



# News

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## News Highlights

***Bangkok – cracks appear in airport surface only four months after opening and new Mass Transit schemes move to next stage of approval.***

Scott Wilson has been drafted in by Thai airport bosses after more than 100 cracks have appeared in the runways and taxiways of Bangkok’s Suvarnabhumi Airport, opened just four months ago to massive fanfare, after 40 years of planning and construction. Last week, airport operator, Airports of Thailand, was forced to close the west runway of the £1.7bn international airport to make emergency repairs, diverting flights to a former US B-52 bomber base. Further temporary repairs are still needed and capacity remains drastically reduced, with 11 of the airport’s 51 piers unusable because of the cracks.

Transport minister Admiral Thira Hao-Charoen is to ask the Thai cabinet to agree to transfer domestic flights to Bangkok’s mothballed Don Muang Airport for up to six months while permanent repairs are carried out.



Settlement is the obvious cause of the cracking as the airport is built on a swamp. Piling was rejected in favour of a major surcharging operation, which was carried out using thousands of vertical preformed drains. These forced an estimated 1.5m-1.8m settlement prior to construction of the airport infrastructure.

The Thai Cabinet also approved the overall details of five Bangkok mass transit projects. Government agencies will now work up the specifics of construction and funding for each project and submit them to the Cabinet

for final approval. Construction of some projects may be broken down into parts. The government has said the projects will be funded by bond issuance and loans from the Japan Bank for International Cooperation. In November 2006, the Cabinet gave initial approval for the construction of the five routes with a combined length of 118 kilometres at a total estimated cost of THB165.40 billion. The routes are expected to be completed by the end of 2012.

## ***12<sup>th</sup> Regional Seminar for Labour-Based Practitioners in South Africa***

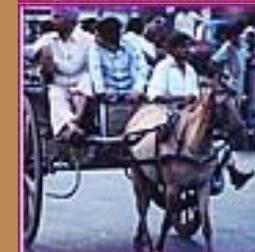
The 12<sup>th</sup> Regional Seminar for Labour-Based Practitioners will be held from the 8<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> October 2007 in Durban, South Africa. This Seminar under the theme “Prioritizing Employment in Government Policies and Investments in Infrastructure Programmes” will focus on key development issues that increase the impact of investments and government programmes on employment creation.

The 12<sup>th</sup> Regional Seminar will provide the opportunity to link developmental and political commitments in the fields of employment, investment and infrastructure to three areas of action, namely:

1. Assessing the impact of investment policies and government programmes on employment creation;
2. Linking social protection, basic income guarantees and job creation through productive and high-quality infrastructure development; and
3. Taking new strides in favour of private sector support to employment creation, both through small-scale domestic enterprise development and through integrating employment creation into the economic and financial strategies of those offering and receiving foreign direct investment.

The Regional Seminar, held every two years, brings together practitioners, planners, policy makers, researchers, funding and development partners – and all others involved in infrastructure development from the African region and beyond to discuss developments, share experience and ideas on the application of employment-intensive approaches in the delivery of essential infrastructure.

This is the first announcement to inform interested participants of this event. Further details on the seminar and calls for paper will be made available shortly.



## General News

### ***The Bolivian death road, the world's most dangerous road***

It seems perverse that one of the main roads out of one of the highest cities on Earth should actually climb as it leaves town. But climb it does - just short of a lung-sapping five kilometres (three miles) above sea level, where even the internal combustion engine is forced to toil and splutter. Then it pauses for a while on the snow-flecked crest of the Andes before pitching - like a giant white knuckle ride - into the abyss.



The road from Bolivia's main city, La Paz, to a region known as the Yungas was built by Paraguayan prisoners of war back in the 1930s. Many of them perished in the effort. Now it is mainly Bolivians who die on the road - in their thousands.

In 1995, the Inter American Development Bank christened it the most dangerous road in the world. And, as you start your descent, and your driver whispers a prayer, you begin to see why.

To read more please click [here](#)

Please click [here](#) to see photos of the hazardous road.

### ***Africa T2 2007: Call for Abstracts and Exhibitions***

The theme for the Africa T2 2007 conference, to be held in Malawi on 22-25 May, is "Technology Transfer for Africa's Sustainable Transport Systems". The key issues to be addressed at this conference are management of road networks, sustainable rural accessibility, road design standards, appropriate management systems, road safety, accelerating skills transfer, dissemination of R&D outputs and promoting gender equality through technology transfer. The organising committee have released a call for abstracts and exhibitions.

