
ROAD SAFETY – ANNUAL POSITION STATEMENT

Report by Chief Officer Roads

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

15 August 2017

1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

1.1 This report proposes to update the Committee on reported road casualties in 2016 and progress towards meeting the Scottish Government casualty reduction targets.

1.2 In June 2009 the Scottish Government set revised targets for accident reduction across a number of key headings. The base taken for this is the 2004 – 08 annual average and the target reduction is by the year 2020 with interim targets set for 2015.

1.3 The five areas identified as national reduction targets are as follows:-

1. The number of people killed in road accidents
2. The number of people seriously injured in road accidents
3. The number of children under 16 killed in road accidents
4. The number of children under 16 seriously injured in road accidents
5. The slight injury accident rate

Progress against these national targets is the main focus of this report.

1.4 The national position is generally positive based on the official 2015 figures, with reductions continuing to be shown across all the accident reduction areas identified in 1.3 above and all but the second category outlined currently exceeding the interim 2015 reduction targets. Provisional 2016 figures, however, indicate some worrying increases in key categories.

1.5 At a local Scottish Borders level 2016 was a disappointing year with a rise on previous years in the overall number of fatal and serious injuries as well as in the number of serious injuries to children. Consolidation of the figures for the last few years however suggests that the long-term trend of road-accident casualty reduction in the Scottish Border's area continues.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 I recommend that the Executive Committee:-

- (a) notes the position with respect to injury accidents in 2016 and the progress that is being made in relation to meeting the Scottish Government targets for road casualty reduction.**
- (b) endorses the proposals for accident prevention going forward:**
 - To continue to concentrate its Accident Investigation and Prevention resources on locations identified through the moving cursor programme.**
 - To submit, as justified, proposals for more substantial schemes for inclusion in future Capital Programmes.**
 - And that broader elements; such as education, encouragement and communications will continue to be addressed through the Scottish Borders Road Safety Working Group. In particular, maintaining close liaison with Police Scotland in terms of appropriate enforcement as necessary.**

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Scottish Borders Road Safety Working Group is the overarching body looking at road safety and vehicle accident prevention in the area. The Working Group is multi-partnership with representatives drawn from the Police, Fire and Rescue, RoSPA, Trunk Road Operating Company AMEY and the South-east Safety Camera Unit, in addition to the Council's Network section and Children and Young Peoples' Service.
- 3.2 Although accidents and casualties have shown a general decrease over recent years it has previously proved difficult for rural areas, such as the Scottish Borders, to meet the ambitious national targets set for the rate of casualty reduction.
- 3.3 Accident and casualty reporting is initially undertaken by the police and the statistics are passed to local authorities for vetting before being returned for validation. This can be a time consuming practice and means that data is some three to five months behind in terms of validated accident figures at any point in the year. It should also be noted that only injury accidents are recorded and notified by the police.
- 3.4 It should further be noted that all accident figures quoted include those that occur on trunk roads as well as those on Council controlled roads.

4 NATIONAL POSITION

- 4.1 In looking at the national position the statistics available are up until the end of 2015, as national statistics are published in late October for the previous year. Subsequent to the first drafting of this report provisional 2016 figures have been released and these are also outlined in the following paragraphs.
- 4.2 168 people were reported as killed on Scotland's roads in 2015. This was 42% below the 2004-2008 average of 292 and as such the reduction exceeded the 2015 milestone and that needed to reach the 2020 target (175). Unfortunately, the provisional figures for 2016 indicate a sharp rise, in the number of fatalities nationally, to 191 (a year on year rise of 14%).
- 4.3 1,596 people were reported as seriously injured in 2015. This was 39% below the 2004-2008 average of 2,605. The number of people seriously injured was therefore well above the 2015 milestone reduction target of 1484. Provisional figures for 2016 indicate a 6% rise (to 1,694) in the number of serious injuries compared to 2015.
- 4.4 Four children were reported as killed on Scotland's roads in 2015. This in isolation is 73% below the 2004-2008 baseline average of 15, but it is also worth noting that the average deaths involving children over the 2011-2015 period is 7 (53% reduction). The reduction therefore exceeded the 2015 milestone target (10) and was ahead of the 2020 target of a 50% fall. Unfortunately, provisional figures for 2016 indicate that 12 children were killed in road accidents in Scotland. This worryingly being a two-fold increase on the 2015 figures.

