

New Road Safety Strategy Aims to Ensure Canada Has World's Safest Roads

OTTAWA, January 26, 2011 - The Ministers Responsible for Transportation and Highway Safety have approved a new five-year Road Safety Strategy under which Canada will continue to strive to have the safest roads in the world. The strategy will be used by individual jurisdictions to develop federal/provincial/territorial action plans to address key highway safety concerns and priorities for their respective and unique situations.

Road Safety Strategy 2015 will carry on the progress that has been achieved in reducing fatalities and serious injuries on Canada's roads since 1996 when Canada's first road safety plan was introduced. The provisional fatality total for 2009 is 8.7% lower than the number of road users killed in traffic crashes during 2008 and represents a 25.1% reduction over the 1996-2001 baseline figure. This is the lowest death toll on record in Canada in more than 60 years.

The new Road Safety Strategy is the result of a broad collaborative effort between all levels of government, public and private road safety stakeholders and the enforcement community. It provides each province and territory with a wide variety of solutions to address key road safety risks – initiatives that are focused on road users, the vehicles they use and the roadway infrastructure on which they operate. The Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrators (CCMTA) will lead the implementation of the strategy and support stakeholders in the process.

"This strategy represents Canada's desire to be a leader in road safety," said Chuck Strahl, the Federal Minister of Transport and Co-Chair of the Council of Ministers Responsible for Transportation and Highway Safety. "It highlights our ambition to have the best possible road safety outcomes for Canada."

"The number of road fatalities and serious injuries is declining nationwide," said Luke Ouellette, Minister of Transportation of Alberta and Co-Chair of the Council of Ministers Responsible for Transportation and Highway Safety. "These results are encouraging and we look forward to continued improvement over the next five years."

The unveiling of Road Safety Strategy 2015 coincides with the National Year of Road Safety in 2011, an ambitious undertaking which aims to raise public awareness and promote road safety activities nationwide. The Canadian Global Road Safety Committee, whose membership is made up of injury prevention and road safety professionals, is leading this initiative.

It is expected that Road Safety Strategy 2015 will continue to inspire all Canadians to work together toward the common objective of making Canada's roads the safest in the world. Road Safety Strategy 2015 will be officially launched at CCMTA's 2011 Annual Meeting, to be held May 15-19, 2011, in Victoria, B.C.

CCMTA is a non-profit organization comprising representatives of the provincial, territorial and federal governments of Canada which makes decisions on administrative and operational matters dealing with licensing, registration and control of motor vehicle transportation and highway safety. It also comprises associate members whose expertise and opinions are sought in the development of strategies and programs.

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ROAD SAFETY STRATEGY 2015 - BACKGROUNDER

- The new Road Safety Strategy (RSS) 2015 is the result of extensive consultations by the Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrators (CCMTA) with its government members, the engineering and police community and key industry stakeholders. This successor plan to Road Safety Vision (RSV) 2010 was approved by the Council of Ministers Responsible for Transportation and Highway Safety in September 2010. An official launch of the new strategy will take place at CCMTA's 2011 Annual Meeting, to be held May 15-19 in Victoria, British Columbia.

- Road Safety Vision 2010 ended on December 31, 2010. Its goal was to improve the level of road safety in Canada with the four strategic objectives of the vision. These were: raising public awareness of road safety issues; improving communication, cooperation and collaboration among road safety agencies; enhancing enforcement measures; and improving national road safety data quality and collection.
 - The 2008 death toll showed a substantial decrease in traffic-related deaths when compared to the 2007 fatality figure and a very positive step towards the achievement of a 30% decrease in fatalities that is the cornerstone of Road Safety Vision 2010. A combination of renewed effort by most of Canada's jurisdictions in developing and implementing action plans and strategies that primarily focused on curbing the incidence of drinking and driving, excessive speeding and non-use of seat belts, and the economic downturn were cited as the main reasons for the considerable progress that was made during 2008.

 - The provisional fatality total for 2009 is substantially lower than the number of road users killed in traffic crashes during 2008 and the lowest death toll on record in Canada in more than 60 years. If the annual percentage decreases that occurred in traffic fatalities and serious injuries during 2008 and in traffic deaths during 2009 continue at a similar rate through 2010, considerably more progress will be made towards achieving the national objective for fatality reductions (-30%). However, a true evaluation cannot be made until the 2010 collision data figures are available.

- Road Safety Strategy 2015 is similar to its predecessor in several ways. First, it retains the long-term vision of making Canada’s roads the safest in the world. Secondly, the core objectives of Road Safety Vision 2010 will continue as objectives in the successor plan. However, a number of key elements contribute to the new strategy’s uniqueness. These key elements are:

- **Flexibility** - The structure of the strategy is different as it provides more flexibility. It outlines best practices and initiatives that jurisdictions will have the flexibility to adopt, depending on suitability, feasibility and acceptability within their respective operating environments. Each jurisdiction will develop and “own” their respective road safety plans.
- **Holistic approach** - The strategy is holistic in nature and provides a coordinated approach which includes initiatives to encompass road users, infrastructure and vehicles. This acknowledges the interdependencies that exist between drivers, roads and vehicle safety design, and will move the new strategy to more of a “safe systems” framework. Indeed, the strategy represents the outcome of very strong collaboration between CCMTA, the engineering and police communities, and road safety stakeholders.
- **No hard targets; rate-based measurement** - Unlike earlier plans, the strategy will not include hard percentage-based targets established at the national level that then become de-facto targets for each jurisdiction. Rather, the strategy will seek to achieve directional downward trends in fatalities and serious injuries throughout its five-year duration. Furthermore, downward trending will be tracked using rolling average rate-based measures. Jurisdictions will continue to report fatalities and serious injuries to Transport Canada annually and a report on national progress in reducing fatalities and serious injuries will be produced using this rate-based measurement approach. While the strategy will not include hard quantitative targets, as was the case with RSV 2010, it will not prevent individual jurisdictions from establishing their own targets, should they wish to do so.

- **Best practices** - Core to the strategy will be a framework of best practices designed to address key target groups and major contributing factors that contribute to fatalities and serious injuries on Canada's roads. The framework has been developed and includes a variety of road safety strategies that have proven to be effective in Canada and/or in other Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)-member countries, based on a comprehensive environment scan undertaken by CCMTA. The nature of the framework is such that it will be a fluid document, regularly updated throughout the five-year duration of the strategy, as new road safety initiatives are introduced in OECD countries or as existing strategies are evaluated and their effectiveness in reducing fatalities and serious injuries is established.

- **Updating and ownership** - As custodian of Road Safety Strategy 2015, CCMTA, working through the 14 jurisdictions and its committees and task forces, will be responsible for updating the strategy. Given its fluid and proactive design, updates may include documenting progress on new research projects, identifying new initiatives to be included in the multi-cell matrix of key target groups and contributing factors, and revising the framework of proven best practices. Each jurisdiction will become the owner of its own action plans, and in creating these plans, may use the appropriate strategies that have proven to be effective in Canada and elsewhere.

- **Five-year timeframe** – The strategy will have a five-year timeframe and a mid-term evaluation of its success will be conducted in year 3 (2013).

“Rethink Road Safety” has been developed to brand the Road Safety Strategy 2015. The slogan represents a tangible call to action to all road safety stakeholders and is flexible enough to resonate with different stakeholders in different ways.



Road Safety Strategy 2015 will, it is hoped, inspire stakeholders from all levels of government, as well as key public and private sector experts, to work together toward the common goal of making Canada's roads the safest in the world.
