

New Zealand

The focus in New Zealand has continued to be on adopting the Safe System approach and implementing the government's road safety strategy for 2010 - 2020, *Safer journeys*. The first of the three-year Action Plans for the ongoing implementation of *Safer journeys* is due to be released by the Ministry of Transport early in 2011, following significant input from the key road safety partners.

Motorcycle safety was progressed with the establishment by the Accident Compensation Commission of a Motorcycle Safety Levy Council to allocate the funds accumulated through an annual \$30 safety levy on motorcyclists. The fund will initially be used to fund education and infrastructure improvements in a similar way to the Victorian approach. The new Council will be chaired by Dr Gareth Morgan, a prominent economist and motorcyclist, and will include representatives from key motorcyclist advocacy groups and the motorcycle industry.

Early consultation has commenced on a state highway classification system, and guidelines are being developed to help target road safety engineering improvements on New Zealand's high-risk rural roads.

Improving the education and licensing regime for young drivers continues: this includes raising the minimum driving age and making significant changes to the on-road driving tests used in the graduated driver licensing system to encourage higher levels of driver experience in the learner stage. Work has also started on improvements to the motorcycle training and testing regime. The revamped young driver website, Practice (www.practice.co.nz), which is designed to support higher levels of supervised driving experience for young drivers, received extensive and very positive coverage through TV, radio and print media during November.

Designing the possible interventions and regulatory changes targeted at high-risk drivers outlined in *Safer journeys* also continues. High-risk drivers are defined in New Zealand as unlicensed and disqualified drivers, those with previous speed and alcohol offences, or those who were engaged in high-risk behaviour (e.g., driving with a high blood alcohol content, evading enforcement or illegal street racing) at the time of the crash. A recently completed analysis shows that, over the last five years, high-risk drivers were at fault in one in three crashes that resulted in death or serious injury.

Building public understanding and recognition of the importance of *Safer journeys* and the Safe System is a crucial component for the success of the strategy. Activity to assist in building this public understanding and recognition has been initiated by the National Road Safety Management Group and is being deployed through a range of means by the various road safety partners.

Fabian Marsh, New Zealand Chapter Chair and Chapter Representative on the ACRS Executive Committee

Managing Editor's note: I would like to thank Fabian very much for his informative quarterly Chapter reports about road safety developments in New Zealand. After four years, he is leaving the NZ Transport Agency in Wellington to take up a road safety role with the public works authority in Doha, Qatar. Best wishes to him in his new position.

Western Australia

The WA committee will be meeting in early February to plan the program of events for 2011.

Dr Paul Roberts, Western Australian Chapter Representative on the ACRS Executive Committee

The Road Safety Decade of Action: Summary of workshop outcomes

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Abstract

The global Decade of Action for Road Safety will be launched on 11 May 2011. Instigated by a UN resolution with the support of the Australian government, the aim of this initiative is to address the more than 1.2 million road deaths that occur every year. This paper provides a summary of this global initiative. It discusses some of the key issues and challenges that will need to be addressed to ensure the initiative is successful, as well as highlighting some of the ways in which Australian individuals and organisations can contribute to this.

Keywords

Global road safety, Decade of Action for Road Safety, United Nations

Introduction

Worldwide, it is estimated that around 1.2 million people die in road crashes every year, and a further 50 million are injured [1]. This represents a major burden on health systems, as well as inflicting profound pain and suffering on individuals, families and communities. Around 90% of these deaths and injuries

occur in low- and middle-income countries, many of which are on Australia's doorstep.

The Decade of Action for Road Safety starts this year. This global initiative was instigated by a UN resolution, co-sponsored by more than 90 countries, including Australia. The goal is to halt or reverse the increasing trend in road traffic deaths and injuries around the world.

In preparation, two workshops were held to explore what the Decade of Action is about and how Australians can engage in it. The first workshop was held in Sydney in June 2010, and the second was held in Melbourne in October.

Sydney workshop presentation

The Sydney Chapter of the Australasian College of Road Safety in cooperation with the National Road Safety Council held a workshop in Sydney on 25 June 2010. The workshop was organised by Australia's members of the United Nations Road Safety Collaboration (UNRSC), Lori Mooren and Soames Job. It presented current developments and challenges to road safety at global and national levels, and enabled small group discussions across a broad spectrum of road safety researchers and practitioners.

