

## **Buenos Aires Declaration on Better Safety Data for Better Road Safety Outcomes**

Over 1.24 million people die every year on the world's roads, and another 20 to 50 million sustain non-fatal injuries as a result of road traffic crashes, as reported in the WHO Global Status Report on Road Safety. Road traffic injuries take an enormous toll on individuals and communities as well as on national economies. Middle-income countries, which are motorizing rapidly, are the hardest hit. The United Nations launched a Decade of Action on Road Safety in 2011, with the ambition to half the expected level of deaths by 2020. Better data is fundamental to improving road safety outcomes and achieving the objectives of the Decade of Action.

On 13 and 14 November 2013, international road safety experts from more than 40 countries met at the Joint IRTAD/OISEVI Conference in Buenos Aires to discuss issues related to the collection and analysis of road safety data as a critical tool to design effective road safety policies.

IRTAD and OISEVI members agreed on the following 12 recommendations:

1. Reliable crash, contextual and exposure data are essential elements to understanding, assessing and monitoring the nature and magnitude of the road safety problem, to setting ambitious and achievable safety targets and to design and implement effective policies.
2. A minimum set of data is required to analyse road safety. It includes not only safety data but also contextual data. While further work is needed on methodology to collect data, it is recommended that data is collected at three levels:
  - a) Outcome level data, including the number of persons killed and injured by type of road users, type of roads, time, etc.;
  - b) Output level data, including performance indicators, focusing on road user behaviour and the safety of vehicles and infrastructure;
  - c) Contextual data, including exposure data such as population, the number of veh-km driven by type of road users; etc.,

It is recommended that countries also collect data on costs of road crashes and the quality of policies and their implementation.

3. All countries from Latin America and the Caribbean countries are encouraged to improve data systems, join OISEVI and contribute to IRTAD LAC. The model developed for Latin America and the Caribbean with a regional network and a dedicated database, designed to be a learning tool, could usefully be replicated in other regions of the world.
4. Safety data should be aggregated at national level, analysed and published by a lead national agency. The agency should be able to monitor road safety performance, based on key

indicators, and provide objective assessments of progress and impacts of interventions to those in charge of designing and implementing the road safety strategy.

5. In several countries, a road safety observatory, under the auspices of a lead road safety agency or a lead ministry, is in charge of data collection and analysis. This model has proven to be a good institutional setting to raise the profile of road safety and encourage policy actions but in monitoring performance, maintaining objectivity is crucial in order to arrive at credible conclusions.
6. Regular monitoring and analysis of key road safety risk factors (for example, the frequency of drivers exceeding speed limits, the proportion of drivers and passengers not wearing seatbelts, drink-driving rates, helmet wearing rates, etc.) should be undertaken. The results of monitoring should be made publicly available at regular intervals and used, if appropriate, to adapt the road safety strategies in place.
7. At a broader level, the relationship between road safety performance and economic development needs to be understood over both the long term and over the shorter term in relation to the business cycle. Several economic factors may influence road safety including unemployment rate and the level of consumption and production. These factors could influence both traffic volume (level and composition) and road user behaviour. Over the business cycle there is evidence of a relationship between economic growth and road safety. Generally, when economic growth declines and when unemployment increases fewer people are killed on the roads. However, the mechanisms are imperfectly understood and further research is needed on the causal relationships involved.
8. The international community should work towards harmonisation of data, including common definitions on the main indicators. Most countries have now adopted the 30 day definition to define a fatality; other countries are strongly encouraged to do the same.
9. Fatality data are not sufficient to understand road safety problems fully. Information on injury crashes is essential for a more complete picture of road safety. Increasing use of information on injuries should be made in international comparisons. IRTAD proposes to define a "seriously injured road casualty" as a person with injuries assessed at level 3 or more on the Maximum Abbreviated Injury Scale i.e. "MAIS3+". While this definition is accepted by a large part of the scientific community, more work is needed to develop a common methodology for collecting injury data. Analysis of less serious injury crashes (MAIS1 and MAIS2) are also meaningful, moreover, data on the impact of traffic injuries in terms of quality- or disability-adjusted life years (DALYs) is needed and will require adoption of a common approach.
10. Police data will remain the main source for road crash statistics. However, because of under-reporting problems and possible bias (for example with differing rates of reporting by vehicle type), police data should be complemented by hospital data. This requires a linking procedure between police and health data. Detailed information on linking procedures, covering a broad range of sources, can be found in the IRTAD report "Reporting serious road traffic casualties".



11. Some IRTAD countries are making effective use of methodologies to forecast outcomes over the short term and project trends over the long term. Systematic use of such projections is recommended in setting targets and assessing performance against targets.
  
12. Benchmarking between countries is a useful process to generate a dynamic for road safety improvement and learn from each other. Progress has been made in developing methodologies for benchmarking and efforts should be continued towards an agreed approach for benchmarking road safety performance internationally.