

**Salt River Pima Maricopa Indian Community
Tribal Transportation Hearing of the
U.S. House Subcommittee for Indigenous Peoples of the United States
Responses to Democratic Members of the Committee
July 24, 2019**

Response for Representative Matt Cartwright

On the collaboration between the Salt River Police Department (SRPD) and the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT).

The relationship between the Salt River Pima Maricopa Indian Community (SRPMIC) and ADOT dates back nearly 60 years when the first State Freeway was built by ADOT within the SRPMIC in 1959. In 2001 ADOT built the SR Loop 202 (and also interchange of the SR Loop 101 Pima Freeway and SR Loop 202 Red Mountain Freeway) and SR Loop 101, both with segments within the SRPMIC. For the last 28 years, the SRPD and ADOT communicate, coordinate and work collaboratively as partners to ensure progressive, safe and well maintained freeway systems.

The SRPD and ADOT also work collaboratively through our Incident Management Systems, computers, training opportunities and Law Enforcement Agencies. The SRPD are primary first responders to all Calls For Service within the SRPMIC including all roadways and we work collaboratively with the Arizona Department of Public Safety (AZDPS) who are primary Law Enforcement agency investigators for all State roadways (unless persons involved are Native American, then the SRPD would investigate).

The SRPD also works collaboratively with the Arizona Local Emergency Response Team (ALERT) and the Maricopa County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) Regional Emergency Action Coordination Team (REACT) who respond out to assist for road closures, detours and traffic control on the freeways.

The collaborative partnership of the SRPD and ADOT also assist the SRPD with assessing, operations and staffing deployment as well as traffic circulation, traffic cycle time, traffic flow and traffic volume, all the signalized intersections and a network of cameras and overhead message signage boards. When there is an AMBER Alert, Blue Alert or Silver Alert, the ADOT supports such messages on all the overhead message signage boards

ADOT and MCDOT have also assisted with other collaborative issues, such as fencing, signage, illegal dumping and trespassing.

This level of communication, coordination and collaboration enhances public safety, operations and traffic control.

- a. Is the lack of funding for street lighting and crosswalks related to shortages in tribal infrastructure funding or the lack of access to state infrastructure funding?

Given the rural character of the Community, existing infrastructure is limited and improvements such as street lighting and pedestrian facilities are lacking. Pedestrians must use the edge of the roadway and are not visible after dark. The Community does have access to state infrastructure funding, but the funding is limited and very competitive.

Tribal funding is generally programmed for these improvements. However, tribal infrastructure funding is also limited in order to serve the variety of tribal needs and priorities.

Response for Subcommittee Chairman Ruben Gallego

What contributes to the inequities in passenger and pedestrian safety on tribal lands?

The primary contributor is a lack of crash data being reported, which leads to a lack of funding. Motor vehicle crashes are a leading cause of death and unintentional injury for Native Americans, but are misrepresented/under-reported due to inadequate crash data collection and/or concerns with sharing data with the states. For example, comparison with the national fatal crash database (FARS) shows that at least six fatal crashes on SRPMIC were not reported for 2010-2014. Unreported crashes are likely not considered when state or federal needs analyses are performed, which affects funding levels. Tribes that do not have adequate crash data have a hard time competing for available safety funding.