

2018 Texas Impaired Driving Forum

Summary of Evaluations

February 7, 2018

Norris Conference Center
2525 W. Anderson Lane, Suite 365
Austin, TX



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Executive Summary

The 2018 Texas Impaired Driving Forum was held Wednesday, February 7, 2018 at the Norris Conference Center in Austin, Texas from 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM. There were 178 impaired driving safety stakeholders from across the State gathered. The Forum provided a platform for speakers and participants to exchange their knowledge, experience, and innovations in reducing impaired driving fatalities, injuries, and crashes on Texas roadways.

The opening plenary set the stage for the remainder of the day with information being shared from national and statewide perspectives on impaired driving. This was the first year that the Forum expanded to include 3 concurrent breakout sessions: alcohol, drug, and a prosecutors/judges/law enforcement track. This was also the first year that BAR credit was offered for prosecutors and judges who attended the Forum. TCOLE credit was also made available for law enforcement.

All participants were asked to complete an event evaluation as well as individual session evaluations after each breakout session. The strengths of the Forum include the breakout sessions, and the quality and variety of speakers and topics. Areas for improvement include additional seating, additional restroom facilities, and offering snacks. These areas for improvement will be addressed in the search for a new venue for host the 2019 Forum. Other areas for improvement include developing a new marketing plan to help promote and expand the reach of the Forum, as well as exploring offering education credit for medical/public health staff.

Overview

The Texas A&M Transportation Institute (TTI) and the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) hosted the 2018 Texas Impaired Driving Forum on Wednesday, February 7, 2018. The Forum was held at the Norris Conference Center in Austin. Event registration began at 8:30 AM, and the Forum officially kicked-off at 9:00 AM. The 2018 Forum was funded and supported by TxDOT's Highway Safety Section and has been for the past several years.

Ahead of the Forum, there were 225 registrants, representing 57 different organizations. The day of the Forum, there were 178 impaired driving stakeholders in attendance. Due to some poor weather conditions in the north and an especially pervasive flu season, there were several cancellations that came in the morning of the Forum.

For the first time, BAR credit was offered for prosecutors and judges attending the Forum. TCOLE credit was also offered for law enforcement in attendance. There were several requests received to offer medical/public health staff education credits as well; this will be looked into for the 2019 Forum.

Both speakers and participants represented nearly every spectrum of the impaired driving safety challenge – from prevention and advocacy, to enforcement, prosecutorial, judicial, probation and treatment, strategic planning, and traffic safety research.

The Forum held three concurrent breakout sessions: an alcohol-impaired driving focus, a drug-impaired driving focus, and a prosecutors/judges/law enforcement track. Breakout sessions allow participants to select and attend sessions that are most relevant to their background and interests. In addition, they provide participants the opportunity to engage with varied and diverse speakers to share their knowledge, experiences, and expertise.

Event Evaluation Responses

This year, Forum participants were asked to evaluate both the event and the breakout sessions they attended. Of the 178 Forum attendees, 122 surveys were returned (in various stages of completion). The event survey included questions about the general impressions and experience of attendees at the Forum while the session evaluation asked questions about the individual sessions attendees selected.

Below are the results from the event survey.

Question 1: Please Indicate Your Primary Affiliation.

The following is a breakdown of participants' backgrounds and affiliation:

- 23 – Prosecution/Judiciary
- 23 – Law Enforcement or Law Enforcement Support/Training
- 16 – Education
- 14 – Toxicology
- 12 – Traffic Safety Research or Evaluation
- 5 – Training
- 3 – Medical/Public Health
- 3 – Left Blank
- 1 – Screening/Treatment or Rehabilitation
- 1 – Engineering

Figure 1 below displays the same information about participants' primary affiliation.

