



An ISO standard for road traffic safety management

Within a few years, road accidents will be one of the most common causes of injury and death. However, even serious events can be prevented by systematic and evidence-based interventions.

ISO is therefore developing ISO 39001, a management system standard for road traffic safety. The standard targets all organizations wishing to reduce death and serious injury related to road travel. With ISO 39001 these organizations will have to comply with established safety indicators such as speed, vehicle condition and driver awareness.

The standard will support organizations involved in designing and operating the road transport system by helping them define their own contribution to a safe road transport system, while communicating with other supplier of products and services. Vehicle manufacturers and suppliers to the automotive industry will be supported by interfaces that the rest of the road transport system can understand and define.

The standard, which will be fully aligned with other ISO management standards, is being developed by ISO project committee ISO/PC 241, *Road traffic safety management system*, which met for the first time in June 2008. It is expected that ISO 39001 will be published within the next four years.

ISO/PC 241 enjoys wide participation from some 30 country members and 10 liaison organizations, including the World Health Organization, the World Bank, and the International Road Federation among other important players.

In the next pages, four contributors from different fields and key organizations, tell us their view on the value of ISO 39001, and the expectations they have for ISO.





Fleet Safety Manager – Europe, Middle East & Africa, Johnson & Johnson



Global road traffic safety management has become a paramount issue affecting the safety and well being of our societies. The emergent challenge is to move away from the old axiom that all accidents result from human error and can be solved by educating road users, towards an all-encompassing systematic approach that embraces all aspects of road traffic safety management to reduce errors and counteract human mistakes.

A harmonized and collaborative approach is needed. And in today's globalized world, where traffic continuously crosses borders, it must address international needs and challenges. In this regard, the future ISO 39001, *Road traffic safety management systems – Requirements with guidance for use*, has the potential to influence organizational efforts to prevent injuries and save lives.

The standard will assist organizations throughout the world, whether governmental, non-governmental or private sector, to identify opportunity areas for road safety. It will also offer a foundation and framework to help them take the most effective actions that directly address issues or gaps for the betterment of road safety at the global level. The standard is expected to gradually change organizations behaviour and approaches towards road safety, with the overall aim of reducing serious injury and fatalities from road traffic accidents.

For many employees of Johnson & Johnson, the company vehicle is the workplace. Taking the safety and well-being of their employees very seriously, Johnson & Johnson has implemented a global fleet safety program known as SAFE Fleet to address and mitigate road safety risks.

The future ISO 39001 standard will be a value-added tool that is sure to benefit existing fleet safety efforts and positively impact the safety of road users worldwide. Its completion and deployment is therefore enthusiastically awaited.



Chairperson, International Road Federation (IRF) Safer Roads Working Group



An ISO International Standard for road safety management systems would:

- Promote the establishment of a lead agency/organization in each country to advance road safety including: traffic and safety legislation; vehicle and driver standards, road safety communication, education and promotion projects; infrastructure safety audits, critical offences law enforcement; training and refresher programmes for traffic personnel; a traffic information system for traffic records and the collection, analysis and evaluation of road traffic issues; research on road safety matters; road safety role-players and stakeholders and public/private partner-



ship agreements for road safety promotion and risk and cost sharing

- Promote self-regulation on road safety issues among national, provincial and local governments, organizations and the private sector
- Provide guidelines, directives, for example, target setting, collection, monitoring, evaluation and reporting of achievements and results on the above
- Ensure harmonization and standardization of road traffic safety management and promotion of issues on a global basis.

Among the contributions that ISO could make is the establishment of uniform definitions and requirements. For example, in South Africa a "road fatality" is considered to occur within six days of a crash, other countries state 10, 21 or 30 days. ISO standards would facilitate international comparison. It would set clear, comprehensive and detailed road safety performance requirements.

Although ISO should take the lead in developing standards for data collection, evaluation and reporting, IRF and other organizations are already responsible for the collection and provision of global road crash and traffic statistics and related initiatives.





President, Institute of Road Traffic Education



Road safety management is an integral part of the different components of traffic management which include: driver training and assessment; development of

road user behaviour through awareness and education; traffic engineering including audit of road safety, traffic enforcement and accident investigation; post-crash management; standards for traffic control devices, road geometrics and vehicles; and finally, the legislation itself.

Developed countries have built their standards based on years of research through which they have developed an inbuilt system of ongoing audit, keeping pace with technology in all the areas of human, road and vehicle development. This is evident from the fact that only 9% of the world's road fatalities happen in developed countries, which have 52% of the globe's registered vehicles.

On the other hand, in low- and middle-income group countries where rapid development is in progress, especially in road building, traffic management systems are hardly based on individual research. Rather, these are built from "cut and paste" standards and practices from the developed world, without any practical adaptation.

Developing ISO standards on each of the components of traffic management is crucial in order to attain road safety management in low- and middle-income group countries, which account for 91% of global road fatalities. Such standards should be attribut-

ed to systems, tools, equipments, practices and even research in all the areas mentioned above.

Care must be taken so that the final International Standards allow systematic adaptation to the needs, culture and prevalent systems of the individual countries, whether developed or developing.



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The idea of an ISO International Standard for road traffic safety can be traced back to a conversation I had in 2006 with Ms. Ziva Patir (former Chair of the ISO Technical Management Board). Discussing the far-reaching consequences of road traffic safety problems around the globe, which is one of the largest contributors to poverty, we considered the potential of a management system standard for tackling the problem of lack of road safety in the world.

Clearly, there is currently no global long-term systematic process approach to road safety. Moreover, common definitions are lacking and top management commitment is often absent.

An ISO management standard on road safety systems would thus constitute a valuable asset for saving lives, suffering and a lot of unnecessary cost, through international acceptance and

transparency, a holistic and systematic approach, common definitions, and the possibility to exchange experiences in the matter of road traffic safety. Its implementation could help companies demonstrate their commitment to this cause. More importantly, its widespread adoption could help mold mindsets from all spheres to be increasingly conscious of road safety issues. The benefits are obvious, thus the idea of a management system standard for road traffic was born.

My future expectations are for ISO to promote information and best practice seminars to help disseminate ISO 39001, and that the standard can be available and accessible to all, everywhere in the world.



Photo Pierre Granier