- 4.5 139 children were reported as seriously injured in road accidents across Scotland in 2015. This is 57% below the 2004-2008 average of 325, exceeding the 2015 milestone reduction target and on profile to achieve the 2020 reduction target. Unfortunately, the provisional 2016 figures indicate a sharp rise to 167.
- 4.6 The slight casualty rate of 20 casualties per million vehicle kilometres in 2015 was 38% below the 2004-2008 baseline average of 32. The 2016 figure has not been released to date.
- 4.7 Overall it can be seen that the national picture based on the official 2015 figures is a very positive one, with accident rates reducing across all five categories and the previously set national 2015 milestones and 2020 reduction targets being surpassed already in most instances. Unfortunately it would appear that 2016 has bucked the downward trend and in all the key areas there has been a significant and worrying increase from the previous year.

5 2016 ACCIDENT STATISTICS FOR SCOTISH BORDERS

- 5.1 In general terms 2016 was a mixed year locally, with 3 of the 5 indicators showing an increase on the previous year. Overall however, the long term trend of accident casualty reduction in the Scottish Borders was continued.
- 5.2 Progress against targets is discussed in the following paragraphs and shown in graphical and tabular form respectively in Appendices A and B.

Progress Against Target 1 – 30% Reduction by 2015 in the Number of People Killed and a 40% Reduction by 2020

- 5.3 In 2016 there were 12 vehicle accident related fatalities in the Scottish Borders; four of which were on the trunk road network. This is significantly up on the previous year and, in isolation, shows no reduction on the 2004 – 08 base. The last five year average comparison, however, illustrates that over the period 2012 to 2016 the average was 8 fatalities per annum. This compares favourably with the 2015 nationally set reduction target of 8.7 for the area. Based on provisional figures there have been two fatalities in the first six months of 2017.
- 5.4 The 2016 total of 12 resulted from 11 separate incidents and consisted of nine car occupants (6 of whom were drivers) two motorcyclists and a pedestrian.

Progress Against Target 2 – 43% Reduction by 2015 in the Number of people Seriously Injured and a 55% Reduction by 2020

- 5.5 The total number of serious casualties in 2016 was sixty five. This is a slight increase on the previous year's figure. It is significantly down on the 2004 -08 base of ninety five, but above 2015 milestone target (54) and remains above the reduction rate required to achieve the 2020 national reduction target (43).

- 5.6 Forty percent of the serious injury casualties occurred in the months of June and August. Other than these are two of the busier traffic months there is no indication why the rate should be so pronounced at this time of the year.

Progress Against Target 3 - 35% Reduction by 2015 in the Number of Children (aged < 16) Killed and a 50% Reduction by 2020

- 5.7 As in the previous five calendar years there were no child fatalities resulting from road accidents in the Scottish Borders in 2016. The 2004-08 base annual average was zero point four.

Progress Against Target 4 - 50% Reduction by 2015 in the Number of Children (aged < 16) Seriously Injured and a 65% Reduction by 2020

- 5.8 There were 8 children under 16 years of age seriously injured on roads within Scottish Borders in 2016. This is the highest rate recorded for the category in recent years and shows no reduction on the 2004 – 08 annual average. This year's high figure was influenced by one of the fatal accidents which also included 3 serious child injuries. The most recent five year (2012 – 2016) figure for serious child injuries is somewhat more re-assuring at 4 per annum; a reduction of 4 on the 2004 – 2008 base average.

Progress Against Target 5 – 10% reduction in the slight casualty rate, expressed as the number of people slightly injured per million vehicle kilometres

- 5.9 The slight casualty rate for an area is calculated nationally and is not available until the November following the previous year end. The Scottish Borders figure for 2015 was eighteen which, as in previous years, was comfortably below the five-year base average of thirty eight and the 2020 reduction target of thirty five.

Identified Trends and Issues for Scottish Borders

- 5.10 The long-term trend for the Scottish Borders is relatively positive in that all categories of accident (fatal, serious and slight) are showing a reduction. The mid-term 2015 national reduction targets were met in all but one of the five categories, but 2016 saw two further categories drift above the desire lines required to meet the 2020 targets.

It is important to emphasise that while this report measures performance against these national targets the over-riding aim is to reach a day when there are no injuries on local roads.

- 5.11 There remain a number of road-user categories that continue to be a particular concern at a local level. These are discussed below and will continue to be the focus of the Scottish Borders Road Safety Working Group and the Council's Network Section. It should be noted that both the 2016 figures and the previous four years figures have been taken into consideration in the following paragraphs.