There were 58 participants, including seven who joined the workshop from remote locations via a web link device. These participants included professionals working in the government and private sectors, spanning disciplines including enforcement, mechanical and civil engineering, behavioural and social science, public health, medicine, education, transport, employers and planning.

Lori Mooren gave a presentation on the global Decade of Action, acknowledging that much of the presentation was originally prepared by David Ward, FIA Foundation. Other UN Road Safety Collaboration members, especially Socheata Sann of Handicap International Belgium, also contributed to the presentation.

The presentation began with introductory remarks about the United Nations resolutions that have progressively committed member nations to an active approach to reduce road trauma. The UN Road Safety Collaboration, chaired by the World Health Organization, meets twice per year to develop a coordinated set of actions to advocate for and address road safety, particularly in low- and middle-income countries. Data were presented to demonstrate that road injury is not just a significant threat to global public health, but indeed an economic development issue.

Mooren advised that:

- Road crashes affect the economically active population, as 67% of all road deaths are of people under 45 years of age
- Road crashes are the number one killer of people aged between 10 and 25
- Typically only 10% of road deaths occur to people who are retired and nearing the end of their natural life span

- Road crashes contribute to the cycle of poverty for families and countries. Low- and middle-income countries account for 90% of global deaths from road crashes, despite having only 48% of the global motor vehicle fleet. See Figure 1 for a view of traffic conditions in Africa.



Figure 1. Child pedestrian in Africa (photo courtesy of the FIA Foundation)

The disparities between rich and poor nations are forecasted to grow. The World Bank has estimated that South Asian countries will see a 144% rise in road deaths between 2000 and 2020, whereas they predict a 28% drop in road fatalities in high-income countries over the same period.



Figure 2. Actress Michelle Yeoh, representing the UN Ambassador of Malaysia, and Global Ambassador of the Make Roads Safe Campaign (photo courtesy of the FIA Foundation)

After a range of efforts by the UN Road Safety Collaboration and others, the UN General Assembly in New York voted unanimously on 2 March 2010 to proclaim the years 2011-2020 the Decade of Action for Road Safety. Figure 2 shows Michelle Yeoh speaking for the resolution in the United Nations General Assembly. The resolution was sponsored by 98 countries and supports the goal to 'stabilize and then reduce the level of road fatalities', which will require a 50% reduction in

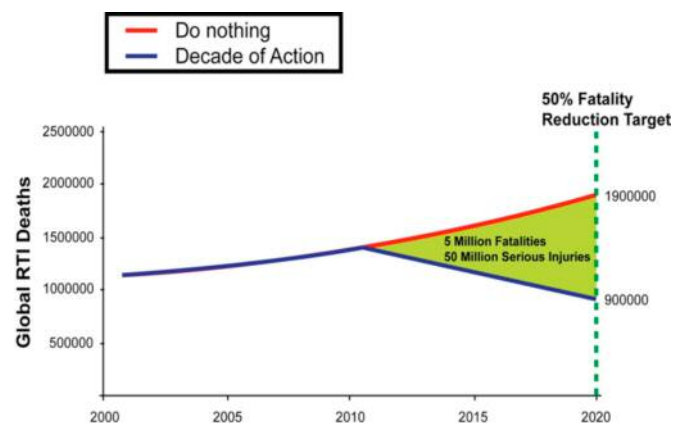


Figure 3. Graph of predicted road traffic injury deaths (courtesy of the FIA Foundation's Commission for Global Road Safety)

the forecast level of fatalities by 2020. This could prevent more than 5 million deaths and 50 million injuries (see Figure 3), saving \$3 trillion.

The Resolution called upon the UN Road Safety Collaboration (UNSRSC) to develop an action plan for the Decade of Action. At a global level, the plan features an overarching framework for international coordination. The UNRSC will seek to coordinate actions to:

- find ways to increase global funding
- advocate for the Safe System approach
- increase awareness of risk factors
- provide guidance to countries
- assist to improve the quality of road crash and injury data.

The draft Decade of Action plan [2] contains recommended actions and performance indicators for national activities under five ‘pillars’, as depicted in Figure 4.



Figure 4. Pillars of the Decade of Action [2]

Under Pillar 1, each country will be encouraged to establish a lead agency for coordinating national actions under a national road safety strategy with targets and adequate funding. The draft plan calls for the creation of multi-sectoral partnerships to carry out plans and achieve targets, supported by the data collection and evidential research to assess countermeasure design, and monitor implementation and effectiveness.

