



Transport Research Arena Europe 2008

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## *Proactive Role of Road Infrastructures in the overall Transport System for Safety*

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**European Union Road Federation (ERF)**

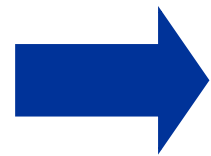
*ERF is a signatory of the European Road Safety Charter, associating civil society to Europe's goal of halving the number of road deaths by 2010*



Brussels Programme Centre



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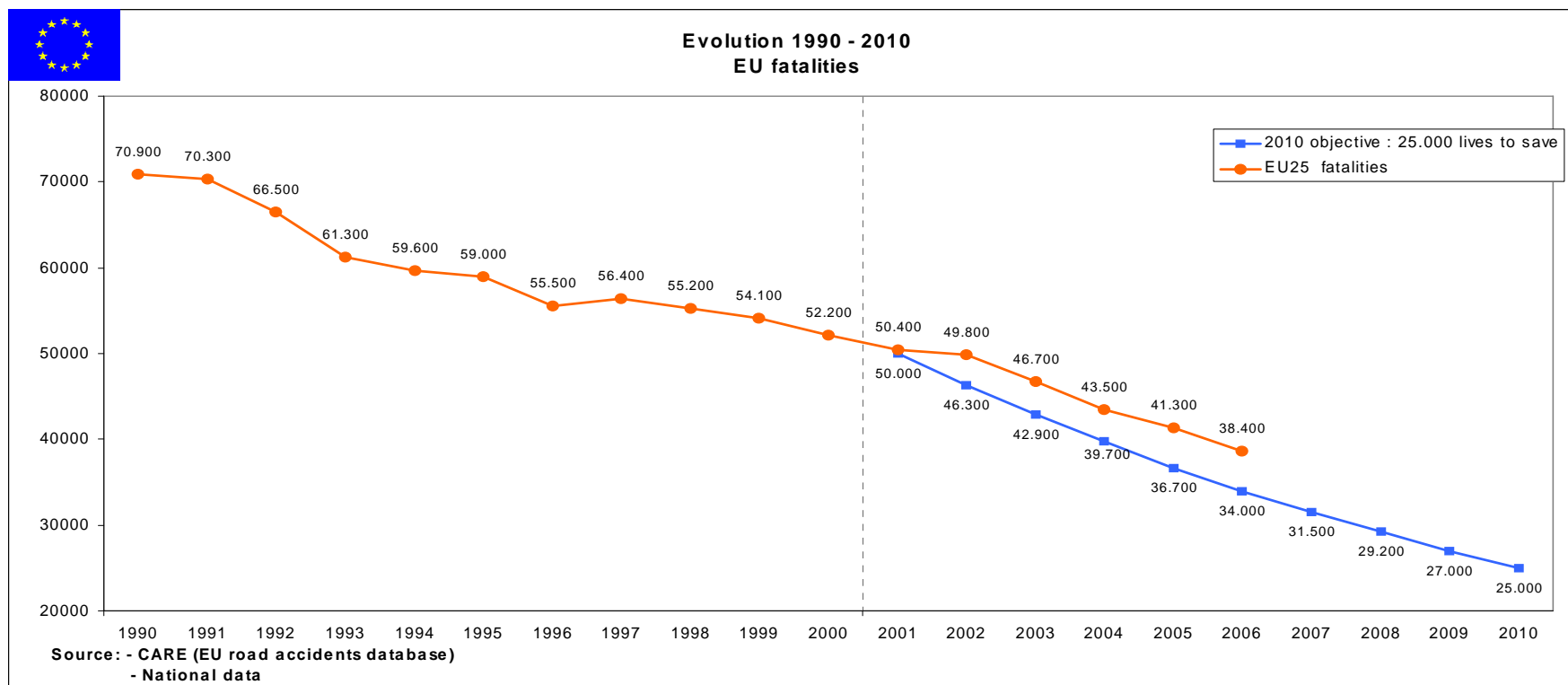