For more information please click [here](#)

## Urban Transport Myths

"It is a fact that there is no transport planning in Pakistan", argues an article in Pakistan's "The News" focusing on the key 'myths' of urban transport in modern Pakistan and suggesting some alternative approaches.

To read the full article, please click [here](#)



### ***UN ECA road safety conference in Ghana***

The UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) held a road safety conference in Accra, hosted by the Government of Ghana, from 5th to 7th Feb 2007. The principal aim of the conference was to develop an African road safety initiative, focusing on the recommendations of the World report on road traffic injury prevention. gTKP's Adrian Walsh attended the event and a full report will be available in next month's newsletter.



### ***IRTE Road Safety Education for Developing Countries workshop, Delhi, January 2007***

gTKP supported an international workshop organized by the Delhi-based Institute of Road Traffic Education, a founder partner of gTKP and leading road safety NGO. The workshop 'Road Safety Education for Developing Countries' provided a regional focus for top level road safety practitioners. Endorsed and supported by the Indian Government, the conference addressed a number of key issues which affect the region including the need to reduce casualties among vulnerable road users.

Some 130 delegates, drawn from senior traffic police staff and government transport officials from India and neighbouring countries, attended the workshop, committing to support the development of the gTKP network.



The conference also provided a forum for the engagement of regional stakeholders who wished to commit to the UN Road Safety Collaboration.

Adrian Walsh and Kate McMahon represented gTKP at the event, leading workshops focused on reviewing school and community education for pedestrians, cyclists and other vulnerable road users. Other sessions sparked discussions on helmets, driver training, law, legislation and standards, campaigns and publicity.



A film festival showing some excellent public information films and a road safety awards event were the highlights of the event. Over the three days, more than one hundred new members signed up to be members of gTKP. Welcome to you all!

### ***The UN Road Safety Collaboration***

Road traffic injuries constitute a major but neglected public health problem that claims 1.2 million victims a year, equivalent to the disease burden of tuberculosis or malaria, with considerable social and economic costs estimated to be 2% of India's GDP. The tremendous burden of death and disability resulting from road traffic crashes falls primarily on low- and middle-income groups. In addition, the loss of the family breadwinner through death or disability often forces the families of these victims into poverty. This is a very preventable problem. The World Report on Road Traffic Injury Prevention, a landmark publication prepared jointly by the World Bank and the World Health Organization (WHO) provides a framework for addressing this problem and the basis for a common approach to a regional road safety policy. This report was the winner of the 2004 Premier Prince Michael International Road Safety Award.

Road traffic injuries have been recognized as an extensive and serious global health problem by the United Nations (UN General Assembly Resolution 58/9) and by the World Health Assembly (WHA resolutions [http://policy.who.int/cgi-bin/om\\_isapi.dll?infobase=WHA&jump=WHA27.59&softpage=Browse\\_Frame\\_Pg42 - JUMPDEST\\_WHA27.59](http://policy.who.int/cgi-bin/om_isapi.dll?infobase=WHA&jump=WHA27.59&softpage=Browse_Frame_Pg42 - JUMPDEST_WHA27.59) 27.59 1974 and 57.10 2004). The

member states of these organizations are already on record as having declared this a global epidemic whose solution requires coordinated international efforts.

Important groundwork has already been prepared by previous regional efforts of the WHO, the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank (ADB), and the Asian Cooperative Dialogue. Standards for enhancing road and vehicle safety have been developed and implemented in the developed countries; the WHO UN Collaboration and the World Bank's Global Road Safety Facility are helping to develop best practice manuals; and a number of Asian countries have developed national plans and programs for road safety. Our community has an opportunity to build on these important works by developing regional road and vehicle safety standards and by implementing evidence-based interventions that have already been shown to be cost-effective for reducing the impact of road traffic crashes.

