GRPN NEWSLETTER

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Road Policing and the Safe System – Safe Road Users – Drink Driving

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In the first edition of the GRPN Newsletter, the importance of the 'Safe System' approach was explained. In this edition, we explain one component that contributes to 'Safe Road Users', which are measures known to be effective at preventing drink driving.

Drink, or alcohol-impaired driving, remains an enormous global problem resulting in hundreds of thousands of deaths and serious injuries every year. The World Health Organization (WHO) has reported that between five per cent and 35 per cent of global road deaths are alcohol-related and that in most high-income countries, about 20 per cent of fatally injured drivers have a blood alcohol concentration level above the legal limit.

Studies in low- and middle-income countries have shown that between 33 per cent and 69 per cent of fatally injured drivers and between eight per cent and 29 per cent of non-fatally injured drivers had consumed alcohol before their crash.

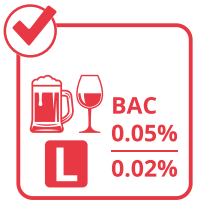
Because systems and enabling legislation to ensure blood alcohol testing of drivers involved in crashes are not always available in many parts of the world, the true level of alcohol involvement in road trauma is likely to be significantly under-reported.

The Global Road Safety Partnership (GRSP) recently reviewed and updated the 'Green Manual' on drink driving. The Green Manuals are an initiative of the UN Road Safety Collaboration, with the first manuals produced in 2006. The process of updating the manuals has been underway since 2021.

This revised manual provides advice and examples that, if implemented accordingly, will reduce the prevalence of drink driving and associated road trauma.

The manual is aimed at policy-makers, road safety practitioners and police and draws on experience from countries that have succeeded in achieving and sustaining reductions in alcohol-related road trauma. It includes recommendations for developing and implementing drink driving legislation and advice on how to monitor and evaluate progress. A particular focus is the design and implementation of interventions that include legislation, enforcement and public education/advocacy measures. Importantly, these interventions must work in concert to achieve optimal results.

Research has demonstrated that the following measures work to reduce the drink driving related casualties:



Setting BAC limits of no more than 0.05% for the general population and 0.02% for young and novice drivers.

Police conducting random breath testing programmes supported by targeted public awareness programmes.

Evidence-based mandated therapeutic programmes for repeat offenders.

Alcohol ignition interlocks.

Successful drink drive prevention measures, originally designed by Professor Ross Homel from Australia in the 1980s, are still proving to be highly effective today. These principles, known as 'Homel's principles', have for many police agencies become the benchmark for drink drive prevention and are explained in detail within the revised Green Manual.

Drink drive enforcement is a fundamental part of effective road policing programmes and is an essential requirement to meeting the global target of the 2nd Decade of Action for Road Safety of reducing road crash death and injury by at least 50 per cent by 2030.

Mobile Phone Detection Cameras – an Emerging Technology in the Fight to Save Lives

Source: Central Western Daily

Using a mobile phone while driving is a growing concern worldwide. Emerging research indicates that mobile phone use while driving is associated with an increase in the risk of having a casualty crash, while texting increases the crash risk even further.

In response to this growing concern, innovative measures to address dangerous or illegal use of a mobile phone while driving are being developed to reduce road crash injuries.

In recent years, technology breakthroughs have combined to offer police and enforcement agencies more options to capture violations using automated enforcement and artificial intelligence (AI). However, the use and impacts of these technologies need to be fully understood to ensure they achieve the intended results.

Illegal mobile phone use while driving can be described as holding or touching the phone, resting it on your shoulder or lap, reading or scrolling through text messages, email and social media while driving or in charge of the vehicle, whether the car is stopped in traffic or travelling at speed.

The use of mobile phone detection cameras aims to prevent road users from driving while using a mobile phone by detecting and penalizing those who do. This not only affects the offender who gets caught (specific deterrence), but also has the potential to positively influence others and deter them from using their mobile phone while driving for fear of consequence (general deterrence). General deterrence is achieved by publicising the enforcement that is taking place.

Unlike speed and red-light cameras, mobile phone detection cameras use AI to detect illegal phone use. They can operate in all weather conditions, including fog and heavy rain using high-definition cameras to capture images of the front-row cabin space of all vehicles to detect illegal mobile phone use.

Both fixed cameras (i.e. cameras fitted to existing infrastructure) and portable cameras (i.e. cameras that can be moved across random locations) are intended to be positioned where road crash injuries or fatalities have occurred and where using a mobile phone was identified as a contributing factor. They can also be used in locations where high levels of mobile phone use have been observed.