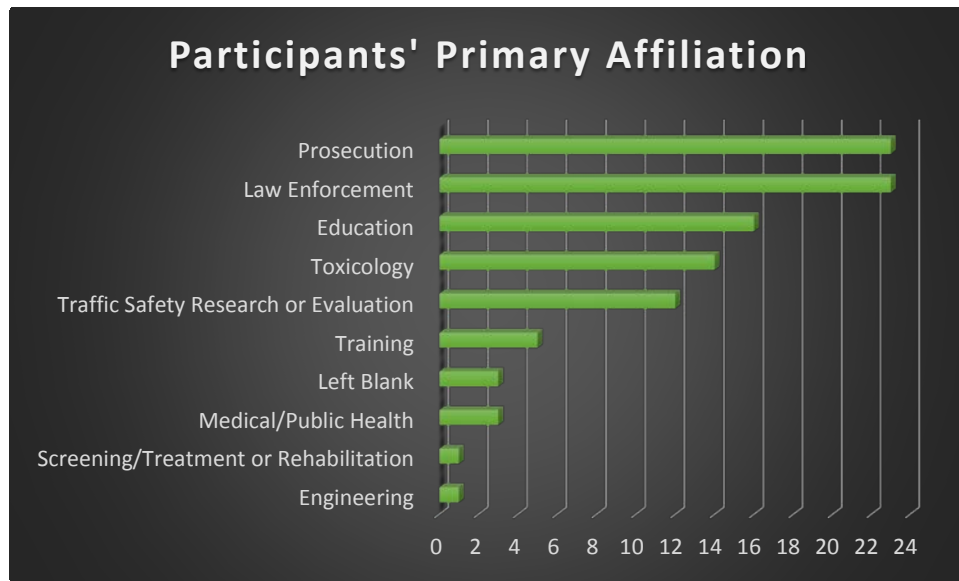


Figure 1. Participants' Primary Affiliation

Question 2: Are you attending as part of a TxDOT grant?

- 63 – No
- 31 – Yes
- 28 – No Response

Because such a large portion of respondents skipped this question, we will add “clarification language” to help explain this question.

Question 3: Rate the following items related to your experience at this year's Forum.

- **98%** of participants “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that the Forum was informative and useful.
- **93%** of participants “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that the Forum addressed important issues related to my work
- **86%** of participants “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that the Forum provided them with opportunities to network with other stakeholders.
- **63%** of participants “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that they planned to contact people they met at the Forum to follow-up on ideas they discussed.
- **95%** of participants “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that they would share information they learned at the Forum with their colleagues/community.
- **97%** of participants “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that the Forum was a good use of their time.
- **95%** of participants “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that they would recommend others attend the Forum.

- **94%** of participants “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that they planned to attend next year’s Forum.

Question 4: What were the strengths of this year’s Forum?

In order of frequency, the most commonly referenced strengths of the Forum were:

- Focused concurrent breakout sessions – 25 mentions
- The variety of topics – 19 mentions
- Quality of the speakers – 18 mentions
- Informative aspect of the Forum (online resources, provided information) – 14 mentions
- Networking opportunities – 5 mentions

The most positively commented on presentations were:

- *Colorado: The Impact of Recreational Marijuana on Illegal Drug Trafficking* by Robert Ticer
- *Medical Issues that Can Affect Driving and Mimic Impairment* by Andrew Nicholes
- *Beyond the Obvious: Why Mixing Prescription Drugs is So Dangerous* by Merlyn Joseph
- *Securing and Preserving the Impaired Driving Crash Crime Scene* by Andrew James
- *Computerized Assessment and Referral System (CARS): DUI Assessment Project* by Erin Holmes

Question 5: List one or more changes you would make to improve future Forums.

When asked about areas for improvement, participants said:

- Venue improvements are needed. Participants would like to see an increase in the number and comfort of seats, restrooms, and rooms as well as add snacks to the program.
- Potential changes in the format of the Forum could be adding more time for speakers to present and adding a discussion panel with the presenters to increase the level of interaction.
- Some participants would like to hear more about emerging drug trends, alcohol use disorder, and detailed information on current legislative changes. Others would like to hear from probation officers, law enforcement, and they would like to see more varied drug topics other than opioids.

In advance of the event, there were 225 registered attendees. The maximum seating capacity for the Norris Conference Center’s Red Oak Ballroom is 250. Given that there is the desire to continue growing the Forum as well as some concerns about the number of restrooms/seats/space available at the Norris Conference Center, we will begin the search for a new venue for the 2019 Forum.

Question 6: Are there speakers or topics you would recommend for future Forums?