The regional responses require a coordinated and multi-sectoral approach, from all relevant parts of government (including transportation, health, law enforcement, education, finance, and urban planning), civil society (including advocacy organizations, academia, foundations, automobile clubs, and professional organizations), and the private sector (including road builders and road maintenance organizations, automobile manufacturers, motor vehicle product manufacturers, insurance companies, and commercial road users). Interventions must also mobilize all the relevant sectors to cover all three phases of road traffic injury control: prevention of crashes and injuries in the first place; provision of prompt and high-quality acute care to those injured in traffic crashes; and the provision of rehabilitation and long-term care to those who have been injured in order to minimize disabilities.

gTKP supports the collaboration through information exchange and knowledge sharing.

### ***Helmet Action Plan Workshop in Laos***

GRSP in association with the Lao PDR Ministry of Communication, Transport, Post and Construction (MCTPC) and Handicap International Belgium (HIB) hosted the workshop attended by 55 participants at the Napakuang Resort in Thalat, Vientiane Province in November 2006. A situation study undertaken to identify the main issues apparent in Laos, highlighted the severity of the trauma problem for motorcycle riders who did not wear helmets. Problems with helmet law



enforcement and lack of helmet standards were identified as serious issues which need to be addressed. The workshop was considered to be very successful due to strong and active participation by many government agencies and private sector representatives. An action plan is being drafted based on the workshop conclusions and will be reviewed by Government officials before it is launched in early 2007.

To read more about the workshop and action plan, click [here](#)

### **Helmet Action Plan Workshop in Vietnam**

This workshop hosted by GRSP in association with the National Traffic Safety Committee of Vietnam (NTSC), French Red Cross (FRC) and Asia Injury Prevention Foundation (AIPF) took place in Hanoi in December 2006. The two-day workshop attracted strong interest, bringing together some 75 participants from government ministries including representatives from 10 provincial traffic safety departments, NGO's and the private sector. A study conducted prior to the workshop found that helmet wearing rates differed markedly in parts of the country due to levels of enforcement and promotion. For example on roads around Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City riders are required to wear helmets and wearing rates can be as high as 70% to 80% especially for commuters. Generally, however, wearing levels are very low on other roads and especially in rural areas. Another issue identified is a continuing rapid increase in the number of motorcycles in use on roads in Vietnam.

To read more about the workshop and action plan, please click [here](#)

### **EU Commission wants binding cuts on car emissions**

The European Commission will propose legislation to make European car manufacturers reduce the average CO2 emissions of new vehicles to 130g/km by 2012, after a voluntary agreement with manufacturers did not achieve its targets. The car industry, as well as green NGOs, rejected the new plans.

In 1995, the EU set itself an ambitious goal of reducing emissions of carbon dioxide from new cars to 120 grams per kilometre (g/km) as a measure to combat climate change. The



Commission tried to achieve this target through a voluntary agreement with European car manufacturers, who promised to gradually improve the fuel efficiency of their new cars.

The 1998 voluntary agreement between ACEA (the EU's Automobile Manufacturers Association) and the Commission included a commitment by the carmakers to achieve a target of 140g/km by 2008. Japanese and Korean car producers made a similar commitment for 2009.

Although significant progress was made, average emissions fell only from 186g/km in 1995 to 163g/km in 2004. The Commission therefore decided that the voluntary commitments did not achieve their target and that binding legislation would be necessary.

To read this article in full, click [here](#)

### **2<sup>nd</sup> African Road Safety Assembly discusses Vulnerable Road Users' (VRU's) Safety**

From 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> November 2006, delegates at the 2<sup>nd</sup> African Road Safety Assembly and Traffic Expo in Lagos, Nigeria, agreed that "people's culture has a great role to play in road safety matters, therefore road designers and engineers should marry road design and construction with the culture of the people in the road environment if the safety of road users is to be enhanced".



The delegates gave the “thumbs down” to African town planners and urban developers, blaming them for contributing to the dangers vulnerable road users face on African roadways. “Our town planners are to blame for many of the problems VRU’s are facing on our roadways. While planning towns and cities, they leave inadequate space for road infrastructure to be constructed, leaving little or no provision at all for the safety of vulnerable road users”, they observed. Delegates at the Assembly advised government and developers to adopt the strategy of ‘site and services’ in order to deal with the problem of improper planning and show greater commitment towards promoting the safety of pedestrians, bikers, cyclists, camel/horse riders and users of other non-motorized transport.