Pillar 2 calls for the use of road infrastructure assessment ratings and improved design to raise the inherent safety and protective quality of road networks for the benefit of all road users, especially the most vulnerable. Mooren advised that, consistent with Safe System principles, some of the ideas generated by UNRSC members include the construction and maintenance of ‘forgiving’ roads, which:

- use low-cost safety architecture
- are self enforcing (less scope for speed)
- separate vulnerable users and vehicles
- avoid vehicle conflicts (roundabouts rather than junctions, median separation)
- use innovative rating and assessment systems (iRAP) to make transparent the safety performance of the road network.

Pillar 3 urges global deployment of improved vehicle safety technologies for both passive and active safety through a combination of harmonisation of relevant global standards, consumer information schemes and incentives to accelerate the uptake of new technologies. The UNRSC wants car buyers to choose the safest models they can afford and encourages a ‘market for safety’ by promoting:

- consumer crash test information (New Car Assessment Program, or NCAP)
- fiscal incentives for safer cars
- fleet purchasing policies
- new crash avoidance systems such as electronic stability control (ESC)
- global UN fleet safety standards that set minimum requirements for all new cars.

Pillar 4 calls for sustained enforcement of road traffic laws and standards and rules, combined with public awareness and education activities (in both public and the private sectors) that will raise compliance with regulations that reduce the impact of the key risk factors (speeding; drink driving; non-use of motorcycle helmets, seatbelts and child restraints; pedestrian right of way; and commercial vehicle operations). The UNRSC has prepared guidance manuals for road safety practitioners in low- and middle-income countries to address most of these risk factors.

Mooren highlighted two innovative programs that have been implemented – a seatbelt campaign in Costa Rica and a ‘helmets for kids’ program that began in Vietnam and is now being implemented in other countries as well. The Asia Injury Prevention Foundation [3] provides an opportunity for local and international companies to ‘adopt a school’ and purchase effective, low-cost motorcycle helmets for every child in a school. (See Figure 5.)



Figure 5. Helmet ceremony in a Vietnamese school (photo courtesy of the Asia Injury Prevention Foundation)

Pillar 5 is seeking an increased responsiveness to emergencies and improvement in the ability of health systems to provide appropriate emergency treatment and longer-term rehabilitation. Mooren provided examples of how some low- and middle-income countries are struggling to address these challenges. For example, the Australian Red Cross assisted the training of Vietnamese motorcycle taxi drivers in first aid and how to stabilise road trauma victims.

She told the participants about an example of how public policies can go wrong. In Nepal, where most people do not have insurance, a law was passed to make vehicle controllers who are at fault in injuring another road user pay to support that person and their family until the person is able to do this for themselves. This resulted in drivers who knocked down pedestrians reversing over the bodies to ensure that they did not survive, because the fine for killing someone with a motor vehicle is generally a lesser amount to pay.

While not in the current draft plan, Mooren suggested that, consistent with the Safe System approach, the UNRSC should consider another pillar to focus activities on safer speeds. Mooren spoke of the global challenge for the road safety community to achieve ambitious targets, including a 50% reduction in predicted fatalities being advocated by the Commission for Global Road Safety 'Make roads safe' campaign.

Mooren said that the next step forward included working up a final draft of the Decade of Action plan for the meeting of the UNRSC in early October 2010. The launch date for the Decade of Action for Road Safety is 11 May 2011.

Working group outcomes

Workshop attendees participated in working groups on one of five topics. Topics and group leaders were as follows:

- Road Safety Management and Post-Crash Care – Harry Camkin, Sydney Chapter executive member, ACRS
- Safer Road Infrastructure – Neil Walker, RTA
- Safer Vehicles – Jack Haley, NRMA
- Safer People – Liz de Rome, The George Institute
- Safer Speeds – Senior Sergeant Mick Timms, NSW Police

Each group discussed the following questions related to their topic:

1. What are the best opportunities to reduce road injury?
2. What are the likely barriers to taking effective actions?
3. What should be done to minimise barriers to success?
4. What are the best indicators of successful actions?
5. What kinds of targets – including interim and output targets – should we set?

Key outcomes of group discussions are summarised below.

Pillar 1: Road Safety Management

This pillar goes well beyond the building of road safety management capacity to the construction of institutional frameworks within governments. It can be seen to be an essential element for establishing a national strategy. The incorporation of activities under the proposed pillars would provide a good structure for a strategic plan. However, transformation into a specific national strategy would initially depend primarily on the level of sophistication in the country's approach to road safety.

