



ONE WAVE  
OPERATIONAL LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE  
ORLANDO, FLORIDA • 2024



# VANTAGE POINT

ISSUE NO. 12

*July - September 2024*



TAT Director of Industry Training Heather Fry presenting at the National Star Route Mail Contractors Association (NSRMCA) national convention in Orlando, Florida

# LETTER FROM ESTHER

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*Dear TAT Friends,*

I've just wrapped up my year of service as Vice Chair of the Department of Transportation Advisory Committee on Human Trafficking (AHT), which includes submitting our 2024 Report: Preventing and Addressing Human Trafficking in the Transportation Sector to the Secretary of Transportation.

I'm not going to lie; gathering and compiling all the information included in this report from every sector of transportation is a massive undertaking and requires hundreds of hours of work and the hands of a lot of people. But, the final report is an incredible tribute to the people who work in every office, department, organization and agency in and with this nation's transportation system, and to the progress they've made in the fight against human trafficking, since the last report was submitted three years ago.

The 2024 report covers legislation, leadership and funding, policies and reporting, partnerships, training and awareness, research, data and information-sharing and victim and survivor support, along with recommendations for what next steps should be to strengthen and expand efforts against this crime.



While it's satisfying to me to see TAT training, materials, resources and initiatives mentioned numerous times throughout the report, it's the people like those we spotlight in this and every issue of Vantage Point who are implementing the support we provide in ways that effect change and ensure that victims are recovered and perpetrators face justice. We are incredibly grateful for their drive, persistence and commitment to stop human trafficking. From our vantage point, it's an honor to work with them and to share the results of their labor.

Handwritten signature of Esther.





*Oregon DOT Program Analyst Ken Oke received the TAT Champion Award in the State Agency Category on behalf of ODOT.*

# **IN THE SPOTLIGHT**

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**Ken Oke**

*Program Analyst for the Oregon DOT*

# KEN OKE

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If you were to create a summary of what the Oregon DOT (ODOT) is doing to fight human trafficking, you'd say something along these lines: To ensure that all employees, inspectors, law enforcement and partners are trained on human trafficking and to distribute wallet cards, window decals, posters and other awareness materials for posting at ports of entry and transit hubs across the state, ODOT has developed an integrated approach across its relevant divisions that includes outside partners, such as TAT, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, the Oregon Trucking Association (OTA), local transit districts and federally recognized tribes.

And spearheading this comprehensive approach, you'd find ODOT Program Analyst Ken Oke, a mission-driven, double-decade, innovative ODOT employee who coordinates the department's grants efforts and says of human trafficking, "The thing about human trafficking is that there's no downside to trying to prevent it; it's easy to build engagement. It's also a unique opportunity to work in partnership with an industry I regulate. It's something that -- even after hearing tragic first-person accounts, class after class -- is rewarding to address. It is doing the right thing."

Oke's work at ODOT has also included roles in Motor Carrier Transportation, in Motor Carrier Enforcement and in Safety Compliance as an inspector and in Complaint Resolution. Through these career moves, he's learned about "the work it takes to be a truck driver," the ins and out of Oregon administrative rules and statutes and the Code of Federal Regulations, and, in 2018, through TAT law enforcement classes, about human trafficking.



**Ken Oke**

He requested a role in the ODOT federal grant program and was allowed to work on the application for fiscal year 2021, the year in which Oregon identified human trafficking prevention as a state goal. "Because I had gained some program management experience managing our bus inspection program, I was allowed to organize our human trafficking prevention efforts," Oke explained. His role in grant management increased until 2023 when he moved into his current position.

"My mission is still safety," he clarified, "as I'm allowed to coordinate our division's human trafficking work. I've got a job with a mission I can feel good about every day."



A native Oregonian who enjoys the weather, fly-fishing and motorcycle riding, Oke knew little about human trafficking before the TAT class. He said that while the work fighting human trafficking is rewarding, hearing first-hand accounts of it happening don't get any easier to stomach when they're detailed.

***“One of the things people don't realize is that it is happening in their town, maybe on their street. I know TAT talks about it, but I just don't know that people fully realize it.”***

**-Ken Oke, Program Analyst for the Oregon DOT**

“I didn't know how pervasive it was in places like Bend, and the Oregon Coast,” he related. “I think working with TAT for a national perspective and our DOJ for an Oregon perspective has been helpful. One of the things people don't realize is that it is happening in their town, maybe on their street. I know TAT talks about it, but I just don't know that people fully realize it.” Oke hopes that a November truck stop briefing with TAT and Oregon's [At: Project](#) (with ties to the Central Oregon Human Trafficking Task Force) will be effective, bringing together the national and local perspective for better understanding.

