

Road Safety Guidelines

for the Asian and Pacific Region

4.1

COORDINATION AND MANAGEMENT OF ROAD SAFETY



Asian Development Bank

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Road safety is a multidimensional social problem involving many government agencies, so the state must play a leading role in initiating, organizing, and coordinating the national assault on road safety problems in a country. The practical development of road safety capability at a national level has to take into account at least five important aspects as follows:

- definition of responsibility: this means designating a member of the government (prime minister's office [PMO] or ministerial task force) to be responsible for overall road safety policy;
- assigning the task to initiate and coordinate the state's actions. Establish a multidisciplinary team led by a high-level civil servant or high-caliber executive director from the private sector;
- setting up a permanent group to steer the actions (e.g., a national road safety council [NRSC] or an officials' committee);
- planning and assigning adequate technical and financial resources for the NRSC to carry out its work; and
- evaluation of the outcomes of actions.

All activities of the ministries involved in road safety (e.g., health, transport, police, and education) must be complementary and coordination also has to be developed with regional and local organizations so that road safety work is undertaken at all levels.

PRIORITY ACTIONS NEEDED

1. Designate the prime minister's office or a ministerial task force to be directly responsible for road safety policy issues and to oversee development of a road safety strategy and action plan.
2. Establish a multidisciplinary NRSC or a similar body with various subcommittees and a full-time secretariat with adequate technical and financial resources to develop and coordinate road safety activities effectively.
3. Identify high-risk target groups for publicity and education from analysis of accident data.

Strong political, financial, and technical support is needed for those delegated to initiate and coordinate road safety on behalf of the state. Such coordination is best done by a multidisciplinary national road safety council supported by a secretariat of road safety specialists led by a senior government official or high-caliber executive director.

1 INTRODUCTION

These sector guidelines on the “Coordination and Management of Road Safety” are from a set of Road Safety Guidelines for the Asian and Pacific Region policymakers, developed as part of a regional technical assistance project (RETA 5620: Regional Initiatives in Road Safety) funded by the Asian Development Bank (ADB).

The central coordination and management of road safety is one of the most significant factors in optimizing road safety efforts and their effectiveness within any country. These sector guidelines give advice on establishing national and local road safety councils and give examples of their successful operation in various countries in the Asian and Pacific region. Additional information on related matters, including the setting of specific accident reduction-related targets, has already been given in Chapter 3 where the subject of “Coordinated Road Safety Action Plans” was discussed.

2 WHY IS COORDINATION NEEDED?

Where a country lacks an effective coordinating body, road safety activities tend to be fragmented and underfunded and thus ineffective. Typically in such countries, a few organizations carry out intermittent efforts with low budgets. These are undertaken in a sporadic and uncoordinated way, covering a few sectors. This is often done with little technical support and without a real understanding of the underlying problems to be overcome or the most effective way of dealing with them.

For road safety issues to be dealt with efficiently and effectively, the following are needed:

- 1) adequate political support;

- 2) adequate funds;
- 3) adequate technical and administrative resources;
- 4) an understanding of the problems; and
- 5) coordinated efforts among at least the organizations working in the fields of:
 - a) traffic and highway engineering;
 - b) education;
 - c) traffic enforcement;
 - d) health services;
 - e) publicity;
 - f) driver testing; and
 - g) vehicle testing.

The best way to ensure that budgets are available and protected and that trained staff are assigned to road safety is for the central government to create an organization dedicated to initiating and coordinating road safety ac-

**Plates 1 and 2:
Road accident deaths
and injuries will continue
to rise in the Asian and
Pacific region unless
effective action is taken
to tackle the problem.**



tivities. This is usually best done by establishing a NRSC or a road safety directorate. Such a body can then help coordinate all the agencies working in the various disciplines, thus ensuring that duplication is avoided and that the activities of different agencies complement each other.

Experience shows that in larger countries, regional or provincial road safety committees or in some cases, even municipal level road safety committees, should also be established to carry out similar activities at a local level. Many road safety sectors typically need improvement in developing countries and such activities can be coordinated by the NRSC and its local equivalents.

3 KEY COMPONENTS

Numerous countries have demonstrated that there are three fundamental requirements of critical importance when setting up an organization to combat road safety problems. Implementation will vary according to circumstances and national contexts, but the essential elements are as follows:

- 1) political support;
- 2) technical secretariat; and
- 3) effective coordinating mechanism.

Each of these is discussed below.

3.1 Political Support

A senior member of the government must be designated to be responsible for road safety policy and to be in charge of coordinating the work of colleagues. This can be the PMO or the head of the government ministry most involved in road safety, acting with the authority of the prime minister. (In such cases the PMO reserves the right to arbitrate when necessary.) The PMO is responsible for road safety in France, Japan, Republic of Korea, and in several other countries. Where the PMO or a minister chairs high-level meetings, other committees need to be established at lower operational levels to implement the decisions of the high-level committee.