There is a view that insufficient attention is given to the importance of road safety administration in managing the extensive mix of countermeasures under the Safe System approach, and managing it for cost effectiveness, equity and vulnerability.

All of the activities outlined in the original draft Decade of Action document are thought to be appropriate for a generic plan. However, establishing an appropriately empowered lead agency and developing a national strategy where they do not exist must be primary objectives.

With regard to capacity building, succession planning should begin in this Decade of Action, to ensure that activities and results are sustained. The possible barriers to effective actions depend on how far down the track a particular nation has already progressed. Common barriers include:

- political and community priorities that give road safety a lower priority for attention compared with education, defence, health care or economic development
- impacts of the Global Financial Crisis
- level of expertise available
- level of funding
- understanding (by politicians, community and decision-makers) of the nature and magnitude of the problem and what can be done about it
- value of human life and human rights issues
- differing cultural values.

Ways to minimise the effect of such barriers include:

- promulgate this UN initiative to national decision-makers and encourage ratification of national government endorsement of it
- take guidance from the work of the UNRS Collaboration
- develop an improved level of road safety expertise
- set up a professional association similar to the Australasian College of Road Safety domestically and through an international network
- carry out public information campaigns about the scale of the problem and as a setting for activities under the pillars
- identify and forge links to other policy agendas such as environment and health
- focus on the returns from highly cost-effective road safety activities
- ensure that relevant agencies are familiar with UN, OECD and WHO reports, particularly, *Towards Zero: ambitious road safety targets and the Safe System approach*
- Share responsibility – community and individual
- Develop national charters for government signature.

Best indicators of successful action are downwards trends in casualty rates per capita, the degree of inter-sectoral cooperation, and proximity of trends to targets.

Process targets should include:

- political endorsement and commitment
- implementation of planned countermeasures
- identification and application of best practice
- establishment of inter-sectoral and partnership coalitions
- benchmarking progress with implementing programs and strategies.

Outcome targets should include:

- fatality and casualty rates (per 100,000 population)
- fatality and casualty rates by socio-economic level and vulnerability
- specific intervention targets, e.g., seatbelt use, reduction in mean speeds
- interim and long-term targets.

There should also be a clear aspirational goal of no deaths nor serious injuries.

Pillar 2: Infrastructure (Roads)

With regard to road design, this discussion group advocated that 'less road safety developed' countries could learn from mistakes, as well as successes, of 'more road safety developed' jurisdictions. For example, in some cases land use and transport planning has not taken road safety considerations into account.

A Safe System approach requires a separation of vulnerable road users from motorised traffic. Constructions including clear zones and roundabouts, for example, need to consider the needs of pedestrians and cyclists.

Opportunities and ideas:

- Consider affordable infrastructure interventions from evidence-based research. Incremental staged development may maximise safety and cost effectiveness
- Place priority on human injury and fatality risk reduction
- Consider whether road infrastructure development is the most affordable transport development solution.

Possible barriers and challenges include:

- lack of political will
- cultural values that place economic needs above human life and safety
- lack of financial resources
- lack of knowledge of low-cost solutions, or lack of acceptance of their efficiency
- lack of availability of technical/governance/standards-setting framework and expertise
- climatic challenges that require different road development standards or materials, for example, monsoon-prone areas.

Pillar 3: Safer Vehicles

This group advised that opportunities could be derived from both new and old vehicle technologies. The newer technologies such as intelligent speed adaptation (ISA) have now been pilot-tested in a number of countries. Other technologies such as in-vehicle monitoring devices, breath alcohol ignition locks and other such advances can assist to reduce risk to human life.

However, protective equipment such as seatbelts, child restraints, and motorcycle and bicycle helmets have been around for many decades, but even when available may not be used. As a primary objective, governments should take action to ensure that for each motor vehicle permitted to use public roads, a seatbelt should be available for use.

Roadworthiness standards should be required and enforced – including, for example, lights, brakes and tyres.

Crashworthiness standards and consumer-driven vehicle safety programs, such as the New Car Assessment Program (NCAP), could be implemented in all countries. Moreover, motorcycle and bicycle helmet standards should be developed and enforced.

