

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

Working Party on Road Traffic Safety

Sixty-first session

Geneva, 21–23 March 2011

Item 7 of the provisional agenda

Towards a best practice for in-depth investigation of crashes
Submitted by Norway

Towards a best practice for in-depth investigation of crashes

1. Purpose of the document

Contribute to achieving recommendations/best practice concerning in-depth investigation of crashes.

2. Key factors

- Establish the work within the relevant authorities
- Organise the work
- Ensure guidelines
- Obtain valid accident data
- Collaborate with the police and medical doctor
- Establish a central electronic database
- Publish reports

3. Description of key factors

Establish the work within the relevant authorities

It is important that the relevant authorities recognise well what is needed to make the work perform properly. There is a need for finances as well as priority. The administration of the in-depth investigation will gain from having close contact between road safety authorities and public health authorities.

Organise the work

The work need to be well organised.

In Norway: There are several data collection groups within each of five regions, but only one data analysis group and management group in each region. The National administration body ensures coordination and has the overall responsibility.

Ensure guidelines

Guidelines are important both for the organisation of the in-depth analysis work as well as for tasks and methods recommended in the on-going work such as data collection procedures and analysis techniques.

The issue of privacy/confidentiality of information needs to be handled. Among possible solutions is a general national legislation, or special legislation related to the investigation body.

Obtain valid accident data

Valid and reliable raw data are essential. Persons collecting data need expertise in the areas of road, vehicle (including motorbikes, bus and lorry) and road-user. This provides more valid information. Persons analysing the data also need insight in the areas of roads, vehicles and road-users when the analyses are being completed.

Collaboration with the police and medical doctor

In addition to information from the police and designated data collection units, the assistance from the medical doctor is important. The doctor considers which conditions have led to the fatal outcome and whether medical or other road-user conditions might have contributed to the accident.

Establish a central electronic database

An electronic database provides better access to all national accident data. After some years with in-depth investigations the database will contain a certain amount of data which enables the use of more advanced statistical tools providing strengthened and reliable analyses. Furthermore, it simplifies investigations of particular areas/themes which can be preferable in road safety research.

Publish reports

Reports are important for the work of in-depth analysis. By summarising the findings and pinpoint issues of concern they become an important tool in road safety work. Some reports analyse single themes such as fatal accidents with motorcycles, bicycles or heavy vehicles.

4. Upcoming event

Norway can be willing to host a seminar on Multi-disciplinary crash investigations in Oslo. Possible themes can be different approaches to investigations (ref: ECE/Trans/WP.1/2010/9), different crash themes, data collection, analysis and reporting, and use of results locally and nationally.

The conference can be a further step towards a common understanding on the use of crash investigations, and recommendations/best practises.

The event could possibly take place in autumn 2011 or spring 2012.