The mobile phone detection camera system incorporates several cameras and an infra-red flash to capture clear images of passing vehicles. The AI software automatically reviews images and detects potential offending drivers

and excludes images of non-offending drivers from further action. Images that are automatically deemed likely to contain a mobile phone offence must be verified by appropriately trained and authorised personnel. This involves checking the image to confirm that illegal mobile phone use has occurred before issuing an infringement notice. Images rejected by the AI should be permanently deleted. Both fixed and transportable versions of the cameras use the same camera technology.

Source: transport.nsw.gov.au

In Australia, the state of New South Wales became the first jurisdiction in the world to start issuing fines using mobile phone detection cameras from March 2021 following a successful trial in 2020, including a three-month warning period prior to fines being issued to motorists. The states of Queensland and Victoria began testing mobile phone camera technology in July 2020, with Queensland authorities activating mobile phone detection technology in July 2021 and Victoria considering introducing the technology on the back of the successful introduction in New South Wales and Queensland.

Automated, camera-based enforcement, coupled with regular on-road policing operations, has played a critical role in addressing other high-risk behaviours such as speeding and red light running in many jurisdictions around the world. This new mobile camera detection technology aims to help prevent distraction-related crashes and reduce road trauma.

Source: traffictechnologytoday.com

GRSP Delivers Child Restraint System (CRS) Training to Police in Romania

As part of the Botnar Child Road Safety Challenge (BCRSC), related to the implementation of Child Restraint Systems (CRS) in Cluj-Napoca, Romania, GRSP organized CRS enforcement training for police officers in April 2022.

Having children safely protected in child restraint systems, that meet international standards and which are correctly fitted into vehicles, significantly reduces the chances of death or serious injury to child passengers in the event of a crash.

Before the training began, a pre-assessment visit was undertaken so the current situation with CRS use was fully understood, including the needs and expectations of local partners.

CRS enforcement is a specific form of road policing that requires a sensitive approach. Throughout the training, there was a focus on the importance of sustainable, safe, highly visible and effective CRS enforcement. Practical advice was provided on how to organize and conduct CRS operations within the local context to encourage parents and caregivers to ensure children are safely restrained within the vehicle. It's also essential that the CRS itself is correctly fitted within the vehicle. There was an emphasis on the sensitivity required when communicating with children.

The content of the training was adapted to highlight important considerations for police officers to be aware of during CRS checks. For example:

- A child who is not seated in a restraint system is not the problem, it's the parent or caregiver who needs to be educated about the risk.
- During communication, police need to focus on the driver who may be the parent or caregiver who is responsible for the child's safety.
- Being sensitive to how police communicate with parents or caregivers in the presence of the child who might feel guilty if there's a CRS violation.
- Being aware of the procedures required when in the immediate vicinity of the entrances of schools and kindergartens, where the parents/caregivers are in the view of others.
- The need to use the interaction to focus on explaining the importance of the use of CRS and how to fit them correctly.

During the training, the police officers involved had their interactions recorded on video, so that they could review their approach and have advice provided on how to improve the interaction. The video recording provided highly valuable insight and will be used by officers in the future to demonstrate good practice and common mistakes that can be made.

The newly acquired knowledge was used in a real CRS enforcement operation, where Cluj-Napoca police officers carried out CRS checks near a major shopping mall in the city. The officers used their newly acquired skills and also distributed stickers to children, which consisted of smiles and sad faces, as part of a "soft enforcement" approach during the first phase of implementation.

The CRS operation was well-received by road users. The training was assessed very positively by police and a decision to extend the training to the national level was made. The responses in the post-evaluation survey showed that the vast majority of officers who were trained significantly improved their knowledge of CRS systems, how to check they were correctly fitted and the correct approach to carrying out checks.

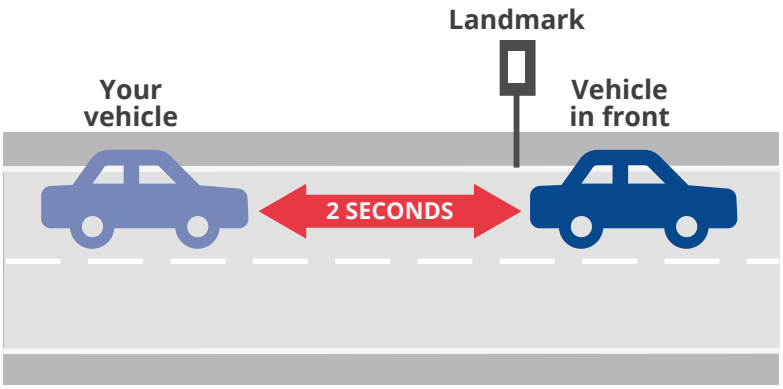
CRS enforcement training in Cluj-Napoca is an example of good practice that can be applied to other countries that are in the process of implementing CRS legislation.

Tailgating: What is it and Why is it Dangerous?