- 5.12 Pedestrians are perhaps the most vulnerable of all road users and this is reflected in the seriousness of their injuries when they are involved in vehicular accidents. Unfortunately there was a pedestrian fatality in 2016 bringing the five year total to five. The area, however, remains significantly below the national average for both fatal and serious accidents in this road-user category. This is perhaps not that surprising in that such accidents are most prevalent in more urban authority areas where vehicle and pedestrian interaction is much greater. Nevertheless this is an area of concern; not least because fatalities have a tendency to fall under the very young or very old age group category.
- 5.13 Cyclists can be equally vulnerable as borne out by two fatalities over the five year period. In terms of fatalities this is similar to the national average over the period. It is perhaps worth pointing out that in any category where the traditional numbers are relatively low, the introduction of small variations can cause very spiky results and it is pleasing to report no cycle fatalities occurred in the most recent four years. Nevertheless this is an area that continues to necessitate careful consideration and monitoring.
- 5.14 Motorcyclists make up 1% of Scotland's road traffic, but account for 15% of its fatalities. This user group has been a particular concern for the Scottish Borders for a number of years as they are attracted in large numbers to the area; in part by the nature of the roads and the challenge that they can present. There have been five motorcycle fatalities in the area in the five year period to 31 December 2016, and many more serious casualties. In percentage terms the Scottish Borders is above (22% to 17%) the national average for combined fatal and serious motorcycle casualties, although this can, to an extent, be explained by the rural nature of the area. Casualties in this particular group continue to be dominated by those over the age of thirty five. One area where attempts have been made to try and address motorcycle accidents is through the "Around the Corner Campaign" which originated in the Lothian and Borders and has gone on to win national acclaim including a Prince Michael International Road Safety Award.
- 5.15 In common with almost every area in Scotland, young drivers make up a disproportionate amount of those involved in injury accidents, with road users under 26 making up a third of all casualties recorded. In addition young drivers make up almost a quarter of all fatal and serious casualties involving car occupants. Locally the area continues to target new and future drivers through various education initiatives at schools and more recently the Scottish Borders has been leading the country with its funding of Advanced Driver courses for young drivers and the delivery of introductory courses for those drivers who are yet to reach the legal age to drive. Nationally more stringent tests, graduated licences and night-time curfews are some of the areas that are again under active consideration.
- 5.16 In line with Scotland's Road Safety Framework Targets it is suggested that the Council continues to concentrate its Accident Investigation and Prevention resources on locations identified through the moving cursor programme that identifies where injury accidents are occurring. In addition to this the broader elements such as education, encouragement and communications will continue to be addressed through the Scottish Borders Road Safety Working Group. In particular, close liaison will be maintained with Police Scotland in terms of appropriate enforcement as necessitated.

6 IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Financial

- (a) There are no costs attached to any of the recommendations contained in this report.
- (b) The costs associated with accidents are substantial with current national statistics putting the average cost to the nation of an injury accident at £101,115 and the cost of a fatal accident at £2,119,521. An annual capital allocation of £50,000 is currently available to spend on accident investigation prevention schemes.

6.2 Risk and Mitigations

There is a risk that the current downward trend in accident casualties is not continued. This is particularly true of the Scottish Borders where the relatively low figures for some categories can sometimes lead to quite dramatic fluctuations in the numbers involved. This risk is mitigated by the work of the Network Section and the wider Scottish Borders Road Safety Working Group.

6.3 Equalities

An Equalities Impact Assessment scoping exercise has been carried out on this proposal which concluded that there are no adverse equality implications and a full EIA was not required.

6.4 Acting Sustainably

There are no economic, social or environmental effects directly related to the recommendations of this report.

6.5 Carbon Management

This report has no direct impact on the Council's carbon emissions.

6.6 Rural Proofing

This report does not relate to new or amended policy or strategy and as a result rural proofing is not an applicable consideration.

6.7 Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation

There are no changes to be made to either the Scheme of Administration or the Scheme of Delegation as a result of the proposals contained in this report.

7 CONSULTATION

- 7.1 The Chief Financial Officer, the Monitoring Officer, the Chief Legal Officer, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Chief Officer HR and the Clerk to the Council have been consulted and any comments received have been incorporated into the final report.
- 7.2 As the report may be of media interest the Corporate Communications team have been consulted and any comments received have been incorporated into the final report.