ODOT fully participates in TAT's Iowa MVE Model and in the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance's (CVSA) Human Trafficking Initiative every January, where they speak with every driver and share human trafficking information statewide on vehicle motor safety (VMS) signs and provide human trafficking information at their scales and inspection bays and links to information about trafficking on Tripcheck.com. They have traveling banners showing where people can get human trafficking information, sponsor human trafficking awareness classes throughout the year, work with industry stakeholders to get human trafficking information out to the trucking community and provide information on TAT with every Oregon CMV registration renewal.

ODOT employees have access to human trafficking training materials and classes. ODOT is a member of the Oregon Department of Justice Human Trafficking Task Force, and Oke says they have received a lot of help from tribal communities who are willing to host human trafficking awareness events at their casinos where they receive a lot of truck traffic.

Oke enjoys his relationship with TAT, because it has vetted materials geared to the trucking community; TAT's collaborative and willing to try different outreach training sessions; and TAT's persistent. “They keep me on my toes,” he shared, “and help keep me active when I get bogged down in other work.”

## Program Highlight: Local Drivers

Waste Connections pledged to require company-wide training, using TAT's local driver video, for about 24,000 employees and invited TAT to present to 1000 people at their annual managers' meeting in September to build awareness and excitement about training. Training is set to begin in October, with the expectation that all will be trained by the end of January 2025.



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# IN THE SPOTLIGHT

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Brad White

*Director of Safety, Werner*





# BRAD WHITE

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Fourteen years ago, Brad White was looking for a career change. Although he grew up down the road from Werner, one of the nation’s leading trucking companies specializing in freight shipping and logistics management, he said trucking wasn’t in his blood. So, he admits it was a “leap of faith to join the trucking industry,” but after speaking to current employees who recommended Werner to him, he applied.

“I couldn’t be happier with that decision,” he said, “and the opportunities that have opened up for me. One of those is being able to use critical thinking to solve complex issues that ensure the safety of people on our nation’s roadways ... that’s what initially drew me to the transportation industry and the safety department specifically. This continues to keep me engaged and excited about my work.”

Before assuming his current role as Safety director earlier this year, White covered a variety of roles in Safety, including associate director of Safety, oversight of regulatory compliance for Werner in several capacities and working in the 24/7/365 driver support call center. In 2015, Werner began partnering with TAT by incorporating TAT training in their onboarding process as well as annual recurrent training. And White was introduced to TAT and fighting human trafficking as a member of the trucking industry.

Before he became more involved with human trafficking prevention awareness, White said he thought of human trafficking as a problem confined to big cities and major events. However, listening to TAT Training Specialist Liz Gray, a survivor-leader, tell her story shattered that misconception. “This issue is happening right here in Nebraska, in my own town,” White stated. “Although it’s a difficult topic to discuss, it’s crucial that we do so. We need to raise awareness and understanding, so everyone can stay vigilant and help prevent the next potential victim from experiencing the horrors of this crime.”

***“This issue is happening right here in Nebraska, in my own town. Although it’s a difficult topic to discuss, it’s crucial that we do so. We need to raise awareness and understanding, so everyone can stay vigilant and help prevent the next potential victim from experiencing the horrors of this crime.”***

**-Brad White, Director of Safety for Werner**



***As Director of Safety at Werner, Brad White has a lot of interaction with all of Werner’s drivers.***

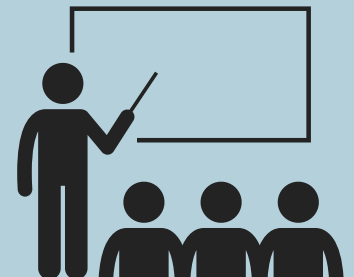
In 2020, Werner signed the USDOT's Transportation Leaders Against Human Trafficking Pledge. From that moment on, the organization has committed a growing amount of time and resources to anti-human trafficking activities. These have included:

- Nominating White for the 2023-24 USDOT Advisory Committee on Human Trafficking, to which he was appointed.
- Rolling out TAT training to all driver, maintenance and office associates at Werner Enterprises, ECM Transport, Baylor Trucking and Werner Final Mile
- Developing a zero-tolerance policy in their associate handbook
- Creating a quick call link in the Drive Werner Pro application, where drivers can contact the National Human Trafficking Hotline
- Participating in the United Against Slavery's National Outreach Survey for Transportation
- Recognizing the Department of Homeland Security's Blue Campaign on January 11, National Human Trafficking Awareness Day
- Producing and releasing a podcast with TAT, focusing on raising awareness and driving action around human trafficking prevention and featuring Gray and Paul Yates from *I've Got a Name*
- Hosting Gray for a companywide Lunch 'N Learn event
- Hosting a networking event via Werner's Woman's Leadership Alliance Associate Resource Group to collect letters of encouragement and support for survivors in conjunction with World Day Against Trafficking In Persons
- Announcing Werner's Pathways To Freedom program, an initiative designed to recognize the proactive efforts of customers, vendors and third-party carriers in establishing and maintaining robust anti-trafficking programs within their workplaces
- Showcasing TAT's Freedom Driver's Project (FDP) at Werner's outreach event, as well as helping transport the FDP to and from events

White works to use everything he's learned about human trafficking to motivate others to engage in the fight. "Becoming more involved, understanding the data and speaking with survivors has grown my desire to want to make a difference. That is when the work I was doing switched from being a part of my job to something I have grown passionate about," he explained. "And, I'm fortunate to work for a company that is committed to doing the right thing. We take our responsibility seriously to use our resources and influence to make a difference."

## Program Highlights

- Sentinel Transportation, the wholly owned subsidiary of Phillips 66, TAT-Trained all 750 of its employees, including 700 drivers (90% local, 10% over-the-road).
- TAT participated in a USDOT webinar attended by over 300 people discussing how to create effective anti-trafficking awareness campaigns.
- TAT registered an additional 1,632 energy industry employees as trained with TAT materials, bringing the total to 31,927. TAT also presented at five energy industry-related events, reaching an audience of 345. TAT energy partners donated a total of \$103,000 in corporate sponsorships.





# IN THE SPOTLIGHT

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**Lindsey Mattson**

*Content Manager, Precision Pipeline, LLC*

**Ileah Henchel**

*Manager, Document Control - HSE (health, safety and environment) & Quality, Precision Pipeline, LLC*

Ileah Henchel



Lindsey Mattson





# ILEAH HENCHEL AND LINDSEY MATTSON

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At Precision Pipeline, LLC (PPL), two women lead the charge in the pipeline contractor’s anti-human trafficking efforts: Lindsey Mattson and Ileah Henchel. Mattson has led the organization’s Human Trafficking Awareness Program since its inception in 2019, with Henchel joining her as a co-champion of this effort shortly thereafter.

Since 2019, PPL has TAT-Trained 8,865 employees. Between their work with a local Eau Claire, Wisconsin anti-trafficking organization and TAT, PPL is able to provide relevant information specifically created for the energy industry. This enables their employees to connect with the training and see themselves as a solution to the problem. Mattson and Henchel state that just as the crime is ever-involving, PPL will continue to seek current, relevant information to incorporate in their employee human trafficking education.

For Mattson, who has a passion for community involvement and volunteers as a board member of a local anti-human trafficking organization, working on the company’s Human Trafficking Awareness Program also satisfies her communications skills and natural abilities, allowing her to create program materials and participate in speaking events nationally.

***“The majority of people soliciting sex or working in forced labor don’t want to be there. They are held through force, fraud or coercion and need help.”***

**-Lindsey Mattson, Content Manager  
for Precision Pipeline, LLC**



*(L to R) Ileah Henchel and Lindsey Mattson*

Other favorite moments occur when human trafficking training and material is presented to new employees and candid conversations take place. “It’s not uncommon for individuals to mention they had no idea this was happening near project locations or that traffickers target male-dominated industries,” she explained. “There have been many times someone has recalled an observation from the past that made them suspicious, but they weren’t sure what to do or even what it was that made them uneasy. Having an open dialogue to debunk myths about human trafficking, as well as empower others to make the call if they notice suspicious activity, motivates me to continue growing the program.”



Henchel said she's often energized and rewarded when she witnesses a shift in many employees' perspectives as they recognize themselves as traffickers' "marks" due to their male gender, isolation from families and buying power. "This shift in seeing themselves as people traffickers have marked as targets becomes a motivator for saying something if they see something and to be more aware of their surroundings," she stated.

Mattson first learned of TAT when she was representing PPL at a hiring event. Seeing TAT's materials at the table of another business piqued her interest, and she wanted to learn more. Since becoming involved with TAT herself, two of the main things she's learned are how human trafficking differs from human smuggling and that "the majority of people soliciting sex or working in forced labor don't want to be there. They are held through force, fraud or coercion and need help," Mattson shared. "You should never second guess calling the National Hotline or using the TAT app to report suspicious activity. The authorities will handle the situation and investigate appropriately."

