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## Russia admits road safety is poor

By Daniel Fisher  
BBC News, Moscow

**A spate of serious road accidents across Russia has killed scores of people - leading the government to blame "systemic" road problems.**

Interior Minister Rashid Nurgaliev blamed criminal negligence and a road culture lacking basic driving skills.

He admitted Russian roads are bad, infrastructure is weak and drivers often chat on their mobile phones at high speed or drive while drunk.

Over 10,000 people died on Russian roads in 2008 - Europe's highest toll.

In the last week a drunk driver in Perm hit a pregnant woman and child in a car-park, killing them both.

In Novosibirsk, central Russia, a passenger bus overturned, killing eight and injuring 30.

### Day of mourning

Police are investigating reports that the driver was either asleep or on his mobile phone.

Meanwhile a day of mourning was declared in Rostov after a bus hit a tanker killing 21 people.

The Russian government has made earnest attempts to combat bad driving - including employing legions of traffic police with stop and search powers.

But Mr Nurgaliev admitted most drivers in Russia still think they can break the law and get away with it.



Vladimir Putin treasures his 1956 Volga - but his country's roads are perilous

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