

# Road Safety Guidelines

*for the Asian and Pacific Region*

1

## INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND



**Asian Development Bank**

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## 1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

This *Road Safety Guidelines for the Asian and Pacific Region* has been developed as part of a regional technical assistance project (RETA 5620: Regional Initiatives in Road Safety) funded by the Asian Development Bank (ADB).

In addition to these guidelines, the project reviewed road safety in the developing countries of the Asian and Pacific region, and a number of technical notes and reports were prepared documenting various aspects of road safety in the region. Among these is a companion volume, *Vulnerable Road Users in the Asian and Pacific Region*, which focuses on the problems, approaches, and facilities faced by the most vulnerable users of roads in the region. Copies are available from the ADB.

These guidelines are based on the practices found to have been most effective in developed and developing countries and on the extensive practical experience of a large number of professionals with direct experience of working on road safety issues in such countries.

It is intended that this publication will be available in Chinese and Russian, as well as in English, and that they will be distributed widely throughout the Asian and Pacific region. Additional copies of this publication are available from the ADB.

### 1.2 Scope

This document was devised to help countries in the region overcome some of the deficiencies and impediments preventing effectiveness of road safety. Guidance is given on the types of interventions and countermeasures that can be implemented in each of the 14 major sectors affecting road safety, and also on how these different interventions can be coordinated within national road safety action plans and programs to bring about road safety improvement.

It is intended to promote comprehensive coordinated approaches to road safety and to encourage networking and sharing of information.

### 1.3 Aim

The general aim of these guidelines is to encourage the development and implementation of initiatives in all the major sectors affecting road safety. The specific objectives are as follows:

- 1) to provide a single comprehensive source of reference and guidance for senior government officials in developing countries of the Asian and Pacific region on the kinds of actions and interventions that can and need to be taken in each of the different sectors affecting road safety;
- 2) to provide, in an easily accessible format that can be updated easily, information for policymakers so that senior government officials can discuss these issues more easily with government ministers and other senior politicians;
- 3) to bring together in a single document the practical experience of specialists from the developing and developed world who have been active in road safety over many years and who have particular knowledge or experience of road safety in the Asian and Pacific region; and
- 4) to improve significantly the capability of developing countries in the Asian and Pacific region to tackle their growing road safety problems.

## 1.4 The Need for Guidance and Advice

Since almost all countries in the developing world suffer from a lack of financial resources, it is essential that the limited resources that are available should not be wasted. Road accidents contribute to high economic losses annually in the Asian and Pacific region and action is necessary to try to reduce these losses. Unfortunately, many countries also suffer from the absence of adequate technical resources and expertise to ensure that road safety issues are tackled effectively.

Often, too few trained professionals are available. There are often gaps in knowledge and they may not always be familiar with recent developments and techniques that can affect road safety. Consequently, there was felt to be an urgent need to amalgamate and distill the collective knowledge and experience of the industrialized countries and of those developing countries that had tackled such issues. This document attempts to do this.

This document is complementary to the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN/ESCAP) *Guidelines on Action Plans and Programs* (published by UN/ESCAP). The two sets of guidelines should assist developing countries in addressing their road safety problems more effectively.

## 1.5 Potential Users

This publication is intended for use by senior government officials at director general or permanent secretary level in sectors that can have an influence on road safety in a country. The document can also act as a basic source of reference for senior politicians, aid agency officials, and other decision makers so that they are at least familiar with the key issues, elements, and opportunities relating to the improvement of road safety.

## 1.6 Structure and Content

The document has been designed for ease of use by different interest groups. It consists of an Executive Summary and four chapters followed by a number of appendices. The arrangement is as follows:

### a) Executive Summary

The Executive Summary gives senior decision makers an overview of the most impor-

tant issues in each sector of road safety and the priority actions that can be taken as first steps to commencing useful activity. Each sector is summarized in a one-page format. Apart from summarizing the contents of the guidelines, it simply provides a short section on each sector of road safety and suggests three priority actions that could be undertaken in order to strengthen road safety activities in that sector. Road safety can be improved only through a multidisciplinary and comprehensive approach. Activities need to be undertaken in each sector that can affect or influence road safety. Implementation of the three priority actions in each sector would at least initiate some activity and strengthen the ability of each country to begin to address its safety problems.

### b) Chapter 1

This provides a brief introduction and discusses the volume's scope, main aims, potential users, and structure. It also offers guidance on the use of the volume.

### c) Chapter 2

This chapter summarizes the scale of road safety problems in the Asian and Pacific region, discusses the motorization and growth in vehicle fleets, and illustrates recent trends in road accidents in the region. It also discusses the socioeconomic cost of road accidents, showing that the problem has now become more acute, and argues for urgent action to be taken.