Participants listed the following topic areas of interest to them:

- Robert Ticer- 6 mentions
- Clay Abbott- 4 mentions
- Victim panel stories such as from Sean & Jenny Carter - 4 mentions
- Don Egdorf - 3 mentions
- Dr. Andrew Nicholes, Dr. Alan Wayne Jones, Dr. Robert Forney - 2 mentions

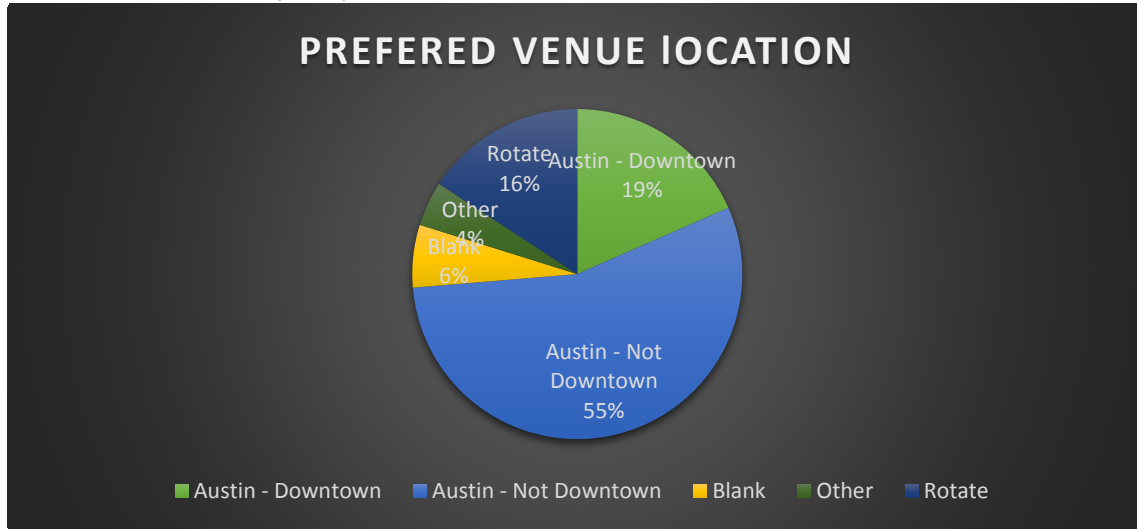
TTI will work with TxDOT during the planning process to ensure that next year's agenda is well-rounded and meets the needs of impaired driving safety stakeholders. Frank Saenz also mentioned including more topics related to probation. TTI will make every effort to include organizations and speakers that can address the abovementioned speakers. To do this, TTI will work with TxDOT program partners and their networks, and TxDOT's regional community coalitions.

Question 7: Are there topics you would like to see presented at future forums?

- DPS/ Driver's License suspension and reinstating
- Panel on criminalization of refusal/ DWI law
- Expand on refusals and warrants breath alcohol issues
- Poly pharmacy cases with no alcohol
- Best practices for management of offenders who do not comply with their remote alcohol monitoring
- Diversion problem for DWI
- Expand on marijuana experiences
- Content on breath alcohol, CARS, and probation topics
- DRE/Toxicologists
- The perspective of DWI defense attorneys
- More data on rehabilitation/intervention
- Data on green labs
- Processing DWI (non-crash) scenes as crime scenes, DWI roadside interview tips, ARIDE/DRE information
- A global perspective of impaired driving. How do other countries deal with impaired drivers? What has worked and what doesn't
- How alcohol with other drugs metabolize in the body; effects on body from medical doctor's view
- Session on how to use CRIS
- More information on new drug topics and products- like Palcohol; how to advocate for appropriate laws
- How does alcohol impact normal brain chemistry and their functionality
- Micro level information on SFST, DRE, ARIDE relating to law enforcement and how defense is getting cases dismissed based on the LEO skill level on expertise

The following set of questions relate to finding a new venue location for 2019.

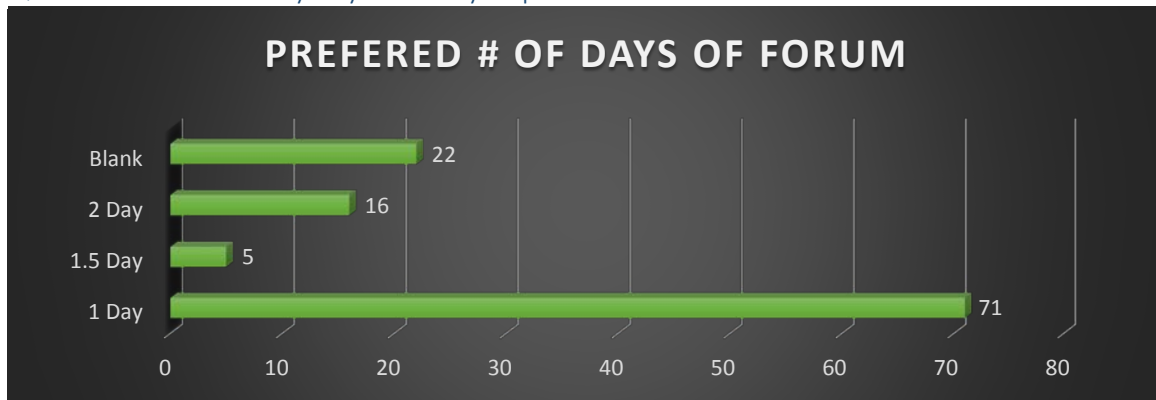
Question 8: What is your preferred venue location?