**European context and policy overview**

**Research framework**

**The ERF**

## The European Context (1/2)



### Evolution of Fatalities in EU-25 (2006)

## The European Context (2/2)

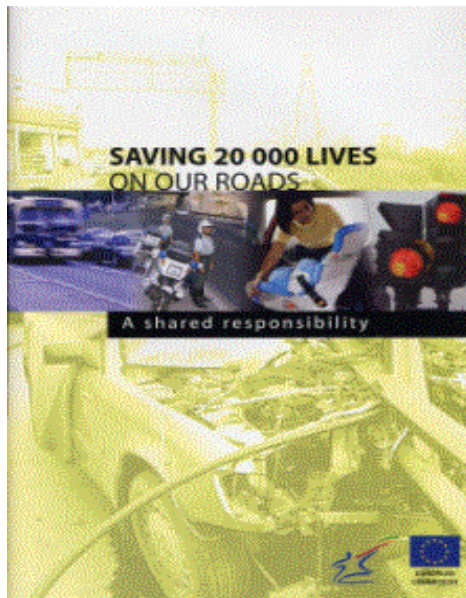


- Road Safety levels in Europe remain preoccupying
- Road Safety remains a major societal issue in Europe
- Official incident statistics significantly understate **the importance of the road as a major contributing factor**

## A shared responsibility (1/2)



### The EU has legal obligations arising from the Treaty...



- ✓ Article 71: measures to improve road safety integrated within Common Transport Policy.
- ✓ Article 155: technical harmonisation and interoperability of the Trans European Network (financing through Cohesion Fund).
- ✓ Article 152: public health and consumer protection issues.

The 2003 RSAP (European Commission's Road Safety Action Programme) translates these obligations into an action plan  
 ...but shares the overall responsibility for road safety

## A shared responsibility (2/2)



### The RSAP proposes actions on:

- **Driver Behaviour:** better driver education & enhanced traffic law enforcement
- **Vehicle Safety:** technical inspections, active & passive safety measures, use of Galileo
- **Road Infrastructure:**  
Sharing of Best Practices, elimination of Black Spots, New Approach to Road Infrastructure Safety Management!
- -> October 2006: ***Proposal for a Directive on Road Infrastructure Safety Management***

## The Infrastructure Safety Directive (1/3)



### Europe's most ambitious legislation is still to come

- ✓ Framework legislation on road infrastructure management applicable to the **TERN (Trans-European Road Network)**
- ✓ Provides guidance (*mentality change*) to ensure safety is integrated at **all stages of road design, construction and management**
- ✓ Who will it affect ?
  - **Road authorities:** safety procedures integrated in all phases of road planning, design, construction and operation
  - **Road engineers:** compulsory qualifications and certification, best practice exchanges
  - **Motorists:** introduction of “black spots” signposts
- ✓ **1,300 lives could be saved every year!**



## The Infrastructure Safety Directive (2/3)



### Preventive strategies:

- For new roads and major changes of operation: Safety Impact Assessment.
- At pre-opening stage: Safety Audits.
- As part of regular road maintenance: Safety Inspections.



### Audit report:

- ✓ Delivers an independent evaluation of the road's accident potential
- ✓ Identifies any potential safety deficiencies
- ✓ Makes recommendations to changes in the design

→ 30% of problems identified during an audit will occur within 5 years unless the recommendations are implemented.

## The Infrastructure Safety Directive (3/3)



### 2007:

- European Parliament's Transport Committee voted against the proposed Directive (1 vote margin).
- EP Plenary decided not to hold vote, but referred the matter back to the Committee for reconsideration.



### Further Steps:

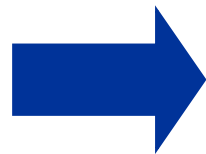
- ✓ In February 2008, the TRAN Committee voted in favour of the proposal.
- ✓ EP and Council to decide via Codecision procedure.