### d) Chapter 3

Chapter 3 discusses how road safety action plans and interventions can be designed for maximum impact. It argues for coordinated action, discusses the stages of road safety development in a country, and illustrates the kind of action and intervention that can be taken in this process. These range from raising awareness to developing prioritized road safety action plans and eventually developing three- or five-year road safety programs. This chapter also discusses road safety goals and targets that can be based on casualty reduction or, less directly, on desired changes in road user behavior (e.g., wearing of seat belts). Advice is also provided on how road safety initiatives can be financed. It also argues for improved monitoring and evaluation to ensure that maximum impact occurs both in terms of accident reduc-

tions and institutional strengthening when such action plans and programs are implemented.

e) Chapter 4

Chapter 4 has been designed as 14 self-contained sector guidelines, covering all important aspects of road safety. The format enables individual sector guidelines to be circulated as needed by relevant users.

The first page of each sector summarizes the key points and priority actions relating to that sector.

The remaining 8-10 pages describe, in more detail, what needs to be done to develop effective road safety activity in that sector. The sector guidelines included in Chapter 4 are as follows:

- 4.1 Coordination and Management of Road Safety
- 4.2 Road Accident Data Systems
- 4.3 Road Safety Funding and the Role of the Insurance Industry
- 4.4 Safe Planning and Design of Roads;
- 4.5 Improvement of Hazardous Locations
- 4.6 Road Safety Education of Children
- 4.7 Driver Training and Testing
- 4.8 Road Safety Publicity and Campaigns
- 4.9 Vehicle Safety Standards
- 4.10 Traffic Legislation
- 4.11 Traffic Police and Law Enforcement
- 4.12 Emergency Assistance to Road Accident Victims
- 4.13 Road Safety Research
- 4.14 Road Accident Costing

The references at the end of each sector provide guidance on the most important documents for those wishing to explore that sector in more depth.

f) Appendices

This section provides additional information. Appendix A includes a list of useful documents worth acquiring by all readers, while Appendix B includes international contacts and organizations active in road safety, to encourage formation of a network of road safety professionals for the Asian and Pacific region. Appendix C provides a small case study of a recent successful Road Safety Action Plan in Fiji and demonstrates the monitoring system

used in ensuring effective implementation. Appendix D provides some statistics for the main countries in the Asian and Pacific region to allow some preliminary cross-country comparisons.

### 1.7 Sources of Further Information And Networking

A deliberate effort has been made within the appendices to provide a list of the key publications considered to be most important for road safety professionals in the Asian and Pacific region.

In addition, sector-specific references are provided within each technical sector in Chapter 4. Appendices B and C also provide the telephone/fax numbers, E-mail addresses, and postal addresses for many organizations from whom additional information can be acquired.

### 1.8 Guidance on the Use of the Document

The document has been deliberately written as a number of freestanding sections that are internally cross-referenced.

The *Guidelines* has been designed to be held within a ring binder file so that relevant sections can be extracted by senior government officials for discussion with politicians and others as appropriate.

### 1.9 Limitations of the Guidelines

This is the first serious attempt to provide a general road safety reference covering all sectors of safety in developing countries. While it obviously cannot meet the comprehensive needs of all countries in the Asian and Pacific region because of their diversity, it does hopefully address common issues and problems that can be found in all the countries.

Attempting to cover in a single document the wide mix of countries at different stages of motorization and with different road safety problems is obviously difficult. The Asian and Pacific region contains some of the largest and smallest (in terms of population) countries, some countries with fast economic growth, and

others at the bottom of the development scale. It contains highly industrialized city states such as Singapore, and countries such as Nepal, where more than half of its districts do not even have roads suitable for motorized vehicles.

Consequently, it is not feasible to provide detailed guidance for all situations. However, the project team has attempted to provide a basic overview of what needs to be done in each sector and has provided guidance, references, and contacts for readers interested in exploring particular topics in more detail.

The knowledge, views, and opinions of many safety practitioners both within the Asian and Pacific countries and from outside were solicited to ensure that the guidelines were as practical and relevant as possible to the needs of the region.

Any credit for this document should be shared by all those who contributed to and commented on it.

Errors and limitations are the responsibilities of the authors alone and it is the intention that these will be rectified when this document is updated in a few years.

# Road Safety Guidelines for the Asian and Pacific Region

The guidelines cover 14 individual sectors affecting road safety, with four introductory chapters and four appendices. Information is presented in a series of freestanding documents that can be extracted for distribution and discussion.

## Executive Summary

- 1: Introduction and Background
  - 2: Road Safety Trends in the Asian and Pacific Region
  - 3: Road Safety Action Plans and Programs
  - 4.1: Coordination and Management of Road Safety
  - 4.2: Road Accident Data Systems
  - 4.3: Road Safety Funding and the Role of the Insurance Industry
  - 4.4: Safe Planning and Design of Roads
  - 4.5: Improvement of Hazardous Locations
  - 4.6: Road Safety Education of Children
  - 4.7: Driver Training and Testing
  - 4.8: Road Safety Publicity and Campaigns
  - 4.9: Vehicle Safety Standards
  - 4.10: Traffic Legislation
  - 4.11: Traffic Police and Law Enforcement
  - 4.12: Emergency Assistance to Road Accident Victims
  - 4.13: Road Safety Research
  - 4.14: Road Accident Costing
- Appendix A: Useful Documents Worth Acquiring  
Appendix B: International Contacts and Organizations  
Appendix C: Comparative Study: Fiji Road Safety Action Plan  
Appendix D: Comparative Statistics



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