Barriers to advancing vehicle safety progress could include:

- macro- and microeconomic costs of improving vehicle safety standards

- accessibility to safer vehicles and technology
- lack of design rules and vehicle registration standards
- lack of enforcement

Target indicators should include:

- age of fleet
- number of vehicles fitted with seatbelts for all occupants
- fleet purchasing safer vehicles
- helmet standards in place and enforced

Pillar 4: Safer People

The opportunities for the Decade of Action include adaptation of road rules in active road safety jurisdictions to those jurisdictions with few or ineffective road rules. However, a lack of or poor licensing systems, lack of enforcement or corruption of enforcement may mean that road rules cannot be effectively enforced.

Administrative apparatus for licensing and record/data keeping is essential for a road user regulatory system to work. This also needs to be supported by traffic law enforcement. Barriers and challenges could include:

- corruption in licensing and enforcement
- lack of evidence-based information on behaviour management
- lack of government commitment to regulation
- lack of research on behavioural intervention effectiveness.

Targets could include:

- community support and engagement on regulation and enforcement
- level of harmonisation of road rules
- preparedness to enact traffic laws and regulations
- Preparedness to promote laws and regulations to road users.

A possible additional Pillar: Safer Speeds

Consistent with the Safe System approach, there are opportunities to advance safer speeds. These include the introduction or reduction of legal speed limits. In rural areas unsafe vehicle speeds can be particularly fatal for vehicle occupants. In cities and towns where motorised traffic is likely to be in conflict with vulnerable road users such as pedestrians, the speed limits need to be quite low to ensure injury-free road travel.

Barriers and challenges include:

- lack of police training and equipment
- corruption or cultural issues in some countries
- volume of traffic – population density
- lack of road rules
- lack of compliance
- poor education of the population
- lack of effective media about speeding risk
- lack of funding and government support.

To minimise the adverse effects of these barriers, the group suggested that speed enforcement is critical and resourcing this

can be achieved, either through self-funding systems or by securing overseas aid. In addition, long-term public education campaigns should complement enforcement efforts.

International events such as the World Cup or other international sporting events can be utilised to rally support in host countries. Indicators of success could include:

- tracking and reporting speed-related fatalities
- monitoring of people's behaviour, with CCTV monitoring of selected sites over 10 years
- speed infringement data (though this may be a measure of enforcement rather than of compliance)
- proportion of roads that have sign-posted speed limits
- number of trained police
- number of speed detection devices
- free-flow traffic speeds.

Pillar 5: Post-Crash Care

This workshop group advised of opportunities to utilise models such as those devised by the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons for the development of a trauma care system.

Barriers include:

- availability of resources for expert treatment and rehabilitation
- capacity to notify of a serious crash
- relative national priorities for infrastructure, education and other government tasks versus trauma care
- cost of insurance cover in developing nations
- misinterpretation of valuation of human life.

The promotion of benefits of primary, secondary and tertiary prevention over long-term treatment may assist to reduce barriers to actions. Indicators of success could include:

- actions within the 'golden hour' (post-crash response)
- reductions in costs of medical treatment of road trauma victims
- pre-hospital and rehabilitation services for road trauma victims
- resources dedicated to emergency rescue and treatment.

Melbourne workshop

As part of the 24th ARRB Conference (in October 2010, a workshop was held in association with the Road Engineering Association of Asia and Australasia (REAAA) to provide background information on the Decade of Action. A further aim of the workshop was to discuss how those based in Australia can usefully contribute to this new initiative, both here in Australia and globally. Over 50 attendees contributed to discussions on Australian involvement.

Several presentations were provided giving background on the Decade of Action and current activities relating to this. These included the following speakers and topics:

- Robert Klein, Road Safety Consultant: background to the Decade of Action document

- Rob McInerney, Chief Executive from the International Road Assessment Program (iRAP): Road Infrastructure Pillar
- Eric Howard, Road Safety Consultant: Road Safety Management Pillar
- Blair Turner, Principal Research Scientist at ARRB Group: recent and current initiatives that Australian safety experts have been involved in internationally
- Alan Coulthart, Principal Infrastructure Advisor for AusAID: recent AusAID initiatives in road safety

Key discussion themes

The presentations were followed by a workshop discussion. Several key themes emerged during these discussions, including the need for coordination of activities, transfer of knowledge and experience, and alignment with the Australian National Road Safety Strategy.

Coordination of activities

Australia is already involved in a significant way in global road safety, but there is no real coordination of our international road safety activities and this should be addressed.

Coordination should include facilitation of resources. It was suggested that this be addressed at senior government level (e.g., Council of Australian Governments).