→ **Vote in second quarter of 2008!**

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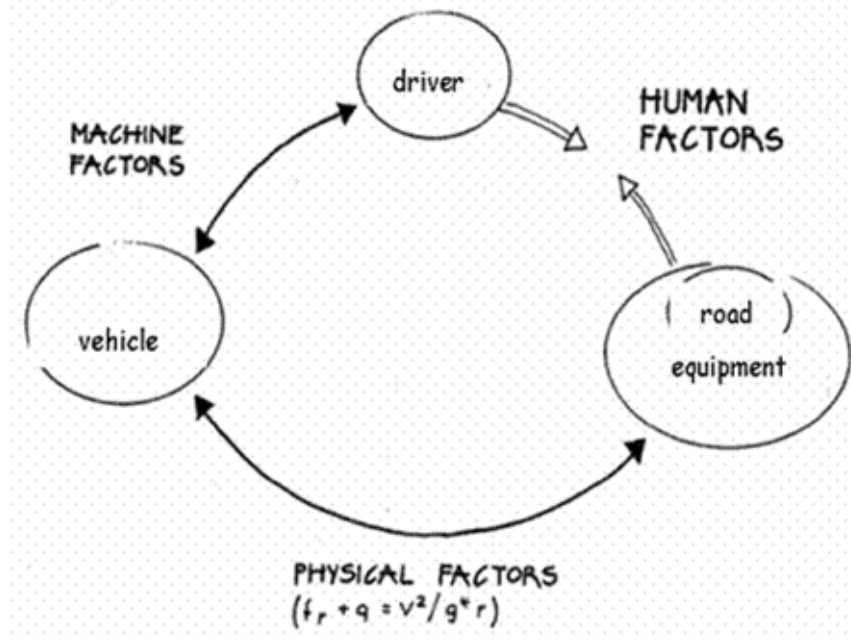
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## Driving seems so easy... (1/3)



- The weakest link ?



- ❑ Most crashes occur when ordinary people make ordinary mistakes.
- ❑ Accidents as an aggregate are systematically over-represented at certain locations and in certain circumstances
- ❑ Need for :
  - ✓ Self-explaining roads
  - ✓ Forgiving roads

## Driving seems so easy... (2/3)



### Case study

#### The driver

Young, inexperienced, driving fast

#### The car

Worn rear tires

#### The road

Wet, no protective devices



## Driving seems so easy... (3/3)



How can accidents be avoided ?

- Acting on the driver
  - More training, graduate licenses
- Acting on the car
  - speed limitation devices, improved stability programmes
- Acting on the road
  - passive safety devices, porous road surfacing, driver information (VMS, road signs, etc.)

Driving mistakes will remain a fact of life

Necessary, but important phase-in time

Immediate effect!

## The teachings of European research



Obvious problems:



## The teachings of European research



Less obvious problems:

**Vehicle travels  
behind protection  
system**





## The teachings of European research



- Problem faced today in road design and roadside safety is not a lack of safety devices but a lack of direction in the implementation, maintenance, and operation of these devices.
  - Crucial information is often unavailable to road engineers:
    - What is the most common single vehicle collision configuration?
    - What is the effectiveness of passive safety devices ?
    - What road geometric and surface characteristics are likely to trigger accidents?
- ⇒ European research programmes can assist network managers in anticipating road accidents and prioritising safety decisions!



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## “The Voice of the European Road”



- ERF is the Brussels Programme Centre of the International Road Federation (IRF), founded in 1948 to offer an international forum to public and private road sector organisations
- Three regional programme centres (Washington D.C, Geneva and Brussels) serving over 350 Members in 90 countries
- An unparalleled range of services:
  - Networking and business development
  - Education and training
  - Conferences and seminars

## ERF and safer road engineering (1/2)



- ERF is a *platform for dialogue and research* at the service of the European road community.
- ERF initiates and supports *scientific studies and publications* aimed at improving the knowledge of the European road system.
- ERF gives the *road community* a consistent and united voice in all transport areas:
  - Socio-economic contribution of roads to society
  - Sustainable road construction
  - Infrastructure financing
  - Intelligent roads
  - Safer road engineering

## ERF and safer road engineering (1/2)

- Signatory to EU Road Safety Charter
- **Engineering Safer Roads** (Bi-monthly newsletter)
- **Discussion Papers** (“Safety on Motorway Workzones”)
- **Publications** (“Designing and keeping roadsides safe”, “Better road infrastructure, saving your life”)
- **Technical Working Groups**
- **EU Research Projects** (RANKERS, RISER, ROBUST, Guidelines to Black Spot Management...)
- **TAIEX Seminars**
- **3d European Road Congress – Brussels – 25 June 2008**



All publications and informations are available at

<http://www.irfnet.eu/>

# Thank You For Your Attention



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