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HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN THE NEWS

42 people arrested during human trafficking operation in Scottsdale

During a human trafficking operation in Scottsdale, 42 people were arrested. The multi-agency operation took place over two days on July 12 and 13 and was an effort by the Scottsdale Police Department along with Goodyear PD, Avondale PD and Surprise PD. [Click here](#) to read more.

Memphis man pleads guilty to sex trafficking minors on Chef Menteur Highway

A Memphis man was convicted Tuesday in federal court in New Orleans of sex trafficking underage girls and women on Chef Menteur Highway, among other “tracks” in a multi-state ring, court documents show. [Click here](#) to read more.

Crowley woman charged with child sex trafficking, pornography

A Crowley woman has been arrested and charged with sex crimes involving children, authorities said. Tiffany Bonin, 50, of Crowley, is charged with trafficking of children for sexual purposes, pornography involving juveniles and contributing to the delinquency of juveniles, according to Lafayette Parish’s daily arrest report. [Click here](#) to read more.

TAT awarded the Department of Transportation Combating Human Trafficking in Transportation Impact Award for 2024

On July 30, marking UN World Day Against Trafficking in Persons, the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) announced TAT as the first-place winner for its \$50,000 [Combating Human Trafficking in Transportation Impact Award](#) for 2024. TAT won for its Youth on Transportation (YOT) Initiative, designed to prevent and interrupt youth exploitation at the intersection of public transit and school transportation.

The award’s goal is to incentivize individuals and entities to think creatively in developing innovative solutions to combat human trafficking in the transportation industry and to share

those innovations with the broader community.

YOT works to train the adults who work in the transportation ecosystems youth rely on, by giving them the knowledge they need to identify and report signs of grooming, exploitation and trafficking. By convening and connecting local stakeholders around the issue of youth exploitation and human trafficking, YOT facilitates community-wide collaboration to protect youth as they move through their days. Finally, by partnering with public transit systems to display and distribute youth-focused awareness materials, YOT equips young people and their parents with crucial information on how to understand vulnerabilities to trafficking.



To date, TAT has hosted three YOT convenings: November 2023 in D.C.; January 2024 in San Joaquin, California; and February 2024 in Denver, Colorado. It will be hosting its fourth in Cleveland, Ohio in September 2024.

“On behalf of the TAT team and Board of Directors, we are incredibly grateful to receive this prestigious award from the USDOT,” stated TAT Executive Director Esther Goetsch. “Creating innovative solutions to combat human trafficking in the transportation industry is deeply important to us, and the Youth on Transportation Initiative serves as a shining example of that creativity. Through this initiative, and with the support of our dedicated transportation and public sector partners, we believe that more young people in diverse communities across our country will be better safeguarded from exploitation as they travel throughout their day.”

Transportation intersects with human trafficking on various levels. The 2021 National Outreach Survey on Transportation found that 81% of 107 survivors of human trafficking used transportation during their recruitment; 76% used transportation during the course of their exploitation; and 52% stated that transportation facilitated their exit or escape from their trafficking situation.

For more on YOT, visit www.tatnonprofit.org/youth-on-transportation.

American Bus Association receives 2024 TAT Champion Award in the Association Category

Annie Sovcik, TAT senior director of Programs and Strategic Initiatives, presented the 2024 TAT Champion Award in the Association Category to the American Bus Association (ABA) at the ABA Bus Industry Safety Council's Summer Meeting in Orlando, Florida on July 22.

“This award recognizes the ABA for the instrumental role it played in helping to open doors for the launch of TAT’s bus program and its continued support using various platforms to reach its members,” stated Sovcik. These include inviting TAT to present in-person and on webinars; donating booth space/registration multiple times at its annual meeting and marketplace; posting information about human trafficking and TAT on its website and social media, including articles on its blog and in its association magazine about how the bus industry can make a difference; co-hosting two Coalition Builds (CB); and regularly sharing CB invitations with its members by state.