3.2 Technical Secretariat

A high-level (e.g., director general) civil servant must be designated to act as coordina-

tor of state action. Needed will be a small multidisciplinary team of officials to assist in coordinating activities in the various government ministries. This approach is particularly appropriate where an officials' committee is to be established. Often the first task is to organize such an officials' committee or to prepare the documents to establish an NRSC. An alternative approach (usually where an NRSC is established) is to establish a multidisciplinary NRSC secretariat and to appoint a high-caliber executive director to the secretariat, who together will operate as the executive arm of the NRSC in coordinating, implementing, and following up NRSC decisions.

3.3 Coordinating Mechanism

There is a need to set up an independent commission, officials' committee, or wider ranging NRSC that has representation on it of the principal civil servants responsible for issues directly related to, or influencing, road safety. The exact structure varies from country to country and the key advantages or disadvantages of each option is outlined below in Table 1.

Irrespective of which coordinating mechanism is selected, all key government and relevant nongovernment organizations should be represented on the council and should meet regularly to discuss road safety activities. Frequency of meetings will depend upon the level of representatives: e.g., if prime minister + ministers (annually), if minister + permanent directaries (two or three times a year), or, if departmental directors (four to six times a year).

To be effective, such councils will need to be of a manageable size (say not more than 25 members) and will need their own operating budget and a small permanent secretariat to provide technical and administration support. The private sector also has an important role to play within the safety council and can contribute fund-raising skills, sponsorship, commercial experience, and contacts. Representatives of the motor insurance, fuel, and other transport-related industries should be welcome to participate as members. Ideally, they should be from the industry or trade organizations rather than from individual firms. The work of the council would be carried out through a number of subcommittees covering different areas of activity.

Table 1: Advantages and Disadvantages of Alternative Options

Type of coordinating mechanism	Advantages	Disadvantages
1. Independent commission	1. Independence 2. Ability to bring in non-government interests 3. Nonpartisan	1. Advisory only, so no power 2. Outside government system 3. No access to government support staff/resources
2. Officials' committee	1. Key decision makers 2. Power to take action 3. Can use government support staff/resources	1. Interministry rivalries 2. Private sector excluded 3. Less access to private sector funding 4. Wider interests not represented
3. National road safety council	1. Key government decision makers 2. Private sector skills can be included 3. Access to private sector funding 4. Access to government staff/support via members	1. Needs secure funding 2. Needs secretariat 3. Needs legislative support

NRSCs provide the best mechanism for harnessing the benefits of both public and private sector organizations. Consequently, the following sections will assume that an NRSC is the mechanism in use. For countries using the alternatives, most of the comments or advice remain equally relevant.

It is necessary to coordinate actions and activities at national level, and also to ensure that similar coordination occurs at local level where much of the implementation will actually be done. In the case of an NRSC, this means establishing provincial road safety committees (PRSCs) with similar multidisciplinary local level participation as on the national council. Thus, whereas the national council may have senior officials from the central headquarters of relevant ministries and organizations, the provincial committees will have the provincial representatives of those ministries and organizations as well as representatives of the provincial government. In some countries, it may even be appropriate to establish district or municipal road safety councils in large cities.

4 STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT

In order to achieve a coordinated road safety effort using national and local level coordinating mechanisms, a developing country usually needs to proceed through certain steps, typically as follows:

- 1) a national road safety seminar at which an interim interagency working group is established and a joint statement (signed by key participants) is published on the need to improve road safety within the country;
- 2) definition and agreement on the role of the NRSC and potential mechanisms for its funding;
- 3) development of the necessary legislation for establishment of the NRSC and its technical subcommittees;
- 4) establishment of the NRSC;
- 5) provision of technical and financial support for NRSC activities;
- 6) establishment of local coordinating bodies (PRSCs);
- 7) development of a program of short-term activities; and
- 8) implementation of a priority action plan and development of a five-year program.

Each of these steps and the moves necessary to achieve them are briefly outlined below.

4.1 Interim Working Group

This is normally established following a national road safety seminar and comprises senior officials from the seven or eight most important organizations with responsibilities in, or potential to assist in, improving road safety. Typical membership should include personal and agencies such as:

- 1) director, traffic police;
- 2) director, roads and highways;
- 3) director, transport department; (vehicle and driver testing);
- 4) director, public health;
- 5) director, primary school education;
- 6) representative, motor insurance insurers industry;
- 7) chairman, chamber of commerce; and
- 8) representative, PMO

4.2 Role and Potential Funding Mechanisms for NRSC (or Equivalent Organizations)

The role of an NRSC is to promote, oversee, and coordinate safety activities. To do this, the NRSC has to include among its membership, all key organizations. Conversely, if there are too many organizations involved, it often becomes difficult to do anything constructive. It is recommended that the number of member organizations be limited, where possible, to no less than 10 and no more than 25.