Tailgating is a dangerous and quite common driver behaviour seen on our roads. This behaviour entails following too closely behind another vehicle and often results in rear-end collisions. According to the Traffic Safety Facts Annual Report (2019) by the U.S. Department of Transportation, rear-end collisions were the number one cause of collisions involving motor vehicles in 2019.

While some drivers tailgate on purpose to pressure other drivers, others may do so because they are not properly paying attention or are convinced that the onboard distance control and brake systems ensure full control of the vehicle, no matter the road's conditions.

There are a variety of legal regulations or recommendations in terms of safe following distances, which vary from country to country, and travel speed. In some countries, the distance is calculated by the "2-second rule", such as in Denmark or the Netherlands. Simply, this means that the distance a vehicle should keep from another should equate to the distance traveled by the motorist in two seconds. Another regulation considers the half-speed rule. This rule states that the distance in meters should be half of the actual speed in km/h, which is the case in Poland.



Time taken to reach the Landmark:

< 2 sec - Too close

≥ 2 sec - Safe distance

The problem is how to measure following distances, detect offences and penalize drivers who fail to keep safe following distances. As noted above, many countries have specified the minimum following distances in their traffic codes, but the challenge is in the effective enforcement of these regulations. The key element necessary to effectively enforce these regulations is appropriate equipment.

@BorowiakPolicja on Twitter

Sophisticated systems for the detection and tracking of vehicle following distances were introduced many years ago. The devices were usually installed on bridges and overpasses to allow cameras to accurately track and measure vehicle distances. The devices work automatically and take a photograph when a vehicle does not maintain the required following distance. The devices can be mounted permanently in one location, or can be portable.

Today, new handheld laser speed measurement devices are often equipped with technology that measures the time and distance between vehicles, which is an operational mode called Distance Between Cars (DBC). While not all of these devices are equipped with the DBC feature, some previous models can be upgraded to include it.

This device is a multitasking tool that, while working in DBC mode, allows officers to measure the speed, traveling time and distance between two vehicles. When the distance is not sufficient, officers can enforce 'following too closely' violations and deter offending. Many of the devices can record an image of the vehicle, its number plate and a full-length video of the violation itself.

An advantage of the device is its size, multifunctionality and mobility; as these elements provide the possibility of using it for different purposes.

The "spot and stop" tactic—which occurs when the laser gun operator/spotter transmits a description of the offending vehicle over the radio to the stopper—can provide additional safety for officers during the measurement-taking process on a motorway.

On 1 June 2021, new regulations were introduced in Poland that required drivers to maintain safe following distances on expressways. Polish officers began using speed guns in DBC mode to carry out enforcement. Initially, road users did not think that the new regulation would be enforced, and that tailgating would go on unpunished. However, police began active enforcement and fined those who were driving unsafely by not following the new regulation.

Wielkopolska Police's spokesman, Andrzej Borowiak, posted a picture of an offence on his Twitter account in which a truck was traveling at a speed of 80 km/h while driving behind a van. The distance between the two vehicles was 28 metres.

> ***We check how drivers respect the obligation to keep the prescribed distance on expressways and highways. It is not good. On average, we find 20 breaches of this obligation within an hour.***
>
> **Borowiak explained.**

While progress regarding tailgating is not the same in every country, it is important to take the right steps to minimize it.

In summary, modern technology, together with proper training, can make enforcement more effective and allows officers to accurately detect offences and improve road safety.

Reducing Road Traffic Fatalities in Accra, the Goal of AMA/BIGRS

Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP) Richard Nyarko is a professional police officer with over 20 years of work experience in crime detection and investigation, traffic management, traffic enforcement, operations and deployment. During the period where he worked as a Traffic Officer within the Police MTTD, he checked road traffic violations, arrested and prosecuted road traffic offenders, and educated drivers on the Road Traffic Regulations.

ASP Richard Nyarko is currently the East Legon District MTTD Commander, Accra at East Legon in Accra, Ghana. Before he was appointed the District Commander, he functioned as the Officer in charge of Operations at the Accra Regional Motor Traffic and Transport Department and supervised over 200-line officers to discharge their road traffic duties. Currently, he doubles as the Leader of the Accra Metropolitan Assembly and Bloomberg Philanthropies Initiative for the Global Road Safety's Police Taskforce Team in Accra (AMA/BIGRS Police Taskforce Team).

The AMA/BIGRS Police Taskforce Team was formed in 2017 to enforce key risk factors, namely: drink driving, speeding, helmet-wearing, seat belt and child restraints. The purpose is to contribute to the reduction of road crash injuries, and fatalities within the city of Accra and beyond. Richard mobilizes members of the team and assigns duties and responsibilities to each member during enforcement checks. The team conducts speed and helmet-wearing enforcement at least two or three times a week barring national engagements.

