

# **Conference on Traffic Safety and the 5.9GHz Band**

## **Welcome Remarks**

**Diana Furchtgott-Roth**  
**Deputy Assistant Secretary for Research and Technology**

Good afternoon. I'm Diana Furchtgott-Roth, Deputy Assistant Secretary in the Office of Research and Technology here at the Department of Transportation, and on behalf of Secretary Elaine L. Chao I'd like to welcome you to this conference. Thanks for taking the time out of a beautiful sunny day to come over to the Navy Yard and discuss traffic safety. I know many of you have come from far away, and all of you are busy, and we all appreciate you coming for this important event.

I'd like to thank my colleagues, Derek Kan, Under Secretary for Policy, and Heidi King, Deputy NHTSA Administrator, who are delivering addresses today. Thanks to my staff Karen Van Dyke, Ken Leonard, Tim Klein, Suzanne Sloan and many others who worked hard to put this conference together.

We have an outstanding group of panelists. We have panelists from the State Departments of Transportation, from Georgia, Utah, and New York. We have representatives of the auto industry, academia, and the underserved community. Our panels are structured so that you will all have a chance to ask questions, and we welcome discussion of these important issues.

We are all interested in mobility. We want more travel for work and for pleasure. We want more packages delivered, more train trips, more cruises, more airplane flights. And we want this done in a faster, cheaper, safer, way. The purpose of this conference is to talk about how we are making travel safer by using connectivity with the 5.9 GHz band of spectrum.

Within our Office of Research and Technology we are working on encouraging smart, cost-effective investments to improve safety. Here are some examples that use the 5.9 GHz band.

The Connected Vehicle Pilot Sites in New York, Florida, and Wyoming implemented a suite of connected vehicle applications and technologies designed to meet their region's transportation needs. These pilot programs are helping connected vehicles make the final leap into real-world deployment so that they can deliver on their promises to increase safety, improve personal mobility, enhance economic productivity, and transform public agency operations. These sites are laying the groundwork for other areas to follow in their footsteps.

Truck platooning is another good example of technology that uses the 5.9 GHz band. Platooning is coordinated operation of two or more trucks via cooperative adaptive cruise control. The lead truck is wirelessly connected to following trucks and sending messages that affect throttle, brakes, and brake lights. Drivers are still behind the wheel to steer and identify hazards, but the following trucks automatically increase their distance if another vehicle intersects the platoon. Platooning saves energy from aerodynamic drag reduction, reduces highway congestion, and increases safety by improving reaction times and supporting systems.

Automated vehicles have the potential to unlock otherwise unachievable safety and mobility benefits, and we must ensure that they do not introduce new risks. Functional and system safety standards are evolving to address the safety challenges and risk mitigations. We want to encourage the widest possible development of new transportation technologies.

Many other new technologies rely upon wireless communications, a trend that is consistent with what we see in connectivity in our everyday lives.

But for these technologies to work in transportation – in particular to work for transportation safety, they have to meet the unique needs of the transportation environment. They need to account for rapidly-moving and out of line-of-sight vehicles as well as pedestrians, bicyclists and other vulnerable road users. They need to account for the potential for radio interference; and they must address security.

The Department of Transportation encourages the use of spectrum by transportation technology deployers and transportation services providers. Importantly, the Department is technology neutral, encouraging the market to demonstrate appropriate approaches to low-latency connectivity that result in safe, interoperable, scalable, and efficient use of spectrum.

Spectrum advances safety, system efficiency, and greater mobility, particularly in the movement of freight and passengers. There are many sites that are deploying and using the 5.9 GHz band of spectrum for traffic safety, and we're going to hear about a few of them today.

Increasing connectivity in our transportation systems using the 5.9 band will increase safety and reduce the 37,000 crashes and 2.7 million injuries on our roads every year.

Now, it is my pleasure to introduce Deputy NHTSA Administrator Heidi King. [READ MS. KING'S BIO.]