National Road Safety Management Plan 2030
Executive Summary
MESSAGE FROM NATIONAL ROAD SAFETY COMMITTEE

Co-Chairs, National Road Safety Committee
Ms. Yvonne Hyde, Chief Executive Officer, Ministry of Finance and Economic Development

“Long term strategic planning for a country is crucial and the most significant approach a government can take. As we implement the first ever Belize Road Safety Project, I am committed to make road safety a fundamental pillar, now and for the future.”

Chair, Road Safety Operational Steering Committee
Mr. Errol Gentle, Chief Executive Officer, Ministry of Works, Transport and National Emergency Management

“It is important to keep our boys and girls safe, and make Belize’s road system safer for all generations, yesterday, today and tomorrow. We continue with our plan to improve the engineering works in our beloved country.”
INTRODUCTION

The Belize Road Safety Project currently underway as a demonstration corridor safety program along the George Price Highway is showing promising results as indicated through a reduction in fatalities along the corridor, which is much greater than the rest of the country. The purpose of this “demonstration project” was to:

• Implement some “quick wins”
• Foster cooperation between the primary stakeholders
• Encourage integration of engineering, enforcement and education initiatives
• Include international good practice strategy elements, where possible.

As a parallel activity to this corridor project, it is vital that a solid foundation is built for a much longer term, sustainable approach.

MAIN RECOMMENDATION

Road Safety Vision 2030
Will carry the vision of Towards Zero Deaths on Belize’s roads and highways.

What is Towards Zero Deaths?
We do not accept that fatalities and serious injuries on our roads are inevitable or acceptable.

How will we achieve this vision?
By ensuring that the Belize community as a whole works together to make a fundamental change in the way it thinks about road safety and works to address the trauma caused by everyday use of the roads. Collisions may still occur as people using the road system make mistakes or poor decisions. But we should strive to create a system in which safe decisions are the easiest ones to make and mistakes are not punished with death or serious injury.
It is modeled on successful strategies in other countries and also the recommendations of the World Report on Road Traffic Injury Prevention. It also takes into consideration the lessons learned during the demonstration corridor project.

In developing the Road Safety Vision 2030, the National Road Safety Committee sought input from cross-ministry partners to answer the following questions:

- Given where we are now, what can we do better?
- How can we leverage cross-ministry/cross-sector cooperation and action to further reduce deaths and serious injuries on Belize’s roads?
- What can we do to embed the principle of shared responsibility for road safety into the culture of the Belize community?
- What can we do to further our progress towards safer roads, safer vehicles and safer drivers?

Road Safety Vision 2030 aims to give guidelines to policy makers in order that they can plan and implement road safety management in a coordinated and harmonized manner. It also serves as a guideline for Regional/Municipal Governments and Cities to recommend steps of road safety management in their respective jurisdictions. This Vision has a long-term perspective, namely 15 years since this Road Safety Vision fully supports the broader Belize Horizon 2030 Vision which embodies the overall vision for Belize in the year 2030 and the core values that will guide citizen behavior and inform the strategies to achieve this common vision for the future.

As recommended in international good practice in the Decade of Action for Road Safety (2010-2020), Road Safety Vision 2030 uses the five pillars approach.

The achievement of Road Safety Vision 2030 targets uses a safe system approach, which accommodates human error and susceptibility of the human body, which is intended for ensuring that road collisions do not cause fatalities and serious injuries. Road Safety Vision 2030 also aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals recently adopted by the UN in its Agenda 2030.
BACKGROUND

The good news is that since the introduction of the Belize Road Safety Project, there has been some improvement in the death rate from 21 per 100,000 population in 2012 down to a projected death rate of 16.1 per 100,000 population by the end of 2014 but there is no room for complacency. In December 2009 PAHO assisted the Ministry of Health to prepare an Estimation of the economic impact of Road Traffic injuries in Belize which determined that the overall economic impact on the country associated with direct and indirect costs of road traffic incidents was 1.26% of GDP, which translates to roughly $32 million/year.

Road safety is not only an issue faced on the national scale, but also as a global issue.

*Every year, about 1.3 million people die in traffic collisions or more than 3,000 people every day. If no immediate and effective measures are taken, it is estimated that the number of collision victims will double every year.*

The World Health Organization (WHO) has published that deaths caused by road traffic collisions are treated as one of the non-contagious diseases with the highest rate of fatalities.

