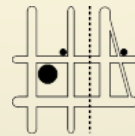


Alta Swanepoel & Associates
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Observations from the Left Lane

An eclectic opinion reviews the threat of speeding vehicles. What are we doing about it? How effectively are we managing this menace?



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Introduction

According to wide ranging recent research it is clear that speeding is a significant factor in most countries.

There are numerous other factors that contribute to fatalities, injuries and damages, all at massive cost to countries, businesses and families. In South Africa we tend to single out “drunk driving” as the main cause of road accidents.

It is a significant problem , however, there are other causes that account for our unacceptable number of road deaths every year.

Every motorist and professional driver should be aware of the mindless speeding vehicles on our highways and byways.

If we are ever going to succeed in finding solutions that lower road fatalities and all other tragic consequences resulting from bad behaviour on our roads, we need to recognise the importance of road safety management fundamentals:

EQUIPMENT - ENVIRONMENT – ENFORCEMENT – EVALUATION

Accident incidents: South Africa vs Other Countries

South Africa 2016

14071 Road fatalities , 451 cyclists
5401 pedestrians, 35% 24/35 years old

Human factors 75%, roads & environ
16.5%. WHO stats - total cost R142 billion in 2015 – 3.49% of GDP

AAA – 1.25 mn road deaths a year aged 15-29 – 3 out of four are males

Middle income countries have 90% of world accidents with only 50% of the vehicles. 49% of road deaths are pedestrians and cyclists. Your chance of dying in road accident

US 16%, EU 12%, Africa 26,7%



American stats show out of 200000 accidents Trucks –regardless who the owner – chalks up Less than 2 per 100000 miles (168000 Km) 75% of big truck accidents are Truck-Tractors 38% occur on Saturdays and 31% on Sundays 98% of people fear another motorists will crash into them. 98% run red lights, 86 % were drowsy

Causations of Road Accidents

Alcohol, drunk driving, inattention, distraction, drowsy, speeding, bad weather, over correction and **loss of control**, crash avoidance movements, roll over, run off road, hit a motor cyclist, cyclist, person, pole, tree or an animal. 70% involve just a single vehicle.

Accidents are caused by drivers mentally distracted or falling asleep. **Such accidents occur twice as many times when drivers are behind the wheel for 8 or more hours.** Then there is **texting**, chatting on cell phone, **driving too fast** or too slow, too close, sick, lack experience.

There is also vehicle failure – tyre blows out, braking or steering problems. Speeding up when articulated vehicles are changing lanes, unsafe passing, pulling in front from the roadside, **tail-gating, weaving, lack of training. Driving faster to make up time.** Unrealistic scheduling, lane drifting, improper turning and manoeuvring at intersections.

Research from around the world confirms road accidents and crashes are a serious problem in terms of human life and massive financial cost to countries, businesses and families.

The decade of road safety 2011 – 2020

Announced *by the United Nations and compiled by world governments in 2010*

Aim is to reduce road deaths of 25 people per 100000 by 50% over the period

This global plan of action embraces five pillars:

Road Safety Management

Safer roads and mobility

Safer vehicles

Safer road users

Post-crash responses



Road Strategies submitted by DoT to UN (2015)

According to DoT White Paper the 2015 submission was in essence the same road safety strategies as submitted in 1991, 1996 and 2006

During these years the target to reduce fatalities by 10 percent proved unrealistic due to a lack of resources prior to 2010

Why did these strategies, compiled every five years fail?

A lack of a national programme to monitor speeding and non-payment of fines – a lack of attention to identify the strategy was not effective

Did not recognise or address the need to employ competent, skilled and experienced people to ensure leadership and management at the national level

Challenges Recognised by DoT to be Addressed

- Lack of funds to improve management of the roads
- Level of corruption within traffic enforcement
- The poor quality of driver training and driver testing standards needs to be addressed.
- High levels of corruption must be eradicated
- Lack of technical resources as it applies to training drivers. Also, corruption must be addressed
- Vehicle roadworthiness impacted by high level of corruption
- DoT is optimistic about the AARTO points demerit system being helpful to identify habitual traffic offenders

In a nutshell the DoT's aims for its envisaged road safety management programme goes along these lines:

The Road to Reducing Traffic Deaths

- RTMC will be the co-ordinating commission for road user behaviour. The notion is that law enforcement should be an adequate deterrent to encourage road users to obey the law.
- Speed data to determine which routes have speeding in excess of the posted speed limits by 20% or more – something like the 85% percentile concept
- Identify where high alcohol and pedestrian related crashes take place in all provinces – a new and distinct programme to be implemented
- Zero tolerance - strict law enforcement to be applied where hazardous, locations and routes are identified.

A culture of adherence will be extended to other roads to intrench a lasting culture of adherence and better on road behaviour by all drivers

How will all this be Funded?

DoT, related government departments and the Treasury make it clear the user pays principle will apply. The authorities have several sources in place and some additional sources are more than likely to be introduced. The current and likely sources are:

Tolling

Vehicle licenses

Cross Border fees

Fuel Levy

Carbon taxes

Congestion Charges

Weight over distance charges

Can it be Achieved?

- **How long will it take before it can be implemented and enforced?**
- **It largely depends on the minister and the broader diverse transport industry that should not allow important decisions to be taken without its collective participation.**
- **Self-regulation is making major strides in South Africa and needs to be implemented extensively – especially for smaller and less experienced vehicle owners**
- **I believe it is time for all who are involved to agree a roads policy and strategy this country needs and not just what some narrow agendas want. The Minister along with all stakeholders and roleplayers must work together to resolve for once and for all this unacceptable blight on our country and all our inhabitants**

EQUIPMENT - ENVIRONMENT – ENFORCEMENT – EVALUATION

THANK YOU