Row Labels	Count	Percentage
Austin - Downtown	21	19.4%
Austin - Not Downtown	63	58.3%
Rotate	18	16.7%
Blank	7	6.5%
Other	5	4.6%

Most participants prefer for the forum to be located outside of downtown Austin. Some suggested to move the event to either North or South Austin.

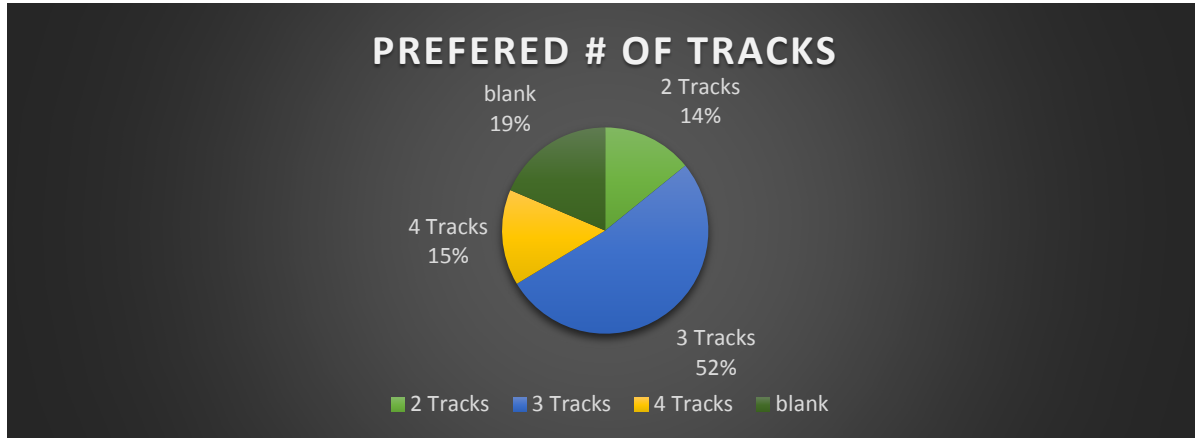
Question 9: How many days would you prefer the forum to be?



- 76% of participants prefer the forum to stay a one day event
- 24% didn't answer this question
- 16% would like the forum to be over 2 days
- 5% would like the forum to be in a 1.5 day format

Most participants prefer the one-day format because it is easier on their schedules. Some people mentioned that if the forum were to be in a 2-day format, they would like the format to include fewer but longer sessions -- as long as the information being presented is kept exciting and interesting.

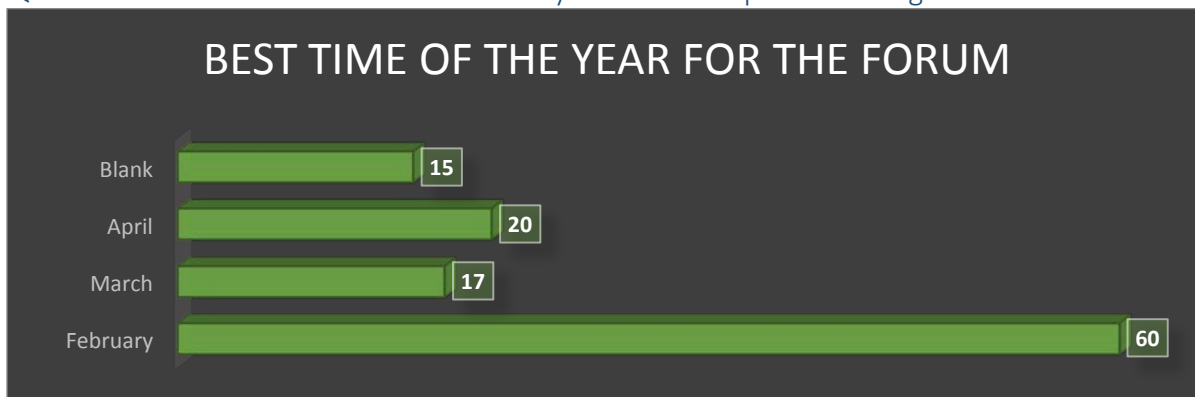
Question 10: How many concurrent program tracks do you prefer?