Henchel said an eye-opener for her was learning "human trafficking is not just happening overseas; it's actively occurring in our towns and neighborhoods. Not one area is immune to human trafficking, and awareness is key to fighting this crime. I was also surprised at the amount of familial trafficking that takes place."

To motivate others to learn about human trafficking and become engaged in fighting it, Henchel believes "opening the dialogue with others is half the battle, since it's such a sensitive topic. Once you open that line of communication, people are more than willing to listen and typically want to know what they can do to help in the process. There are a lot of myths out there surrounding human trafficking, and having conversations about the reality of the crime has been extremely beneficial in my experience."

Mattson believes being passionate about a cause and having authentic conversations about it will lead others to gravitate toward learning more and become advocates as well. She speaks with parents about online risks and the ways AI has enabled traffickers to reach children, participates in many local events to bring awareness to the crime and supports the anti-human trafficking organization of which she is a part. She wants people to know, "We all play a part in stopping human trafficking."



## NEW TAT-TRAINED TOTAL:

# 1,968,427

- The total number trained increased by 143,620 people since June 30, 2024.
  - The total trained in Canada is 33,856.
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# ADDITIONAL PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

## TAT and Platform Science

Platform Science announced its partnership with TAT in a press release, blog post and social media and has started to promote eTAT to customers.



*Lexi Higgins, TAT director of Industry Engagement for transit, motorcoach and school transportation, presented at the Youth on Transportation (YOT) Coalition Build in Cleveland, Ohio.*

## Coalition Builds

In Q3, TAT hosted four Coalition Builds (CBs) in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Monroe, Louisiana; Nova Scotia, Canada; and Cleveland, Ohio (Youth On Transportation, or YOT). The events attracted a total of 220 attendees, representing various sectors, including trucking/truck stops (19%), bus/transit companies/associations (5%), law enforcement (26%), government/state agencies (21%), NGOs/nonprofits (17%), and other sectors (12%). Additionally, TAT continued to follow up with participants and track the impact of past CBs, initiated planning for future CBs and engaged in planning discussions and collaboration with various state governments and task forces/coalitions.

## Freedom Drivers Project (FDP)

So far this quarter, the Freedom Drivers Project (FDP) has participated in 11 events in 10 states, with 844 participants touring the trailer. At the American Trucking Associations Truck Driving Championship in Indianapolis, Indiana, 223 people toured the exhibit.



*FDP mobile exhibit*



## Model Replication (Canada)

As of July 2024, Prince Edward Island became the second province to implement all the Canadian Vehicle Enforcement (CVE) Model steps, joining Newfoundland and Labrador. Five other provinces have partially implemented the CVE Model.

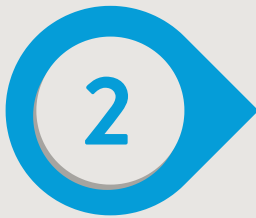


# OPPORTUNITIES



## New Education Portal

Have you visited our new [education portal](#)? All TAT's training videos are now available on this new training site, and French Canadian and Spanish translations of specific courses will be available this month. The new software system is sleek and easy to use, and by all accounts, the transition was smooth and users to the new portal have reported no major issues.



## New Toolkits

Visit [TAT's Training Library](#) to download your copy of our newest toolkits: TAT Energy Toolkit, TAT Truck Stop Toolkit and TAT Shipping & Logistics Toolkit. These resources are full of helpful information, including why your industry is important in the fight and what audiences you can impact, how to implement TAT training, beyond training, ways to engage, FAQ and more. Check them out today.

### How the Energy Industry Can Combat Human Trafficking

A TOOLKIT FOR IMPLEMENTING ANTI-TRAFFICKING INITIATIVES



[www.tatnonprofit.org/energy](http://www.tatnonprofit.org/energy)



### How Truck Stops and Travel Centers Can Combat Human Trafficking

A TOOLKIT FOR IMPLEMENTING ANTI-TRAFFICKING INITIATIVES



[www.tatnonprofit.org/truck-stops](http://www.tatnonprofit.org/truck-stops)



### How Shipping & Logistics Can Combat Human Trafficking

A TOOLKIT FOR IMPLEMENTING ANTI-TRAFFICKING INITIATIVES



[www.tatnonprofit.org/shipping-logistics](http://www.tatnonprofit.org/shipping-logistics)



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## USDOT ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON HUMAN TRAFFICKING (ACHT)

The United States Department of Transportation Advisory Committee on Human Trafficking recently completed the 2024 report. Read it [here](#).

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*Top left: Esther Goetsch, TAT executive director and USDOT ACHT vice-chair*

*Top right and bottom: USDOT ACHT members*

