

## Road Safety

### Introduction

- ◆ There were 8,710 personal injury road accidents reported in Wales in 2005.
- ◆ There were 12,733 casualties, 954 fewer than in 2004.
- ◆ There were 135 children killed or seriously injured in 2005

The Welsh Assembly Government's *Road Safety Strategy for Wales* was published in January 2003. It sets targets for reductions in the number of people killed or seriously injured, the number of children killed or seriously injured and the number of people slightly injured. These targets are to be achieved by 2010 and are drawn from the UK Government's road safety strategy, published in 2000. Figures showing the progress made on achieving these targets are published annually.

*Connecting Wales*, the Assembly Government's new Transport Strategy that is currently out for consultation, sets out the measures that are being taken to continue to reduce casualties associated with transport.

The Assembly Government launched its Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS) initiative in 1999 with the aim of tackling the congestion caused by the school run, and promoting healthy alternatives to the car. It provides transport grant to local authorities to implement road safety schemes including SRTS and 20mph zones.

### Overview of current statutory powers of the Assembly

"Highways and Transport" is field 10 of Schedule 5 of the *Government of Wales Act 2006*. This means that the National Assembly for Wales can seek Measure-making powers over highways and transport matters through Legislative Competence Orders.

The *Road Safety Act 2006* gave Welsh Ministers enhanced powers to make payments to local authorities and others to promote road safety, but road safety policy, speed limits, policing and road signs are matters reserved by the UK Government.

### Forthcoming EU and UK primary legislation

The most recent UK legislation is the *Road Safety Act 2006*. This introduced a range of new measures to promote road safety including increasing the penalties for some offences.

### EU policy

The EU's Road Safety Action Programme (2003-2010)<sup>i</sup> aims to half the number of road accident victims in the European Union by 2010. In February 2006, the Commission issued a mid-term review of the programme<sup>ii</sup>.

## Key Assembly Government strategy documents and action plans from the Second Assembly:

In March 2000 the Department for Transport, published the UK road safety strategy - *Tomorrow's roads - safer for everyone*<sup>iii</sup>.

In January 2003 the Assembly Government published its *Road Safety Strategy for Wales*<sup>iv</sup>.

The targets for 2010 set by these strategies based on the average for 1994-98 are:

- Target 1: A 40 per cent reduction in the number of killed or seriously injured casualties
- Target 2: A 50 per cent reduction in the number of children killed or seriously injured
- Target 3: A 10 per cent reduction in the slight casualty rate, expressed as the number of people slightly injured per 100 million vehicle kilometres

By 2005 in Wales:

- ◆ The number of people killed or seriously injured was 34 per cent lower than the average for 1994-98 (Target 1)
- ◆ The number of children killed or seriously injured was 53 per cent lower than the average for 1994-98 (Target 2)
- ◆ 2005 road traffic data for target 3 are not yet available. However, there was an estimated reduction of 23 per cent in the rate (using 2004 traffic volume data) in the number of people slightly injured during 2005 per 100 million vehicle kilometres compared to the average for 1994-98 (Target 3)

Extending 20mph zones was one of the top ten commitments of the Welsh Assembly Government in the Second Assembly.

## Legacy issues from the Second Assembly

In its legacy paper the Enterprise, Innovation and Networks Committee agreed that its successor may wish to consider Implementation of the Road safety strategy and progress towards the targets during the Third Assembly.

## Useful links

Welsh Assembly Government website transport pages:

<http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/transport/roadsafety/?lang=en>

Department for Transport Road safety:

<http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/roadsafety/>

Sustrans, Safe Routes to Schools:

<http://www.saferoutestoschools.org.uk/index.php?f=wales.htm>

Welsh Assembly Government, Statistical Directorate, 2005 Road Casualties: Wales, December 2006:

<http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/publications/rcw2005/?lang=en>

Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents:

<http://www.rospa.com/>

European Road Safety Observatory:

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

## Further information

For further information about transport matters, please contact:

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<sup>i</sup> EU Road Safety Action Programme (2003-2010) <http://europa.eu/scadplus/leg/en/lvb/l24257.htm>

<sup>ii</sup> Communication from the Commission, *European Road Safety Action Programme Mid-Term Review*, February 2006 [http://ec.europa.eu/transport/roadsafety/road\\_safety\\_observatory/rsap\\_midterm\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/transport/roadsafety/road_safety_observatory/rsap_midterm_en.htm)

<sup>iii</sup> Department for Transport, *Tomorrow's roads - safer for everyone*

[http://www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/dft\\_rdsafety/documents/page/dft\\_rdsafety\\_504644.hcsp](http://www.dft.gov.uk/stellent/groups/dft_rdsafety/documents/page/dft_rdsafety_504644.hcsp)

<sup>iv</sup> Welsh Assembly Government, *Road Safety Strategy for Wales*, January 2003

<http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/transport/roadsafety/?lang=en>