

# FEDERAL NEWS WEEKLY SUMMARY CONTINUED



The NAPBC web site is available in both English and Spanish. The web site address is: <http://www.napbc.org>.

—U.S. DEPT. OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES  
10/30/96

## PUBLIC SAFETY

### TWENTY YEARS OF TRAFFIC SAFETY DATA ON CD-ROM NOW AVAILABLE FROM DOT

■(WASHINGTON) U.S. Secretary of Transportation Federico Pena last week announced that updated information on traffic safety is now available on CD-ROM from the U.S. Department of Transportation.

The data for the Traffic Safety CD-ROM, collected by DOT's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), includes the 1988-94 General Estimates System (GES) data files, the 1975-94 Fatal Accident Reporting System (FARS) data files, the 1982-94 blood alcohol concentration files, the 1994 Traffic Safety Facts Annual Report, and the 1994 Traffic Safety Fact Sheets.

The data provides a comprehensive overview of fatal and non-fatal accidents in the United States, including information on vehicle, person, and environmental characteristics (road conditions, type of vehicle, weather, restraint usage, estimated speed, and so forth) of each accident. FARS data is based upon every fatal accident in the U.S., while GES is based upon a sample of all U.S. accidents. The BTS Transportation Data Sampler-3 issued in February contains the past 3 years of TIFA (Trucks Involved in Fatal Accidents), a complementary product focusing on fatal truck accidents and based upon FARS data.

*"You talk about capitalism and communism and all that sort of thing, but the important thing is the struggle everybody is engaged in to get better living conditions, and they are not interested too much in the form of government."*

Bernard Baruch  
press conference in  
New York City  
Aug. 18, 1964

The Traffic Safety CD is produced in ASCII and Statistical Analysis System (SAS) formats, with the information provided by NHTSA. To order a copy of the CD-ROM, contact the Bureau of Transportation Statistics by phone on (202) 366-DATA, by fax on (202) 366-3640, by Internet at [www.bts.gov](http://www.bts.gov), or by writing the Bureau of Transportation Statistics at BTS/DOT, 400 Seventh Street, SW, Washington, DC 20590.

—U.S. DEPT. OF TRANSPORTATION  
10/28/96

### PUBLIC SAFETY IMPROVED WITH NEW TECHNOLOGY

■(WASHINGTON) The U.S. Department of Transportation and the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) this week unveiled a technology system that virtually takes the police department and places it inside the police car.

Officials from the department's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) unveiled the new ALERT system during a special ceremony at the 103rd Conference of the IACP in Phoenix, Ariz. Dubbed the public safety technology for the 21st century, the ALERT (Advanced Law Enforcement Response Technology) system aims to help public safety personnel work more efficiently by automating the traffic data collection process.

The ALERT system uses components such as hand-held computers that link to on-board computers with touch-screen displays. The system makes data gathering and entry simpler, quicker and more reliable. Electronic data entry eliminates errors resulting from illegible handwriting and repetitious entry. New information is incorporated into a central database in a matter of hours instead of months.

In addition, the global positioning system (GPS) automatically transmits an officer's location to the law enforcement agency's headquarters so other emergency personnel can be dispatched if needed.

ALERT's clean cockpit approach provides an integrated control center, allowing an officer to control everything with the touch of a finger, including the radar, emergency lighting and siren, radio communications unit, GPS, video camera and display. The system also has applications in other areas of public safety.

In the future, ALERT technology also

may be used to enhance fire and emergency medical services and to help solve criminal investigations.

—U.S. DEPT. OF TRANSPORTATION  
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## SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

### USDA RESEARCHES IMPROVED ETHANOL YIELD FROM CORN

■(PEORIA, IL) Cars in the 21st century could run on ethanol fermented from fiber-rich crop residues like wheat straw or corn stalks instead of corn. Agriculture Department scientists are moving in that direction with research that seeks to squeeze more ethanol from corn using the grain's fiber.

Microbiologist Rodney J. Bothast of USDA's Agricultural Research Service heads a research team that's now scaling up a process for converting grain fiber into sugars. Genetically engineered microbes convert these sugars into ethanol.

Modern ethanol plants ferment grain's starches and sugars to produce 2.5 gallons of ethanol per bushel of corn. Bothast's research team, based at the ARS National Center for Agricultural Utilization Research here, aims to coax an extra three-tenths of a gallon of ethanol from the outer fibrous layer of every bushel of corn kernels.

"This technology could be applied to converting cellulose from other crops creating additional income and market opportunities for farmers," said Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman. "USDA analysis confirms that expanding ethanol production increases farm income and creates jobs in rural America."

According to USDA's Economic Research Service, the ethanol energy now produced from each bushel of corn is more than 25 percent greater than the amount of energy used to grow and harvest the corn and distill it into ethanol, thanks to today's higher corn yields, more energy-efficient fertilizer production and improved distillation technology.

—U.S. DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE  
10/28/96

*"A government is not legitimate merely because it exists."*

Jeane J. Kirkpatrick  
on Sandinista government in  
Nicaragua  
Time, June 17, 1985