In her presentation, Sovcik also highlighted the ABA’s support by:

- Allowing TAT to present to the ABA's Board of Directors in January 2018 as part of TAT’s program launch. This meeting connected TAT to several significant bus industry partners, including Coach USA, Arrow Stage Lines, Trans-Bridge Lines, GoRite Way, Jefferson Lines, CT Signature, Fullington Trailways, etc. It also led to opportunities for TAT to present at most of the state/regional

motorcoach association conferences in 2018-2019 and helped connect TAT to the ABA's Canadian counterparts: Motor Coach Canada and the Ontario Motor Coach Association.

- The ABA's Bus Industry Safety Council, a forum for addressing safety topics in the industry, helping center anti-trafficking initiatives as a safety issue within the industry and helping to open doors for TAT with safety directors at bus companies throughout the United States
- The ABA's Women in Buses Council hosting multiple webinars featuring TAT
- The ABA Insider blog featuring a four-part series about TAT and human trafficking during the critical first six months of TAT's bus program while building network and establishing credibility



Jeff Shanker, chairman of the ABA Bus Industry Safety Council and chief strategy officer at Black Tie Transportation, received the award on behalf of the ABA from Annie Sovcik, TAT senior director of Programs and Strategic Initiatives.

“We are deeply honored to receive the 2024 TAT Champion Award,” Peter Pantuso, president of the ABA, said. “This recognition underscores our commitment to eradicating human trafficking and highlights the crucial role our industry plays in this fight. Together with TAT, we are making a significant impact and will continue supporting this vital cause.”

TAT joins trucking partners in support of National Human Trafficking Database Act – S.4534

“While TAT doesn’t typically weigh in on legislation unless it is directly tied to anti-trafficking training within the transportation industry,” TAT Executive Director Esther Goetsch explained, “this bill’s passage would be an enormous win for the entire anti-trafficking movement and in the nation’s ability to understand the prevalence of the crime within our nation and how better to combat it.”

The bill in question, introduced by U.S. Senators Marsha Blackburn (R) of Tennessee and Amy Klobuchar (D) of Minnesota, would establish a national human trafficking database at the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and incentivize certain state law enforcement agencies to report data to the database. That data would include:

- The human trafficking risk assessment index score, indicating the presence and prevalence of trafficking for every county in every state
- The names of all anti-trafficking organizations operating in each county
- The total number of state-level human trafficking prosecutions collected in coordination with local District Attorneys’ offices

This bill will address a critical gap in the nation's current data collection efforts, enhancing the ability to understand the full scope of human trafficking and enabling those working on anti-trafficking efforts to develop more effective strategies to combat it. Thorough data analysis will guide the

development of preventative measures and policies to reduce the incidence of human trafficking.

To that end, TAT has worked on compiling a letter of support, alongside its partners at the American Trucking Associations (ATA), Owner/Operator Independent Drivers Association (OOIDA) and 49 state trucking associations to distribute among their networks. The American trucking industry has proven itself to be a leader in the fight against human trafficking, recognizing its role in combating this crime. As an industry that traverses the nation's highways and intersects with countless communities, this industry is uniquely positioned to identify and report suspicious activities that may indicate human trafficking and has been a leader for more than a decade in doing so.

Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance (CVSA) releases results of 2024 Human Trafficking Awareness Initiative (HTAI)

Fifty-one jurisdictions took part in the 2024 Human Trafficking Awareness Initiative (HTAI) of the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance (CVSA), which was carried out in the first few months of the year throughout the three nations of North America – Canada, Mexico and the U.S.

As part of the five-day awareness and outreach campaign to educate commercial motor vehicle drivers, motor carriers, law enforcement officers and the general public about human trafficking, participating individual law enforcement officers/troopers/inspectors held 334 human trafficking awareness and prevention events and made 204 presentations. In addition, there were 692 media contacts and 107 social media activities/outreach throughout North America.

CVSA collaborated with TAT (Truckers Against Trafficking) to offer human trafficking identification and prevention training and reference materials to the motor carrier industry and law enforcement. During the five days of HTAI in each country, participants distributed 38,158 wallet cards, 13,510 window decals and 1603 posters. In the U.S., for the first time, TAT staffers participated in some activities alongside law enforcement officers.