- 52% prefer to keep the current three-track format
- 15% prefer a four-track format
- 14% prefer a two-track format
- 19% left the question blank

Participants agreed that three-track format worked well. Although a few expressed that it was hard to choose between the three sessions and asked if the sessions could be repeated.

Question 11: What is the best time of the year for the Impaired Driving Forum?



- 54% of participants prefer the forum to be held in February
- 18% of participants prefer the forum to be held in April
- 15% of participants prefer the forum to be held in March
- 13% of participants left this question blank

Some participants voiced that the month of April is a busy month. A few suggested that late February is a good time to have the forum or early March.

Question 12: What other factors should be considered when choosing a venue for future Impaired Driving Forums?

An overwhelming number of participants would for future venues to have free and accessible parking. They also mentioned that hotel accessibility and a more comfortable venue are also important factors.

Concurrent Breakout Sessions Evaluation Results

The 2018 Texas Impaired Driving Forum marked the first year the Forum held three concurrent breakout sessions. Below are evaluation results that pertain to the breakout sessions.

10:30 AM Breakout Sessions

Alcohol Track: Motorcycling and Alcohol – Why Do They Go Hand-In-Hand? – Mike Manser

- 31 participants attended this session; 31 surveys were returned.
- Of the surveys returned:
 - 90% either “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that the session met their expectations.
 - 84% indicated the session length was an appropriate amount of time; 10% indicated it was too short; 10% indicated it was too long; 3% were neutral.
 - 71% either “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that the topic should be covered at next year’s Forum; 23% were neutral; 3% disagreed, and 3% left this question blank.

Drug Track: Beyond the Obvious: Why Mixing Prescription Drugs is So Dangerous – Merlyn Joseph

- 38 surveys were returned.
- Of the surveys returned:
 - 77% “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that the session met their expectations; 18% were neutral, and 5% left question blank.
 - 92% indicated the session length was an appropriate amount of time; 3% indicated it was too short; 5% left this question blank.
 - 66% “strongly agreed” or “agreed” the topic should be covered at next year’s Forum; 32% were neutral, and 3% disagreed.
 - Participants commented that the speaker was knowledgeable, personable, enthusiastic, and informative.

Prosecutors/Judges/LEO Track: DWI Case Law Update: Everything Old is New Again – Jessica Frazier

- 58 surveys were returned.
- Of the surveys returned:
 - 94% “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that the session met their expectations; 6% left the question blank.
 - 86% indicated the session length was an appropriate amount of time; 12% indicated it was too short; 2% indicated it was too long.
 - 93% “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that the topic should be covered at next year’s Forum; 5% were neutral, and 2% strongly disagreed.
 - Participants indicated that the speaker was knowledgeable and presented outstanding information. One participant voiced that the presentation would not be necessary to repeat at next year’s Forum unless new court cases were to be covered.

11:30 AM Breakout Sessions

Alcohol Track: Mitigating Wrong-Way Driving Crashes– Melisa Finley

- 33 participants attended this session; 24 surveys were returned.
- Of the surveys returned:
 - 92% either “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that the session met their expectations.
 - 96% indicated the session length was an appropriate amount of time; 4% indicated the session was too short.
 - 75% either “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that the topic should be covered at next year’s Forum.

Drug Track: Medical Issues that Can Affect Driving and Mimic Impairment– Andrew Nicholes

- 32 surveys were returned.
- Of the surveys returned:
 - 78% “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that the session met their expectations; 3% were neutral, 6% disagreed, 3% strongly disagreed, and 9% left this question blank.
 - 59% indicated the session length was an appropriate amount of time; 31% indicated it was too short, 6% indicated it was too long, and 3% left this question blank.
 - 81% “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that the topic should be covered at next year’s Forum; 9% were neutral, and 9% disagreed.
 - Participants commented that the speaker was informative and entertaining.