Provision should be made to establish smaller five to six person subcommittees to be responsible for specific areas (e.g., fundraising and finance, safety education in schools, and publicity). Other external agencies or specialists

can be co-opted onto such committees as and when necessary. Most of the day-to-day work of the NRSC will be done by the subcommittees and the NRSC secretariat with the whole NRSC meeting only periodically.

Funding can be through an annual grant from government or via a levy on motor insurance policies, driver licenses, fuel, or other sources, which will increase in line with growth in vehicles. Typically about 60 percent to 70 percent of NRSC income should come from such a guaranteed levy, about 20 percent to 30 percent from commercial sponsorship and NRSC fundraising activities, and, say, 10 percent from government to avoid undue reliance on government funding, which may often be subject to severe fluctuation or cutbacks.

Plate3:
National road safety seminar, Samoa.



4.3 NRSC Legislation

For effective action, there need to be clear lines of authority, and the NRSC should be given statutory responsibility to coordinate and oversee the development of safety activities. There should be an obligation to report back annually to legislators on progress made. The legislation apart from defining the role, responsibilities, and function of the NRSC should define the sources of funding, and should empower the NRSC to raise additional funds through sponsorship. It should also permit the NRSC to establish regional, provincial, or municipal committees.

4.4 Establishment of an NRSC

This should be undertaken with media attendance and it is useful to involve a senior politician (the prime minister if possible) and at least several ministers to formally launch the safety council. The opportunity should be taken to feed the media statistics and facts on the scale and nature of the problem and on its economic and social impact on the nation. Various safety-related articles, e.g., on seat belts and on drinking and driving, can be placed in the media to raise awareness of safety issues.

4.5 Technical and Financial Support

Technical support can be achieved by either establishing a multidisciplinary team to work under the high-level director of the safety directorate or by establishing an NRSC secretariat with its own high-caliber executive director. In the latter case, staff could be seconded to the secretariat from member organizations of the NRSC, and the NRSC can hire additional staff of its own. Funding should, where possible, be organized via the legislation establishing the NRSC, and additional revenue should be raised by the NRSC secretariat through private sponsorship.

4.6 Establish Local Coordinating Bodies

Road safety problems have to be tackled not only in various sectors but also at different administrative levels. It is, therefore, necessary to establish local regional or provincial road

safety committees modeled on the NRSC, operating under it and including local branches of the same organizations. This enables road safety activity to be carried out at grassroots level.

PRSCs provide the same sort of coordination function at regional or provincial level as that provided by NRSC at national level. They should receive general publicity and education materials developed by the NRSC and, in addition, should receive some funds from the NRSC. These will help to cover some of the local administration costs and allow the PRSC to develop and print local publicity material of particular relevance to local needs and problems. This can supplement the material, posters, and safety pamphlets received from the NRSC.

The PRSC, like the NRSC, should, in addition, raise 30 percent to 40 percent of its income from local sponsorship and fundraising activities in its geographic area. This helps to raise awareness of safety issues as well as raising funds.

4.7 Programs of Activities at National and Local Level

It is important that activities at local level are harmonized with initiatives being taken at national level.

The NRSC should prepare a program or calendar of proposed activities and circulate this to the PRSCs so that their local activities can be integrated with national campaigns and initiatives.

In some countries, the NRSC provides exhibition vehicles and specialist presenters to support local road safety committees. In Fiji, for example, NRSC presenters and exhibition vehicles are placed (by rotation) at the disposal of each of the three divisional safety committees who then organize a series of awareness-raising events and visits with the district safety committees (Fiji is divided into administrative regions called divisions).

4.8 Implement Action Plan and Devise Five-year Road Safety Programs

The NRSC should oversee implementation of urgent improvements and coordinating ef-

forts of the different agencies to produce a five-year safety program. Each agency and government ministry that is a member of the NRSC, should prepare within its own sphere of activity and influence a five-year program of activities to enhance or improve road safety; e.g., the ministry of health may try to expand the emergency ambulance system; or the public works department may try to identify and improve 100 of the worst accident black spots on the road networks.

The amalgamation of these various individual sector-specific initiatives into a single document constitutes the national road safety action plan. The NRSC role is to promote and support road safety efforts in each of the important agencies with road safety responsibilities, and to raise public and political awareness to ensure adequate funds and resources are made available to allow the problem to be tackled effectively.