Other recommendations at the workshop included the following:

- African governments should formulate policies that promote the safety of vulnerable road users and should consult extensively with stakeholders before formulating the policies.
- Teaching of road safety in schools in African countries should be pursued.
- Cyclists and their passengers should be mandated to use reflective materials – e.g. reflective arm bands, reflective jackets and helmets in order to be conspicuous on the roadways at all times, particularly at night.
- Road safety regulatory agencies and law enforcement agencies should strengthen law enforcement to discourage those who have tendency to err.
- African countries should improve data gathering on victims of traffic fatalities because most current statistics on crashes, injuries and deaths are not reliable.

At the close of the workshop, Mr. Olanrewaju, Executive Director of Safety Alliance, announced that the 3<sup>rd</sup> African Road Safety Assembly with the theme “Enhancing Roadway Safety in Africa through the Principle and Practice of Road Safety Audit” would take place in Daarasalam, Tanzania, from November 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> 2007.

Please click [here](#) to find out more about Safety Alliance events.

## ***New gTKP web portal in final stages of development***

gTKP is currently finalising a new and greatly improved web portal to support the work of the Partnership.

The new portal will link to more relevant content from our partners and other organisations world-wide, and will make it much easier for users to browse and to search for relevant knowledge under a range of key subject areas such as maintenance, funding, and road standards and specifications. It will also provide more things for you to do - including the ability for every member to have their own on-line profile page and to contact other members direct, helping to build connections to share knowledge and experience.

The biggest change will be in the three main focus areas. These have been agreed by DfID and the gTKP Interim Board as: Rural Transport; Governance, and; Environment, Health and Road Safety. Each focus area has a "theme champion" from the Interim Board. The champions will be responsible for building the content on these topics on the portal, using blogs and discussion groups as well as "signpost" pages and by attending or organising events.

Peter Njenga will champion matters related to Rural Transport.

Peter Njenga holds a Masters Degree in Urban and Regional Planning, with a specialisation on transport planning. He is the Eastern and Southern Africa Coordinator for the International Forum for Rural Transport and Development [IFRTD], a global network of individuals and organisations working together towards improved transport, access and mobility for the rural poor in developing countries. Currently based in Nairobi, Kenya, Mr Njenga has previously worked in IFRTD's head office in London, as a deputy chief executive, as well as an acting chief executive.

Mr Njenga has worked extensively in Africa, as well as occasionally in Asia. He has published a number of articles on transport, chiefly in the "Transport Reviews" Journal, as well as "Public Service Review" journal. Mr Njenga is also an accomplished public policy analyst, and has previously worked with an International Dutch Development Agency as a policy research advisor in Kenya.



Charles Melhuish will champion matters related to Governance.

Charles has 33 years experience in the fields of economics and social development, most of which have been in the Asia-Pacific region. He is an honours graduate in Economics from the Manchester Metropolitan University and postgraduate in Transportation, Traffic Planning, and Management from Birmingham University. After graduation, he spent 10 years working as a UK-based consultant in the fields of transport, urban and rural development and was responsible for various projects in different parts of the world. Following this, Charles worked for the Asian Development Bank (ADB) for 24 years, the last 5 of which he served as the Lead Transport Sector Specialist and the focal point for transport operations and policies. He has since retired and returned to consultancy and is now concentrating on key sector issues such as governance, road safety and environmentally sustainable transport.

Adrian Walsh will champion matters related to Environment, Health and Road Safety.

Adrian Walsh is the gTKP Knowledge Management Champion. He is the founding director of RoadSafe, a high level independent forum established by the leading companies in the motor and transport industries in Britain to reduce road deaths and injuries through encouraging partnerships between the motor industry and related companies, traffic engineers, the police and road safety professionals promoting the safe design and use of vehicles and roads and encouraging improved education and innovation.

Formerly an Army officer with a lifetime interest in transport and technology and recent experience in a number of communications businesses, Adrian is well known amongst road safety professionals as the organiser of The Prince Michael International Road Safety Awards, which he has done for the last eight years, whilst also engaged in the development of a number of other representative and regulatory bodies including the Personal Investment Authority, The Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders and The UK Engineering and Technology Board.

He now commits himself full time to road safety, with a special interest in international issues, through RoadSafe, The Prince Michael Awards and by running a world-wide network of professionals in the field.