Approved by

David Girdler
Chief Officer Roads

Signature

Author(s)

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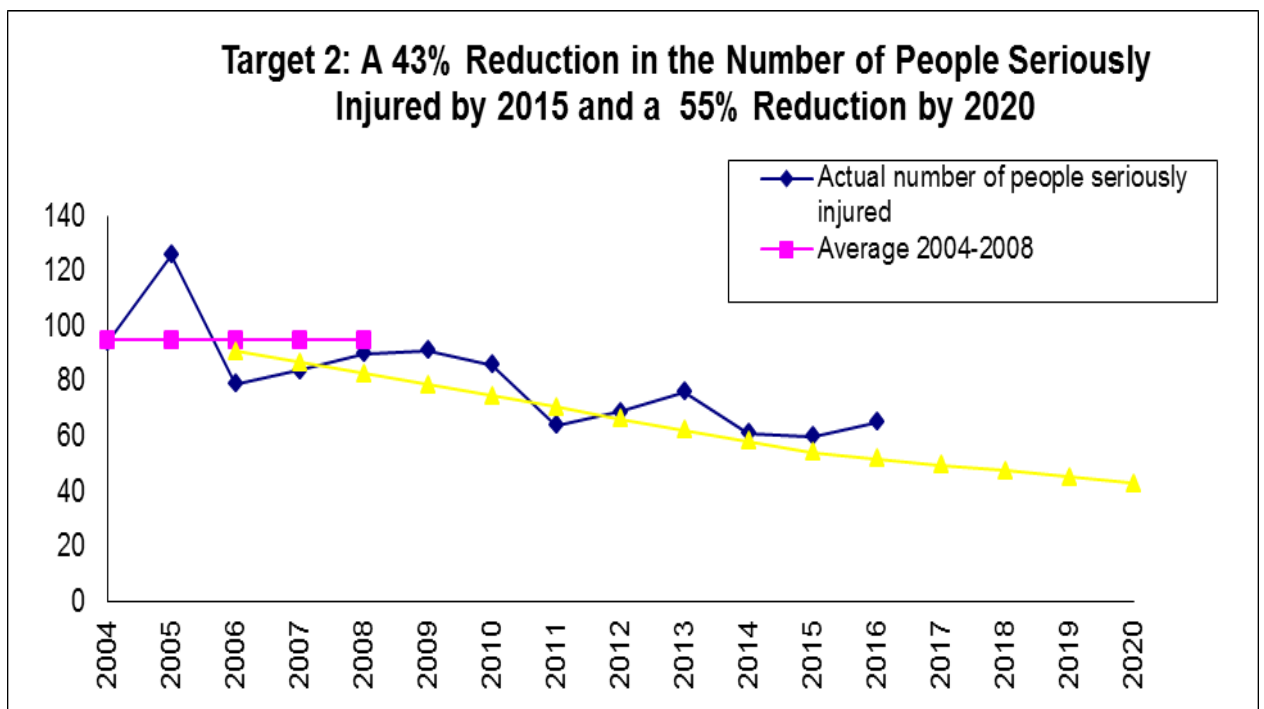
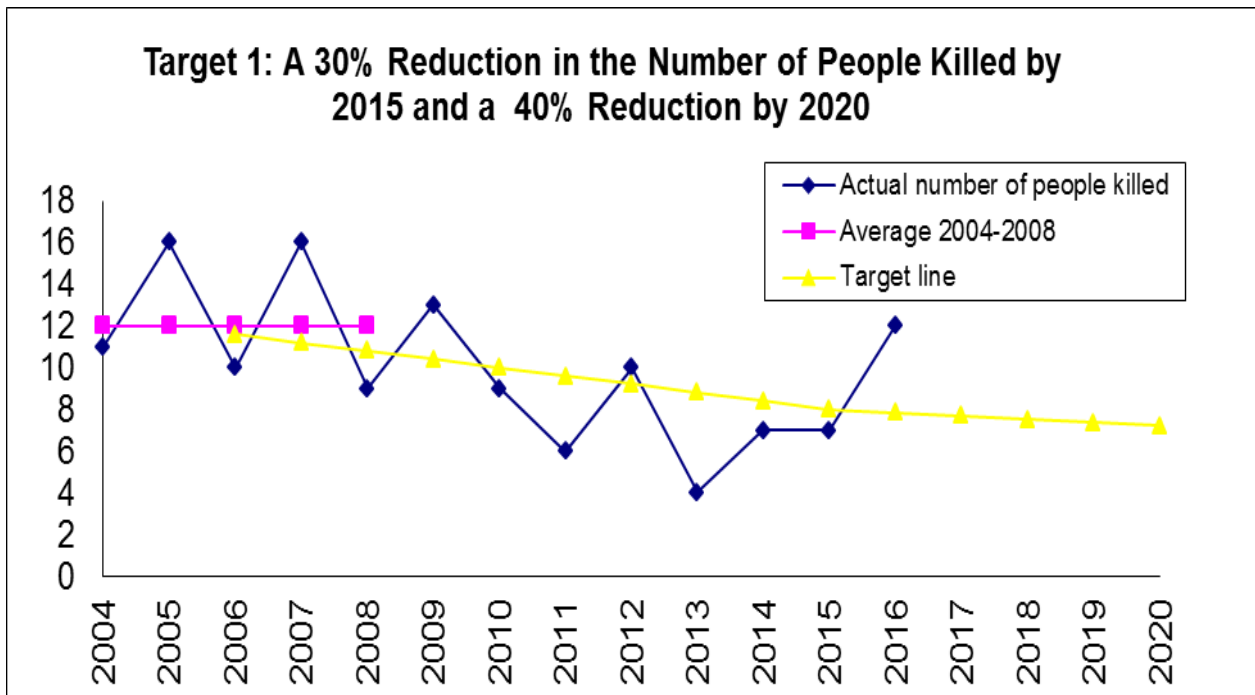
Background Papers: Scottish Borders Road Safety Plan 2010 - 2020

