

Research Report Summary: *The PACT-Ottawa Human Trafficking Awareness Initiative – TruckSTOP Campaign*

Funded in part by *Public Safety Canada*



Campaign Overview & Objectives

The TruckSTOP Campaign is part of PACT-Ottawa's human trafficking awareness initiative. The purpose of the campaign is to raise awareness about human trafficking amongst a specific target audience. This target audience is comprised of members of Canada's trucking industry, as well as members of the public who utilize truck stop facilities during the course of intercity travel. By increasing the knowledge of trafficking within this group, it is expected that individuals may contribute to eliminating trafficking through knowledgeable and informed tips to the appropriate authorities.

The campaign encompasses five primary objectives:

1. Raise awareness about human trafficking amongst a specific target audience (trucking industry) that offers a strong potential for detection and reporting of human trafficking
2. Create a set of information resources supporting public education and awareness about human trafficking
3. Act locally in anti-trafficking initiatives and engage communities across Ontario
4. Achieve broad reach by sharing the materials and methods developed, both across Canada and internationally
5. Increase PACT-Ottawa's capacity and effectiveness towards its goal to prevent human trafficking and protect trafficked persons

The TruckSTOP Campaign is funded in part by the Government of Canada's Department of Public Safety through the Contribution Program to Combat Child Sexual Exploitation and Human Trafficking (CPCCEHT).

Canada and Human Trafficking

According to the 2011 Trafficking in Persons Report, published annually by the United States Department of State (USDOS), Canada is a "source, transit, and destination country for men, women, and children subjected to sex trafficking and forced labour."¹ According to an RCMP Report on Human Trafficking, the majority of recent human trafficking convictions have been related to domestic cases: "Recent convictions of human trafficking have mostly involved individuals found guilty of trafficking citizens and/or permanent residents of Canada for the purpose of sexual exploitation."² Furthermore, Criminal Intelligence Service Canada, reports that, "[a]cross the country, organized crime networks are actively trafficking Canadian-born women and under-age girls inter and intra-provincially, and in some instances to the United States (US), destined for the sex trade."³

¹ United States Department of State, *Trafficking in Persons Report* (Washington: June 2011), p. 54.

² RCMP, *Human Trafficking in Canada*, (Ottawa: RCMP Criminal Intelligence, March 2010), p. 1.

³ CISC/SCRC, *Strategic Intelligence Brief: Organized Crime and Domestic Trafficking in Persons in Canada*, (Criminal Intelligence Service Canada, 2011), p. 1.

These reports indicate the need to examine transport routes more closely to identify and protect victims being trafficked domestically and across the Canada-US border using ground transportation. This also further illustrates the need for a campaign targeting the transport industry. As truck drivers travel the same routes as traffickers, there is high potential for drivers knowledgeable about human trafficking to notice suspicious activity and alert the appropriate authorities. It has been said that truck drivers are the “eyes of the road” and therefore an untapped asset in identifying situations of trafficking.

Why the Trucking Industry?

The consensus amongst various reports is that truck traffic in Canada is increasing, and that transportation is a sector of Canada’s economy that will continue to grow. This further illustrates the need to raise awareness about human trafficking within this particular industry. PACT-Ottawa sees truck drivers as potential “unsung” heroes in the fight against human trafficking in Canada – there is no other population that knows Canada’s roads and transport routes better.

PACT-Ottawa’s truck stop campaign was inspired by the success of similar campaigns in the United States. Campaign reports and materials from the organizations Truckers Against Trafficking (TAT) and The Defenders were consulted to determine best practices in the creation of PACT-Ottawa’s campaign. More information on these organizations is available at www.truckersagainstrafficking.com and www.sharedhope.org/thedefenders respectively.

Campaign Outputs

PACT-Ottawa will produce and distribute both print and electronic resources, including:

- Posters
- Beverage coasters
- Audio CDs
- Podcasts
- Radio production of “The Walk”

All products will be available free of charge. PACT-Ottawa will also utilize social media, including Facebook and Twitter, to advertise the campaign.

With regards to content, all materials developed will be easy to access and educational, providing information about:

- Human trafficking in Canada
- Measures for recognition and reporting of suspected incidents of trafficking, including the Crime Stoppers 1-800 number for victim protection and reporting
- Organizations working to eliminate human trafficking, as well as those that offer victim support services
- A story that will catch people’s attention, pique interest and be relatable

As truck drivers spend the majority of their working hours in their vehicles, outputs of the campaign will primarily be of an audio/electronic nature. Print materials produced will have as little text as possible and be designed primarily as advertisements for the campaign's audio materials.

Geographic Scope

The TruckSTOP Campaign will be based primarily in the Southeastern Ontario region, extending from Ottawa to Windsor, with an added route between Toronto and Fort Erie. This geographic area, especially along Highway 401, sees the largest volume of truck traffic in the country. According to Transport Canada, "the average kilometer of main highway in Canada has about 1, 100 trucks a day in both directions. In Ontario, the average is 2,300 trucks a day, although the main freeway (Highway 401) has volumes exceeding 10, 000 trucks a day in Southern Ontario and 40, 000 a day near Toronto."⁴ In addition to encompassing the busiest transit corridor in the country, the campaign area will also cover two of the busiest border crossings in Canada, through extension to Windsor and Fort Erie.

Key Partnerships

PACT-Ottawa will seek to partner with various members of the transport industry in both promoting the campaign and distributing materials. Potential partners include trucking publications (Truck News, Today's Trucking, Woodward Publishing), local radio stations, unions, associations, driver training centres and truck stop owners.

Project Timeline

PACT-Ottawa plans to officially launch the campaign in April 2012 through the installation of campaign materials at truck stops throughout the Southeastern Ontario region. A replenishment trip will occur in July 2012.

More Information

For more information, or to get involved in the campaign, contact the TruckSTOP Project Coordinator:

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⁴ Fred P. Nix, *Truck Activity in Canada: A Profile*, (Ottawa: Transport Canada, March 2003), 9.