

## Road safety

### Introduction

- 161 people were killed on roads in Wales in 2007, 1,241 people were seriously injured, and 10,868 people were slightly injured.<sup>i</sup>
- 8,340 personal injury road accidents were reported in Wales in 2007.<sup>ii</sup>

The Welsh Assembly Government's *Road Safety Strategy for Wales*<sup>iii</sup> 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 the Nation* is the Assembly Government's Transport Strategy for Wales<sup>v</sup>. It states that "Road Safety Strategy' (2003) continues to be central to accident reduction measures on the roads of Wales." Key actions are:

- Casualty reduction strategies.
- Developing plans for casualty reduction among vulnerable groups.
- Taking forward our Safe Routes in Communities scheme and encouraging local authorities to develop 20mph zones.
- Measures to improve security on the public transport network.
- Measures to improve the security of the transport system.

The Local Road Safety Grant was introduced in 2000 and has been provided to local authorities each year by the Welsh Assembly Government to contribute towards solutions to road safety problems in their respective areas. The grant is in addition to local authorities' own highway and traffic engineering budgets<sup>v</sup>. Halcrow Group published an evaluation<sup>vi</sup> of the first seven years of the grant in December 2007.

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 provided transport grant to local authorities to implement road safety schemes including SRTS and 20mph zones. From April 2008 the initiative was widened to allow local authorities to use the grant in any area, and renamed "Safe Routes in Communities".

### Overview of current statutory powers of the Assembly

Under the *Government of Wales Act 2006*, the National Assembly for Wales can seek legislative competence through Acts of Parliament or Legislative Competence Orders (LCOs) to make a piece of law in the form of an 'Assembly Measure'. Measures can only be made in a specific policy area (or 'Matter') added to one of the 20 'Fields' (or broad subject areas) which are contained in Schedule 5 of the Act.

As "Highways and Transport" is Field 10 of Schedule 5 to the Act, the National Assembly for Wales can seek Measure-making powers in this area. Currently there are no matters in this field.

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>vii</sup> aims to halve 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>viii</sup>.

## Key Welsh Government strategy documents and action plans:

In March 2000 the Department for Transport, published the UK road safety strategy - *Tomorrow's roads - safer for everyone*<sup>ix</sup>. The *Second Review of the Government's Road Safety Strategy*<sup>x</sup> was published in spring 2007.

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

The targets for 2010 set in 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 2007 in Wales<sup>1</sup>:

- The number of people killed or seriously injured was 30 per cent lower than the average for 1994-98 (Target 1)
- The number of children killed or seriously injured was 49 per cent lower than the average for 1994-98 (Target 2)
- The number of people slightly injured per 100 million vehicle kilometres was 28 per cent lower than the 1994-98 average. (Estimated, using 2006 traffic volume data) (Target 3)

## Useful Links

- Welsh Assembly Government website road safety pages:  
<http://new.wales.gov.uk/topics/transport/roads/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, *Road Casualties in Wales, 2007, 2008*:  
<http://new.wales.gov.uk/statsdocs/transport/sdr91-2008.pdf?lang=en> (pdf)
- Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents:  
<http://www.rosopa.com/RoadSafety/index.htm>
- European Road Safety Observatory:  
<http://www.erso.eu/>

## Further information

For further information about transport in Wales, please contact please contact Graham Winter, Members' Research Service ([Graham.Winter@wales.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Graham.Winter@wales.gsi.gov.uk)), 029 2089 8166

<sup>i</sup> Welsh Assembly Government, [Road Casualties in Wales, 2007](#), (pdf) June 2008

<sup>ii</sup> Ibid

<sup>iii</sup> Welsh Assembly Government, [Road Safety Strategy for Wales](#), January 2003

<sup>iv</sup> Welsh Assembly Government, [One Wales: Connecting the Nation, Wales Transport Strategy](#), May 2008

<sup>v</sup> Welsh Assembly Government, [Local Road Safety Grant web page](#)

<sup>vi</sup> Halcrow Group Limited for Welsh Assembly Government, [Evaluation of the Expenditure and Effectiveness of the Road Safety Grant Issued to Local Authorities: 2000-2007 Final Technical Report](#), (pdf) December 2007

<sup>vii</sup> [EU Road Safety Action Programme \(2003-2010\)](#)

<sup>viii</sup> Communication from the Commission, [European Road Safety Action Programme Mid-Term Review](#), February 2006

<sup>ix</sup> Department for Transport, [Tomorrow's roads - safer for everyone](#), 2000

<sup>x</sup> Department for Transport, [Second Review of the Government's Road Safety Strategy](#), 2007