conference. Sgt. Griggs presented a crime scene investigation class for children and earned first place in the public safety category. The Patrol took third place in the radio PSA competition for their PSA about what to do if someone encounters dynamite or other explosives on their personal property. The Patrol's MultiMedia Unit helped create the PSA.

At the 2022 USEOW, Capt. Hotz was inducted into the USEOW Hall of Fame, Class of 2020, honoring him for his many years of service. Capt. Hotz attended, helped plan, hosted numerous USEOW conferences and created presentations for the event’s competition. When asked, he served on the USEOW Board of Directors for several years. While serving as president of USEOW, he ensured the organization’s official paperwork was correctly filed when unexpected issues arose. His servant leadership, professionalism, and integrity benefitted both the Missouri State Highway Patrol and USEOW in countless ways.

Social Media

The Patrol became actively involved in social media in 2016. The agency welcomed 6.5K followers on Twitter and 55K likes on Facebook that year. The most popular tweet showed a dash cam view of the dangers of driving too fast in inclement weather. On Facebook, a picture of the Patrol's K-9 teams ranked number one. The agency has 13 Twitter accounts enabling it to reach specific geographical areas as well as the entire state. The Patrol also launched its mobile application in 2016 but was discontinued a couple years later. This allowed smartphone and tablet users quick access to the Patrol's emergency lines, locations, and web pages.

PIED added Facebook live to its arsenal to broadcast news conferences, recruit graduations, and awards presentations in 2017. The first time a Patrol event was broadcast via Facebook live was March 14, 2017, when Colonel Sandra K. Karsten was sworn into office.

An Instagram account added another way for the Patrol to reach the public and media beginning in 2018.

The agency launched a YouTube Channel November 9, 2020, as part of the Patrol's Accountability Project. The agency commissioned a state-of-the-art video "This is your Missouri State Highway Patrol" to launch the channel, which would promote the agency's activities, services, history, safety messages, and career opportunities on this channel.

In 2023, two division employees earned their FAA remote pilot certification (part 107 commercial) when the division acquired a small, unmanned aircraft system (sUAS). PIED used the sUAS for video creation, aerial photography, taking photos in places where access is challenging or not safe for a person. The sUAS has proved to be valuable both to social media projects and to the Patrol's photographer.

In 2023, Twitter was rebranded to "X." The Patrol continued using this social media outlet and has 17 X pages (including the Alerts paged used for Amber and Blue Alerts).

PIED began using Flickr as a photo sharing platform for the public to view and download photos taken by PIED's photographer.

2025 and 2026 saw the Patrol's social media posting daily content updates for followers. Content included recent pursuits from across the state, community service, AMBER Alert recoveries, etc. Social media also included reels (short form videos) and hype videos.

In 2026, PIED, the Recruiting and Community Outreach Division (RCOD) and the Audio/Visual team from the Training Division began working together to create a four-part docuseries showcasing the 126th Recruit Class's time at the Patrol's

Academy. The videos were posted on the Patrol's YouTube channel and shared on Facebook and Instagram.

COVID-19

The coronavirus pandemic led to PIEOs discontinuing safety presentations and displays to groups in the spring 2020. Social distancing and face masks were implemented in an effort to prevent the spread of the virus. PIED employees first staggered workdays to distance themselves, then began teleworking in April-May 2020. In June, employees returned to the office. However, late in the year, division employees were once again directed to telework. In March 2021, PIED employees again returned to the office. However, social distancing and face mask guidelines remained in place. Over the next six months, more and more programs were scheduled and PIEOs returned to present to schools, civic organizations, and churches. The Safety & Education Center re-opened for tours in the fall 2021. The ability to telework has changed the Patrol's workplace, in that division members can now work from home during inclement weather.

Accountability Project — 2020

The colonel directed his staff to develop and implement an accountability project to better communicate the Patrol's mission, values, responsibilities, and accomplishments to the public. Transparency and messaging became the project's focus. Various divisions became involved in the creation of symposiums held throughout the state, a Show-Me Integrity portal, a Patrol YouTube channel, and a new look for the Patrol's website. PIED worked mostly on the symposiums and implementation of the YouTube channel.

The Patrol commissioned a state-of-the-art video "This is your Missouri State Highway Patrol" to launch its YouTube channel. The Patrol's YouTube channel launched November 9, 2020.

Multiple divisions worked to create symposiums, which went on the road in September and October. PIED set up six symposiums—one each in Kansas City, Jefferson City, St. Louis, Poplar Bluff, Springfield, and Chillicothe. Missouri legislators, minority community leaders, clergy members, and elected officials learned about Patrol policies regarding use of force situations and took part in hands-on stop and approach and MILO firearms training system experiences. PIED added information from the Training, Professional Standards, Drug and Crime Control divisions and the Field Operations Bureau to the joint presentation. This presentation explained Patrol policy and provided data driven facts on use of force situations, and how they are tracked and investigated. A seventh symposium hosted media representatives (Note: COVID-19 guidelines were followed at each location).

During the Use of Force sessions, participants learned about training, de-escalation, profiling, complaints, various use of force options, and the difference

between protests and civil disturbance. The interactive use of force experience with the MILO firearms training system showed how quickly something as routine as an enforcement contact can escalate. The stop and approach exercise with role-players showed participants why training is so important and how law enforcement officers must make split-second decisions. Each symposium concluded with a roundtable discussion between those attending and members of the Patrol's command staff.

The amount of time, energy, and creativity dedicated to this endeavor shows the level of importance placed on our employees connecting with the public. Prior to the project, Patrol employees showed the public who we are by performing their duties as ladies and gentlemen one contact, one stakeholder, at a time. The accountability project, with its multi-faceted, open approach, allows the agency to not only show, but finally tell its story.

Public Information and Education Division Directors

Capt. Eric F. Brown, August 2026 to present
Capt. Scott B. White, July 2024 to July 2026
Capt. Dusty L. Hoffman, February 2024 to June 2024
Capt. John J. Hotz, 2015 to 2024
Capt. Jay T. “Tim” Hull, 2006 to 2015
Capt. Christian T. Ricks, 2000 to 2006
Capt. James G. Watson, 1997 to 2000
Capt. Clarence A. Greeno, 1993 to 1997
Captain Charles R. Jackson, 1992 to 1993
Sgt. Terry W. Moore, 1991 to 1992
Lt. Ernest G. McCutchen, 1989 to 1991
Sgt./Lt./Capt. Ralph G. Biele, 1977 to 1989
Lt. Alvin R. Lubker, 1966 to 1977
Lt. F.W. Shadwell, 1953 to 1965