The task force team has conducted drink driving, helmet-wearing, speeding, seat belt, and child restraint checks. This has significantly contributed to the reduction of road crash injuries, and fatalities in Accra.

Prior to the establishment of the task force team in 2016, Accra recorded 1697 road crashes, 653 minor injuries, 469 serious injuries, and 111 fatalities (AMA Road Safety Report, 2021). However, when the task force team hit the road after GRSP donated breathalyzers to the Police MTTD in 2017, reported serious crashes reduced. Reported minor injuries reduced to 357, serious injuries reduced to 333 and fatalities reduced to 86.

In 2021, the task force team conducted speed checks on the iRAP assessed road corridors noted for speeding and road crashes. At least 198 drivers were arrested for speeding, and out of those, 191 cases were sent to court, while 178 drivers were fined.

Police enforcement undertaken by the AMA/BIGRS Taskforce Team led by ASP Richard Nyarko has generated significant public interest. The work of the task force team has led to the reduction of serious crashes on these road corridors and resulted in positive changes in driver behaviour. Some local communities have called for speed enforcement on their roads in order to "bring some sanity to their communities".

A look into ASP Richard Nyarko's shift

"The shift I am reporting on starts at 6:00 in the morning, but I have to point out that shifts are mostly needs-based. Before I start describing the day's Taskforce activities, it is worth noting that preparing a group for an activity requires a lot of upfront work, such as data analysis, technical checks of measuring equipment, communication means, and arranging appropriate transport, which in our case is sometimes a challenge. Generally, each shift is assigned a list of tasks, which is based on crash data, requests from the community, or areas with the highest number of violations. Tasks assigned to each officer are established within the unit, and each officer begins his or her shift by acknowledging acceptance and understanding of the tasks assigned. This is important if, at the end of your shift, your objectives have not been met and you want to find out what caused this. As I have already mentioned, the location of the site where speed enforcement is to be conducted can be found in the action plan, which is drawn up based on the crash data. In the plan, there is also a time and day of planned actions.

Once everything has been checked and set, I go with the officers to the site to make sure that the place of control has been chosen properly and the checkpoint is organized correctly. I then supervise the entire operation until it is completed at the checkpoint, and then we return to the police unit, where we will begin to deal with the detainees. You should know that in our country every speeding offence, where we do not give warnings, results in the arrest of the person. Therefore, at the police station begins the hard work of preparing all the necessary documents to bring the driver to court.

The Roads Policing Academic Network

Director, Dr Helen Wells, Senior Lecturer in Criminology at the University of Keele

over 170 MEMBERS

over 70 ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS

on 3 CONTINENTS

The Roads Policing Academic Network is an international group of academics and academically-engaged practitioners across institutions and organizations, with (at last count) over 170 members from over 70 different academic institutions, on three continents. Members bring expertise from a wide range of disciplines (including psychology, law, criminology, sociology, gerontology, neuroscience, social marketing and engineering) as well as from their experience on the frontline and in policy-making roles. Our aim is to help build connections between members and between the research community, practitioners and policy-makers.

The network was established because, being a subject that touches on so many disciplines, academics researching in this area seldom got the opportunity to cross paths. Academic conferences tend to be arranged on disciplinary lines, and frontline and practitioner-focused conferences naturally have a more practical focus.

We were established in November 2018 and to date the network has held five events (with a further two planned events suspended due to COVID-19), presented as panels (RPANels!) at international conferences, and enabled at least 100 connections that we believe would not have happened otherwise. These have included successful funding bids for major research projects, recruitment to studentships, academic publications, inputs into national projects, consultations and inspections, student placements, and over 60 direct contacts between a practitioner seeking advice and an academic with expertise in a relevant area. We hope to launch an Australasian branch of the network in the next couple of years.

Members receive a weekly email featuring opportunities to answer specific requests from practitioners, to feed into consultations, to apply for funding and to engage with media requests. Conferences and events are publicised and new reports and publications are shared. Members can also advertise studentships, recruit participants for research projects or seek out collaborators for new research ideas. There is no cost associated with membership, and no expectations. Members simply engage when they see an opportunity they want to make the most of.

If you would like to join RPAN, please email h.m.wells@keele.ac.uk, and in the meantime, follow us on Twitter @RoadsPolicingAN.

ROADS POLICING ACADEMIC NETWORK

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The GRPN welcomes member contributions in the form of articles, letters and comments. We can all help the Network by sharing reports on road policing operations, by describing the road safety issue, the response, the outcome and any lessons that were learnt. Remember that a picture can tell a thousand words so, please try and include quality photographs to illustrate your operation.

Contributions can be sent to email **GRSP@ifrc.org** with 'GRPN Submission' in the subject line.

For more information please visit our website:
https://www.grsproadsafety.org/global-road-policing-network/

GLOBAL ROAD POLICING NETWORK

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