



**DEPARTMENT: TRANSPORT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

Private Bag X193, Pretoria, 0001
Forum Building, cor Struben and Bosman Streets, Pretoria

NATIONAL ROAD SAFETY STRATEGY

2006 ONWARDS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Four fundamentals dictate the requirements of a South African road safety strategy. These are:

- ❑ the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) for the Transport Sector,
- ❑ the need for a reduction in unnatural causes of death,
- ❑ the contribution that traffic management can make to achievement of the ASGISA goals,
- ❑ and the provision of an enabling environment for the 2010 FIFA World Cup event.

The target set by the African Transport Ministers in the MDG document, includes, among other issues, halving of the road fatalities by 2014.

The number of deaths and injuries that take place in developing countries due to traffic crashes is recognized by the World Bank as a priority health issue. South Africa is unfortunately part of this international trend, with several factors leading to the high rates:

- Poor driver behavior and attitude - 95% of crashes follow a traffic violation.
- The existence of a “culture of impunity” in respect to payment of traffic fines, resulting in little behavior change for offenders.
- The average age of most vehicles being around 10 years, and the taxi fleet being over 13 years.
- Widespread fraud and corruption in all sectors of the industry.
- First class, high-speed roads, traveling through informal settlements and rural areas where pedestrian activities are high and pedestrian activities inadequate.

To improve the situation, an internationally recognized road safety strategy must be implemented. This should include the following elements:

Enforcement – heavy, visible, with follow up of fines and identification of repeat offenders.

Education and communication - Emotive advertisements, showing consequences of unsafe behavior, and dealing with a single common offence at any one time, with a public relations campaign to ensure support of communities for the efforts being made.

Engineering – low cost engineering at hazardous locations to have the highest possible impact, a substantial amount of which must be aimed at protection of pedestrians.

Evaluation – research to ensure a data driven, scientifically based strategy.

Cooperation and Coordination between all role players, and involvement of business and industry and civil society.

The cost of crashes leads to the loss of more than 14,000 lives, 7,000 permanently disabled people and 40,000 serious injuries annually, as well as around R43 billion cost to the state, communities and individuals.

In terms of un-natural deaths, traffic related fatalities fall in seventh place after HIV/Aids, heart and lung disease, homicide and violence and strokes.

The following table summarises strategic responses to the main challenges.

Challenge	Strategic Response
Poor driver behavior – responsible for 95% of casualties	Increased levels of enforcement, including mini-road blocks, and speed control through speed camera placements and other activities. Patrolling of hazardous roads, Improved alcohol testing and prosecutions, Improved surveillance through video evidence. Improved learner and driver license training. Reduction in speed limits in hazardous areas
Inadequate punishments and follow up of fines	Implementation of the Road Traffic Infringement Agency and Administrative Adjudication of Road Traffic Offences Act of 1998. Removing most traffic offence punishments from the Justice System. Ensuring that there is a National Contravention Register in operation, and introducing demerit points to identify repeat offenders. Introducing parity of fines throughout the country..
Age of the national fleet.	Introduction of Periodic Vehicle Testing and more regular testing of public transport vehicles. Mini-road blocks and generally increased enforcement. Maintenance of standards of vehicles through regulation. Improvement in vehicle testing standards at stations.
Fraud and corruption	Investigation by the Special Investigation Unit into fraudulent drivers licenses. Introduction of systems to reduce fraud: micro-dotting of vehicles, best practice models in registration offices and investigation of the potential of Electronic Vehicle Identification and other technology.
High levels of pedestrian casualties.	Education programs in schools and communities – concentrating on visibility and behavior, including alcohol abuse. Reduction of speed limits in areas of high pedestrian activity. Improved enforcement of road rules on free ways.

The target of a 50% reduction in fatalities by 2014, the contribution that this will make to the ASGISA goals, and the provision of a safe environment for the 2010 World Cup can be achieved through a comprehensive strategy, involving all role players and commitment to this target.