5 BENEFITS AND EFFECTS

The formation of an NRSC and the local PRSCs typically leads to the following:

- 1) an increased awareness and understanding of the problem, the political will to address it, and serious coordinated attempts to improve road safety;
- 2) well-targeted road safety campaigns and remedial measures within a coordinated road safety action plan;
- 3) a source of revenue to finance some safety publicity and education activities. This may come from the central government, or perhaps through a fuel or insurance levy or other funding source from the private sector;
- 4) an increased recognition of the need for a good accident data system to define the problems;
- 5) increased technical support for safety interventions in all relevant sectors;
- 6) a sharing of experiences and a synergy developing between the various disciplines;
- 7) updated traffic legislation, traffic, and highway design standards; and
- 8) initially a halt to the rising accident rate and eventually a drop in the accident rate, and often in the total accident numbers themselves.

6 EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE

Several countries in the Asian and Pacific region have been able to demonstrate effective coordination of their road safety action plans and programs.

There is no single model that has been adopted and different countries have devised different solutions depending upon their particular needs and circumstances.

Some of the more successful coordination mechanisms adopted in the Asian and Pacific region are as follows:

The State of Victoria, Australia, set up a two-minister Task Force to address road safety issues. The two ministers (police and transport) represented the ministries with greatest responsibility. With the assistance of an officials' committee of technical specialists drawn from the main agencies and organizations with safety responsibilities, the two ministers were able to make significant reductions in the numbers of people killed in road accidents during the early 1990s.

Fiji: Under a recent ADB-funded road safety action plan, Fiji has established an NRSC. This has legislative responsibility to coordinate and promote road safety. It has established a network of three divisional and about 15 district road safety committees to carry out activities at local level. Funding is via a 10 percent levy on compulsory third party motor insurance premiums, commercial sponsorship, and a government grant representing 60 percent, 30 percent, and 10 percent, respectively, of total NRSC annual budget. All key public sector and private sector organizations are represented on the council and there is an NRSC secretariat with its own executive director to implement and follow up on NRSC decisions. The actual work of the council is undertaken via several subcommittees and implementation is undertaken by the secretariat, which also provides support services and assistance.

Japan has for many years had an NRSC chaired by the prime minister with all key ministers as members. A number of other safety councils also exists at lower level chaired by ministers and senior civil servants. In addition to these councils and committees,

Japan has established, under the management and coordination agency of the PMO, a Road Safety Policy Office staffed by a multidisciplinary team under a senior civil servant. Their role is to coordinate, promote, and oversee road safety and the five-year road safety programs.

Republic of Korea in the late 1980s set up a Ministerial Road Safety Council under chairmanship of the prime minister. The PMO took direct responsibility for coordinating road safety initiatives in the different ministries. Unfortunately, this has never really worked as well as it should have due to absence of a dedicated multidisciplinary team to follow up the council's decisions. What is a successful mechanism in the Republic of Korea, however, is the funding for the Korea Road Traffic Safety Association (RTSA) which receives a large annual income (tens of millions of dollars) from an assortment of small levies on fuel tax, insurance, tire manufacturer profits, and expressway authority incomes. It is believed this provides about US\$100 million each year for RTSA activities, which range from road safety research, children's safety education, driver training, and safety publicity, to accident black spot investigation.

In New Zealand, growing concern led to the establishment of an officials' committee under the chairmanship of the Ministry of Transport. This officials' committee, comprising representatives of the 10-12 organizations with road safety responsibilities, collaborated to develop a comprehensive Road Safety Improvement Strategy, which was implemented via annual road safety plans. At local level, task forces (comprising local representatives of the organizations on the national officials' committee) were established to coordinate, implement, and monitor local level initiatives. At national level, the officials' committee was supported by the staff of the Land Transport Department, and at local level it was supported by one-person secretariat partly funded through the national road safety plan. The officials' committee has been replaced by an NRSC comprising chief executives of key agencies supported by a number of road safety advisory groups drawn from interested government and nongovernment organizations.

Although these examples of good practice vary from country to country, those that are more successful have several features in common, as follows:

- 1) high degree of political support (either via political leadership or willingness to establish a legislative framework for an NRSC);
- 2) multidisciplinary council with all key agencies and senior officials involved;
- 3) involvement of the private sector;
- 4) multidisciplinary secretariat or support team led by a high-caliber, highly motivated executive director or senior civil servant; and
- 5) adequate funding from government and, especially, nongovernment sources to enable the work to be carried out effectively.

Irrespective of which of these coordination mechanisms is adopted, efforts should be made to incorporate the above elements to ensure likelihood of success.

7 REFERENCES AND KEY DOCUMENTS

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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

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