*Estimates in 2030 = road deaths = fifth leading cause of death in the world after heart attack, stroke, lung disease and upper respiratory tract infections.*

Responding to such data, in March 2010, the UN General Assembly declared the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011 – 2020, which aims to control and to decrease the fatality rate of road traffic victims on a global scale by improving activities carried out at the national, regional and global levels.

In addition, road safety targets have been approved in the new Sustainable Development Goals adopted by UN member states in New York. These new goals for Post-2015 are now known as Agenda 2030.

A specific stand-alone target in the Health Goal (to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages) to reduce road traffic fatalities and deaths by 50% by 2020 and a target on sustainable urban transport in the Cities Goal (make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable) have been approved, in a landmark achievement for the global road safety community to secure inclusion of road safety in the global development agenda for the first time. The SDGs will guide all global development efforts over the next 15 years, designed to ‘stimulate action in areas of critical importance for humanity and the planet’.
GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF ROAD SAFETY VISION 2030

1. Adopt a comprehensive safe system approach coupled with a public health perspective.
2. Envision road safety as a collaborative effort with a focus on results.
3. Sustain successful measures and focus on new areas that need attention.
4. Encourage innovation and flexibility among partners.
5. Build on the foundations of sustainability, coordination, and togetherness, based on the understanding that road safety is the responsibility of each and every one of us.

OBJECTIVE OF ROAD SAFETY VISION 2030

• Provide a foundation to policy makers in order that they can plan and implement road safety management in a coordinated and harmonized manner, and
• Serve as a reference for regional governments to recommend steps for road safety policy, management, and implementation of initiatives in their respective jurisdictions.

VISION

Belize will have the safest roads in the Latin America and Caribbean countries and will work toward the ultimate goal of zero traffic fatalities and zero serious injuries.

MISSION

Establishing Road safety as a national priority
Every party realizes the large amount of national economic losses due to traffic collisions, therefore they are committed to making road safety the main subject in the determination of policies, programs and development activities.

Nurturing road safety in road management
Every party is actively involved in generating road safety explicitly in every aspect of road management and road infrastructure.

Synergizing potentials to optimize road safety performance
Empowering the role of Government, the Business Sector, and People to make use of the resources in order to improve road safety nationally.
ACHIEVING ROAD SAFETY VISION 2030

REQUIREMENTS

1. Focused safety education and law enforcement with deterrent effects
   Guaranteeing the implementation of road safety education that focuses on road safety values in order to generate a culture of being safe on the road. Meanwhile, law enforcement is directed to create deterrent effects by implementing administrative sanctions, fines, and/or imprisonment.

2. Provision of sustainable financing to improve road safety
   Formulating policies and implementing regulations in order to provide alternative sources of fund originating from the private sector, community, and road users to guarantee the sustainability of road safety programs.

3. Improved standards for permitting drivers on Belizean roads
   Rights to drive are given strictly to prospective drivers who can meet the requirements of knowledge, skill and attitude by implementing enhanced licensing principles.

4. Effective road safety management supported by a comprehensive and accurate information system
   Implementing principles in the management of road safety requires an effective organization which means that effective and efficient management and governance among the stakeholders are well implemented. It must also ensure coordination among stakeholders, with the support of an information system as a supporting device in making appropriate and accurate decisions.

5. Improved safety of road infrastructure and broader transport networks
   It will be vital to provide a safe and reliable transportation network across the country with consistent practices. This would include the road infrastructure, in addition to programs addressing the movement of goods by commercial vehicles and the transportation of people through the bus system.
TARGETS

Since the introduction of the Belize Road Safety Project there has been continued decline in the number of fatal road related collisions, particularly on the demonstration corridor.

This figure shows the total number of fatalities between 2011 and 2015.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>JICC Fatalities</th>
<th>JICC Fatalities Recorded</th>
<th>S.I.B Population</th>
<th>Fatality Rate per 100,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>332,089</td>
<td>17.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>324,066</td>
<td>21.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>349,728</td>
<td>16.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>358,899</td>
<td>15.60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When compared with collisions across all highways in Belize, as in the table above and highlighted in yellow, one can see the progress that has been made along the Demonstration corridor through the introduction of comprehensive and integrated safe system elements.

It is therefore not unreasonable that Belize could meet a target of no fatalities and serious injuries by 2030, through a continued annual reduction of these numbers, even as modest as 10% per year.

STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

This section presents a comprehensive set of initiatives and actions on which an effective long term road safety strategy can be implemented.

It is built on the experience and knowledge gained during the implementation of the Belize Road Safety Project. Particular attention is given to short, mid-, and long-term actions, which will require strong and early commitment from the Belizean organizations and without which any strategy document would only be a polite wish list. To be sustainable and effective the long-term strategy should be supported by annual operation plans which provide details on the specific actions and interventions that will take place in any given year, continuing to move forward towards the vision.

It is modeled on successful strategies in other countries and also the recommendations of the World Report on Road Traffic Injury Prevention and is aligned with the 5 Pillars of the Decade of Action and the Safe System Approach. In order to ensure the achievement of the long-term vision, the foundation is established as follows:

• Harmonizing the direction and commitment of road safety management by implementing principles that coordinate the five pillars inclusively;
• Implementing road safety using cost-efficiency approach through curative and preventive measures in order to handle the victims, prevent injuries, and prevent collisions;
• Implementing a road safety system approach which can accommodate human error and the susceptibility of human body to ensure that traffic collisions do not cause fatalities and severe injuries.
COORDINATION AND MANAGEMENT

Key Component ➔ National Road Safety Committee (NRSC)

Role of NRSC? ➔ Advise the appointed lead agency THROUGH the NRSC Secretariat know as the ROAD SAFETY UNIT.

NRSC Mandate ➔ Establish a nation-wide mechanism to provide leadership, direction, coordination and evaluation of road safety initiatives across the country. The Committee is supported by the Ministry of Economic Development, who leads the multi-sectoral initiative to improve road safety in the country by reducing deaths and injuries due to motor vehicle collisions. The Committee enhances collaboration among all road safety partners including law enforcement, education and engineering organizations, in addition to the private and business sector to improve road safety across the country. The National Road Safety Committee is co-chaired by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (Economic Development) and the Ministry of Works and Transport (Transport).

STRUCTURE FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

• Cabinet under the leadership of the Prime Minister will approve and authorize the NRSMP 2030
• The Ministry of Economic Development will coordinate the implementation of the NRSMP 2030, in line with its overall planning function
• The National Road Safety Committee will have general oversight on implementation and policy advice
• A set of Technical Working Groups will support the process and report the National Road Safety Committee

EFFECTIVE LEGISLATION

This implementation measure is highly important. New laws and a revision of existing ineffective laws are needed. This includes examining laws to ensure ease of enforceability. This is necessary to increase deterrence to make the laws work in a better manner. Laws must also be revised to improve regulation along the length of the regulatory chain from standard setting, inspection and certification to enforcement. Minimum mandatory penalties must also be examined for certain offenses to improve deterrence.

A common challenge in all countries is the need for constant updating of road traffic laws. This challenge also exists in Belize.

**REASONS**

- A need to update standards on vehicle road worthiness, certification, etc. due to technological advances
- Greater use of technology to enforce traffic rules (cameras, alcohol testing)
- The need to progressively impose stricter rules to improve safety.
- Gaps or deficiencies in legislation are often discovered once provisions are implemented, requiring corrections to the law.

To meet these challenges, most countries structure their road traffic laws so that provisions that may change frequently (or are potentially difficult to implement) are contained in subsidiary laws. Subsidiary laws normally only require cabinet or ministerial approval. Hence, they can be prepared and adopted more rapidly than laws that require parliamentary approval.
As shown in the figure below, road traffic legislation has three primary **focus areas**. The first establishes the institutions required to administer various parts of the traffic system and allocates them specific duties and functions. The second imposes safety and other standards with which vehicle owners, drivers, vehicles and infrastructure must comply. The third area regulates compliance with standards through training requirements, testing, certification, enforcement and audits.

**Role of Legislation in Road Traffic Safety**

![Diagram showing institutional, standard-setting, and regulation roles in road traffic safety](image)

A comprehensive legal framework for traffic safety must cover all three focus areas.

**PROACTIVE ROAD SAFETY PLANNING**

In addition a *proactive* approach, which undertakes to prevent unsafe situations developing, through such programs as the *countermeasures approach, network screening, and safety conscious planning* should be considered. These programs complement proven countermeasures that are used to treat unsafe locations.

European research indicates that, in order to achieve future quantum reductions in crash levels, it is necessary to change the focus of initiatives to ones that will make it more difficult for the driver to have a crash. The improved inherent safety of the transportation system, as achieved through initiatives such as *Safety Conscious Planning (SCP)*, is a key factor in this regard.

