

NATIONAL YOUTH ROAD SAFETY COMPETITION



Date started: 2007 Date finished: annual event

Partners: Road Traffic Management Corporation (RTMC), GRSP ZA members, BP Southern Africa (Pty) Ltd, Road Accident Fund (RAF), South African National Roads Agency (SANRAL) and Transnet, together with all nine provinces in South Africa.

Cost/time/resources: R5,0m / USD 800,000 over three years

Main result so far: A phenomenal increase in the number of schools participating in the road safety debate.



Every year more than 12,000 South Africans die on the roads. Most of these deaths and injuries are preventable. To increase road safety awareness by young people, the Road Traffic Management Corporation (RTMC) and GRSP South Africa host an annual National Road Safety Debate Competition, targeting high school learners. The competition has attracted thousands of students at national level and the South African national debating leagues have included road safety in their programmes. The number of schools interested in participating in the discussions has increased exceptionally. Radio celebrities have also drawn the public's attention to the importance of debating road safety.

Summary project sheet.

Objectives and scope

Every year, more than 12,000 South Africans die on the roads. To increase road safety awareness by young people the Road Traffic Management Corporation (RTMC) has started organising a National Road Safety Debate Competition. The competition is held annually to encourage learners to:

- be aware of road safety issues and to take responsibility for road safety concerns affecting their communities
- empower learners with practical research skills and to enhance their presentation skills
- promote team work by means of participatory education techniques.

Activities

Youth groups from all 9 provinces take part in the debate, demonstrating their knowledge of road safety issues in a fierce contest in which learners compete as individuals and as teams to be number one in the country. A strong understanding of the issues is necessary to win. Some of the topics that were addressed included:

- How best to approach the problem of road accidents on South Africa roads?
- If road safety is a priority for national government?
- If South Africa is geared for the 2010 road safety challenge (FIFA world cup)?
- If the demerit system is the best solution to curbing lawlessness on our roads?

Conclusion and main lessons learnt

The best teams from all provinces meet for the final competition. The winning prize goes to the speaker who has given the most significant impression in terms of facts and content, based on the world style debating criteria. Prizes offered are useful tools (laptops, camcorder, digital camera, voice recorder) to assist the participants towards excellence. The items were also regarded as being popular items for the students in order to create incentives for participation.

The youth competition debates have had good coverage in the national "Etile" road safety magazine for children (December 2008), published by the South African Roads Agency Ltd. and in Traffic Focus (Oct/Nov 2008), published by RTMC. It also featured in the Pan-African magazine, which has as a main audience members of parliament across the sub-Saharan region, and the CSI Handbook, which targets the donor community as well as the non-governmental constituency in Southern Africa.