Examples of law enforcement's activities include:

- Handed out human trafficking information to drivers to review during the portion of an inspection when the driver is waiting
- Observed and spoke with passengers in trucks to monitor for signs of human trafficking
- Distributed flyers and wallet cards and talked to the public at truck stops, city halls, train and bus stations, ports of entry, department of motor vehicle offices, weigh/inspection stations, etc.
- Displayed the human trafficking hotline on digital roadway billboards
- Posted messages, videos, infographics, etc., to social media
- Included brief information about human trafficking and a hyperlink to more information in new entrant and compliance review emails
- Delivered human trafficking awareness and prevention training to motor carriers
- Issued news releases, held news conferences, and spoke with reporters for print and television news segments
- Completed the human trafficking online learning modules
- Participated in Wear Blue Day (in the U.S.) on Jan. 11



At the Love's Travel Stop in Berthoud, CO, LaDonna Rogers, Port of Entry training coordinator for Motor Carrier Programs and Training for the Colorado State Patrol (center), and Zachary Miller, Dumont Port of Entry officer for the Colorado State Patrol (right), give a driver (in yellow vest) information on human trafficking and some TAT materials during HTAI week.

Zachary Miller, a Dumont Port of Entry officer with the Colorado State Patrol, commented, "I found the HTAI events to be very rewarding and a great experience! While they took me out of my comfort zone, they gave me effective and positive ways to spread awareness about human trafficking, such as sharing what red flags to look out for and the resources TAT has available to help fight this crime. I also learned a lot by interacting with the truck drivers and hearing what they had to say. I really appreciated the opportunity to work these events accompanied by a TAT staffer and hope to do more events like this in the future! Thank you!"

New TAT logo moving down the road!

While TAT knows there will be many years in which older versions of its logo will still be in use – and we're grateful for each one -- it's exciting to see the new version out on the road and being used. Bison Transport in Calgary is the first company to create a trailer wrap for one of its vehicles with the new TAT logo, while Quality Carriers and KWE are using the latest version of the trailer sticker on their vehicles.



Bison Transport debuting its new wrap with TAT's logo and the human trafficking hotline numbers (U.S. and Canada).



Quality Carrier trailers are sporting stickers with the new TAT logo.



(L to R) Jason Jagros, KWE Fleet Safety trainer and Arizona driver, along with Christine Walker, KWE Fleet Services



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Aug. 1 – Bennett International Headquarters, FDP, McDonough, GA

Aug. 1 – Salida School District Conference and Vendor Show, Salida, CO

Aug. 2 – EMS Conference, Hot Springs, AR

Aug. 4-7 – Association of Public Communications Officers, Orlando, FL

Aug. 4-7 – National Star Route Mail Contractors Association National Convention, Orlando, FL

Aug. 5 – DFP 24th Basic Training, New York Department of Environmental Conservation, virtual

Aug. 5-7 – The Mercury Group Conference, Breakthrough, U.S. Venture, Bridgestone, Nashville, TN

Aug. 6 – Task Force/TAT Lunch N Learn Webinar: Youth on Transportation, virtual

Aug. 7 – The Foundation United, *But what can I do? The role of schools and school transportation in combating human trafficking*, virtual

Aug. 7 – Broward County Human Trafficking Task Force meeting, virtual

Aug. 8 – Trimac Safety Webinar, virtual

Aug. 8-9 – Wyoming Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration Industry Days, Cheyenne, WY

Aug. 14 – Penske Headquarters, FDP, Logan Township, NJ

Aug. 14 – American Public Transportation Association Security Affairs committee meeting, virtual

Aug. 15 – Volvo Headquarters, FDP, Allentown, PA

Aug. 16 – TA Charity Golf Outing, North Olmstead, OH

Aug. 18-23 – National Interdiction Conference, Anaheim, CA

Aug. 21-24 – National Truck Driving Championship, FDP, Indianapolis, IN

Aug. 25-27 – Great Dane Connections Conference, Austin, TX

Aug. 27 – Coalition Build, Monroe, LA

Aug. 28 – Arc Best Survivor Panel, virtual

Aug. 28-29 – Southeast Commercial Motor Vehicle Summit, Tuscaloosa, AL

Aug. 29 – National Transportation in Indian Country Conference, Durant, OK



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