Some type of coordinating body is required to concentrate Australian efforts at the regional and global level. It was also suggested that Australia lacks a road safety champion.

Australia's previous international involvement has relied largely on a philanthropic approach, but with the increased global emphasis on road safety, this needs to switch to a more sustainable approach in terms of funding. A long-term commitment is needed.

Australia's federal system of government presents challenges for coordinated national action, with road safety being primarily a state and territory responsibility. There is a need to coordinate and connect relevant resources at local, state and national levels. Austroads may have an important role in this respect. NGOs and corporate organisations have capacity for involvement in the Decade of Action, but again there is a need to coordinate actions.

Transfer of knowledge and experience

Australia has very solid experience in road safety, both within Australia and globally. There is a need to identify areas of safety where we perform well (and particularly those areas with high safety impacts) and concentrate on these in our international efforts. One suggestion was in the area of heavy vehicle safety, although there are many others.

There is a need to prepare new professionals for involvement in these global initiatives. The benefits of this are likely to be twofold: countries where the skills are applied will benefit from trauma reductions, and the individuals participating are likely

to gain in terms of personal and professional development. Opportunity should be sought for younger Australian professionals to gain experience overseas, perhaps initially in some sort of shadowing role. Longer-term projects lend themselves well to these sorts of arrangements.

It was suggested that Australia has a wealth of road safety guidance documents that would be of relevance to those working in other countries. It was recommended that greater dissemination of this guidance be investigated, including the possibility of Austroads providing these documents for free to those in developing countries.

Some type of network involving senior road managers in the region would be of value. There are several organisations already active in the region that could act as a platform for establishing and maintaining such a network (e.g., Road Engineering Association of Asia and Australasia).

Australia could assist developing countries by conducting further research to address global research needs. For example, little is known about the safety benefit of various road infrastructure measures in developing countries.

The Australian National Road Safety Strategy

It was unclear at the time of the workshop whether the current draft of the new National Road Safety Strategy for Australia [4] contains reference or sufficient linkage to the Decade of Action. Like the Decade of Action, this strategy also spans the period from 2011 to 2020. This linkage needs to be examined with urgency. The Decade of Action provides an international framework for road safety activity, and actions within Australia need to be connected to this. In addition, the national strategy is a very useful means to concentrate thinking about how Australia can be involved at the global level in the Decade of Action.

Early indications are that the crash reduction targets in the new Australian Road Safety Strategy will be less than those set down in the Decade of Action. This needs to be reviewed with urgency, especially given that others in the region look to Australia for guidance on road safety issues. If a lower target is set for Australia, any difference with the international target needs to be carefully explained.

It was also suggested that we take a critical look at the delivery of road safety within Australia and New Zealand, as our performance over the last decade has not improved greatly.

Recommendations from the Melbourne Workshop

The workshop participants made the following recommendations:

- As a priority, the new Australian Road Safety Strategy should be reviewed to ensure it is consistent with the new global Decade of Action road safety strategy. Opportunities should also be sought to include actions to facilitate global involvement in road safety and achievement of the Decade of Action outcomes.
- A coordinating body is required to maximise the impact of current and future efforts in the delivery of global road safety. A high profile road safety champion would be an asset in this aim, and would assist in the delivery of road safety within Australia.
- The coordinating body (as well as individuals and organisations) should explore ways that we can concentrate our efforts in terms of transfer of knowledge and experience at the regional and global levels.
- Individuals and organisations should consider how they can contribute to the Decade of Action. To facilitate this, greater education and publicity about this initiative is required.

Concluding comments

Both of these workshops were successful in presenting information on the Road Safety Decade of Action, and exploring some of the issues that will need to be addressed to make this a success. However, it is recognised that both workshops had limited scope to address all of the issues relating to global road safety, and that each contributed in a limited way in this task.

It is suggested that further workshop events be held to more thoroughly explore these issues. ACRS and ARRB are proposing a follow-up roundtable session in 2011. It is intended that this roundtable include peak road safety bodies, motoring clubs, road authorities and other key stakeholders, and that it aim to help progress discussions in advance of the launch of the Decade of Action. Key suggestions from the workshops included increased focus on safer roads and roadsides, effective enforcement (with education), and greater focus on management of speed.

Acknowledgements and disclaimer

The authors thank all of the workshop participants for their commitment to road safety and contribution of suggestions. Note, however, that the views reported from the workshops are not necessarily those of the authors or their agencies.

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