**THE BASIC PRINCIPLES OF SCP ARE TO**

- **Reduce exposure to collisions, through reduced automobile travel**
- **Reduce the risk of collisions occurring, for travel that does take place**
- **Reduce the consequences for collisions that do occur.**

In general, it is important to undertake activities that are: **proactive** (road safety audits to prevent unsafe situations from developing) and **reactive** (identifying and studying blackspot locations and high risk segments of road).
EFFECTIVE TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT

This Plan ensures that traffic enforcement priorities can be identified, addressed and delivered within budgetary allocation and is aligned with national and municipal traffic enforcement and road safety partner priorities. The Strategic Enforcement Plan is accountable, performance-based and evidence-led and works in an integrated manner with national enforcement priorities, and road safety stakeholders.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF THE STRATEGIC ENFORCEMENT PLAN

- Participatory, Respectful & Inclusive
- Research-driven, Intelligence-led
- Alignment with Stakeholder Goal
- Data Driven
THE PLAN INCLUDES TRAINING, COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION AS KEY ACTIVITIES
DEALING WITH OFFENDERS

• Improve administrative procedures for handling traffic violations. By decreasing the number of constraints which hinder enforcement and compromise traffic safety.
• Expand the role of the courts in dealing with serious traffic offenses.

BELIZE YOUTH FOR ROAD SAFETY (BYRS)

The BYRS was established in 2014. Its mission is: “Youths encouraging, empowering and inspiring others to become advocates of road safety by generating awareness, using innovative and interactive activities to reduce the numbers of road traffic deaths and injuries in Belize”. Their main objective is targeting a minimum of 2000+ youth between the ages of 16-29 to disseminate workshops with a youthful vibe/ youth friendly manner that will assist in the learning of Drunk Driving, Distracted Driving, Speeding and get them to understand the concept of the importance of Road Safety in Belize. They play a key role in teaching road safety in schools as part of the newly established School Curriculum Program.

TRANSPORTATION OF GOODS AND SERVICES AND PEOPLE

2 major challenges to address for the next few years

• The aging public transport (bus) system which is a primary means of traveling around the country for many residents
• The amount of commercial vehicles, which are often overloaded, causing ongoing damage to the road infrastructure.

SAFER VEHICLES

It is vital to ensure that every vehicle used on the road is of a high safety standard in that the vehicle should be able to protect its user and people involved in a collision, minimizing any injuries to themselves or other road users. A significant step will be that vehicles imported and sold in Belize are in line with international new car assessment standards.
**POST-CRASH RESPONSE**

Injury is a major cause of premature death and disability worldwide. Most existing injury control strategies focus on primary prevention – that is, avoiding the occurrence of injuries or minimizing their severity – or on secondary prevention – providing adequate emergency medical response to enhance treatment and thereby minimize harm following an injury.

In many instances the prompt provision of emergency medical care and rapid movement of injured casualties from the scene of injury to an appropriate health-care facility can save lives, reduce the incidence of short-term disability and dramatically improve long-term outcomes.

Many fatal injuries may be prevented or their severity reduced by adequate pre-hospital trauma care. The major benefits of pre-hospital care are realized during the second phase of trauma, when the timely provision of care can limit or halt the cascade of events that otherwise quickly leads to death or lifelong disability. Without pre-hospital care, many people who might otherwise survive their injuries may die at the scene or en-route to the hospital.
With a clear mission, direction and targets, this National Road Safety Master Plan will not be effective without any follow-up and immediate and necessary concrete steps from all the partners and stakeholders involved in the implementation of the initiatives.

Development of Belize's Road Safety Master Plan 2030 took into consideration the 2012 baseline and a projected 20 year future (i.e. 2030) is the direction that has been determined for the achievement of ideals into the future. Over the period of the strategy there may well be a fundamental change in the recommended direction and detailed interventions. If this is the case, the established targets may also need to be adjusted. It is therefore strongly recommended that this Road Safety Master Plan be assessed at least once every 5 years, to ensure the expected outcomes are still realistic. Should significant changes take place to the recommended direction contained in this long-term strategy, it may be necessary to identify and revise new targets, strategies and policies that are influenced by the identified changes in the implementation direction.

The National Road Safety Committee can serve as the body to conduct regular review of the Plan as it takes shape, ensuring its credibility, precision and legitimacy.