Prosecutors/Judges/LEO Track: Standardized Field Sobriety Tests (SFSTs) in Court – Justin McCants

- 37 surveys were returned.
- Of the surveys returned:
 - 84% “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that the session met their expectations; 5% were neutral, 8% disagreed, and 3% strongly disagreed.
 - 78% indicated the session length was an appropriate amount of time; 16% indicated it was too short, and 5% indicated it was too long.
 - 81% “strongly agreed” or “agreed” the topic should be covered at next year’s Forum; 8% were neutral, and 11% strongly disagreed.
 - Participants listed that they would like to hear a more in depth presentation about the topic. For example, one participant would have wanted to see more specifics on the SFST’s and the correct administration of it.

1:30 PM Breakout Sessions

Alcohol Track: Why Equip Fleet Vehicles with Ignition Interlocks? – Debra Coffey and Stephen George

- 21 participants attended this session; 21 surveys were returned.
- Of the surveys returned:
 - 85% “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that the session met their expectations; 10% were neutral, and 5% left this question blank.
 - 95% indicated the session length was an appropriate amount of time; 5% indicated it was too short.
 - 81% “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that the topic should be covered at next year’s Forum; 19% were neutral.

Drug Track: Colorado: The Impact of Recreational Marijuana on Illegal Drug Trafficking – Robert Ticer

- 87 participants attended this survey; 48 surveys were returned.
- Of the surveys returned:
 - 100% “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that the session met their expectations.
 - 29% indicated the session length was an appropriate amount of time; 21% indicated it was too short.
 - 98% “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that the session should be covered at next year’s Forum; 2% were neutral.
 - Participants commented that the speaker was knowledgeable, informative, and that they would like to have him back at future forums

Prosecutors/Judges/LEO Track: Securing and Preserving the Impaired Driving Crash Crime Scene – Andrew James

- 30 participants attended this session; 27 surveys were returned.
- Of the surveys returned:
 - 100% “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that the session met their expectations.
 - 70% indicated the session length was an appropriate amount of time; 30% indicated it was too short.
 - 100% “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that the session should be covered at next year’s Forum.

2:30 PM Breakout Sessions

Alcohol Track: Computerized Assessment and Referral System (CARS): DUI Assessment Project – Erin Holmes

- 37 participants attended this session; 28 surveys were returned.
- Of the surveys returned:
 - 89% “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that the session met their expectations; 3% were neutral, and 5% left the question blank.
 - 96% indicated the session length was an appropriate amount of time; 4% indicated it was too long.
 - 96% “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that the topic should be covered at next year’s Forum; 4% were neutral.

Drug Track: The Evolution of Opioids – Jennifer Harmon

- 44 participants attended this session; 29 surveys were returned.
- Of the surveys returned:
 - 100% “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that the session met their expectations.
 - 95% indicated the session length was an appropriate amount of time; 5% indicated it was too short.
 - 95% “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that the topic should be covered at next year’s Forum; 3% were neutral, and 3% strongly disagreed.
 - Participants commented that the speaker was knowledgeable and provided a great informative presentation

Prosecutors/Judges/LEO Track: Blood Evidence and DREs: The One-Two Punch in Drugged Driving Prosecutions – Clay Abbott

- 43 participants attended this session; 36 surveys were returned.
- Of the surveys returned:
 - 92% “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that the session met their expectations; 8% left the question blank.
 - 86% indicated the session length was an appropriate amount of time; 11% indicated it was too short, and 3% left the question blank.
 - 91% “strongly agreed” or “agreed” that the topic should be covered at next year’s Forum; 8% were neutral, and 3% disagreed.
 - Participants agreed that this was a great presentation

Conclusion

The 2018 Texas Impaired Driving Forum was successful for a number of reasons. First, there was a high volume of interest ahead of the event and at the event, demonstrated by both the number of registrations (225) and actual turnout (178) at the Forum. It is likely that the turnout would have been slightly higher had it not been for poor weather conditions in certain parts of the State (that were experiencing sleet, freezing rain) and an especially widespread flu season. However, even given these circumstances, this was the largest turnout for the Texas Impaired Driving Forum to date.

The 2018 Texas Impaired Driving Forum offered three concurrent breakout sessions. Adding a prosecutor track to forum attracted a significant new number of participants. The overwhelmingly positive evaluations received and the increased number of attendees illustrates the success of the Forum and continued interest by stakeholders.

TTI in conjunction with TxDOT will develop a marketing plan to better promote the Forum to stakeholders outside the current purview, including offering education credits for medical/public health staff.