Previous Minute Reference: None

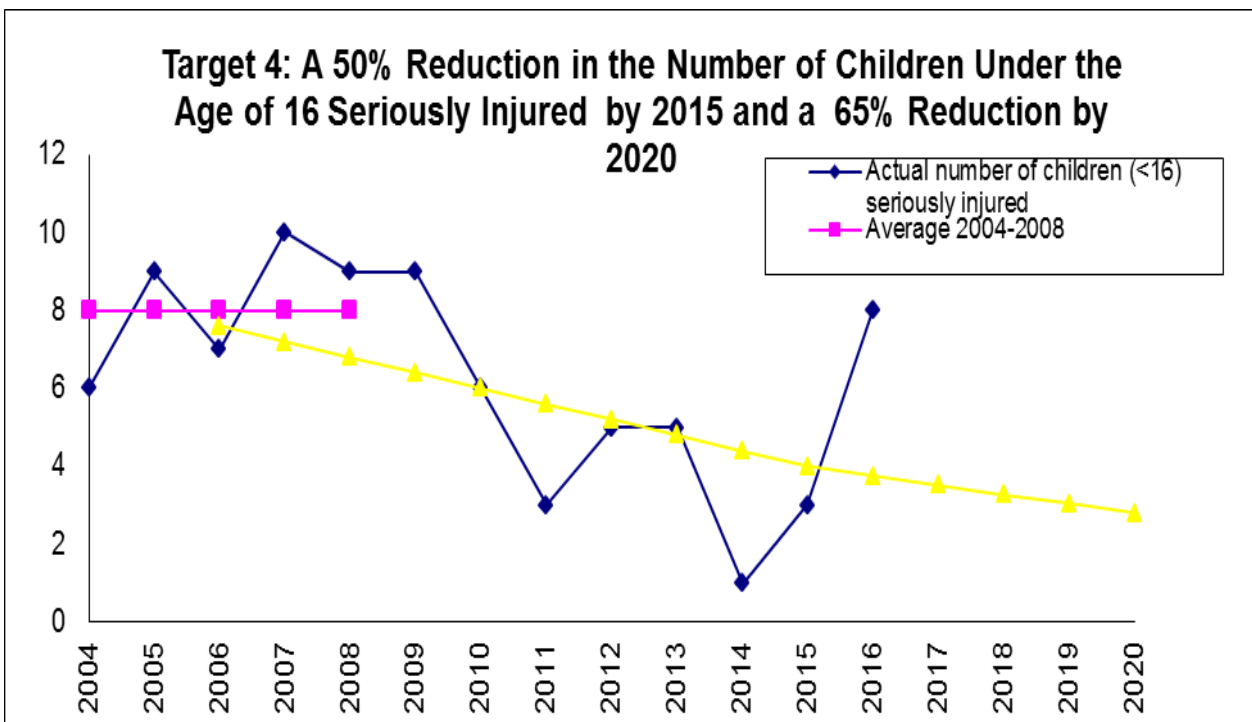
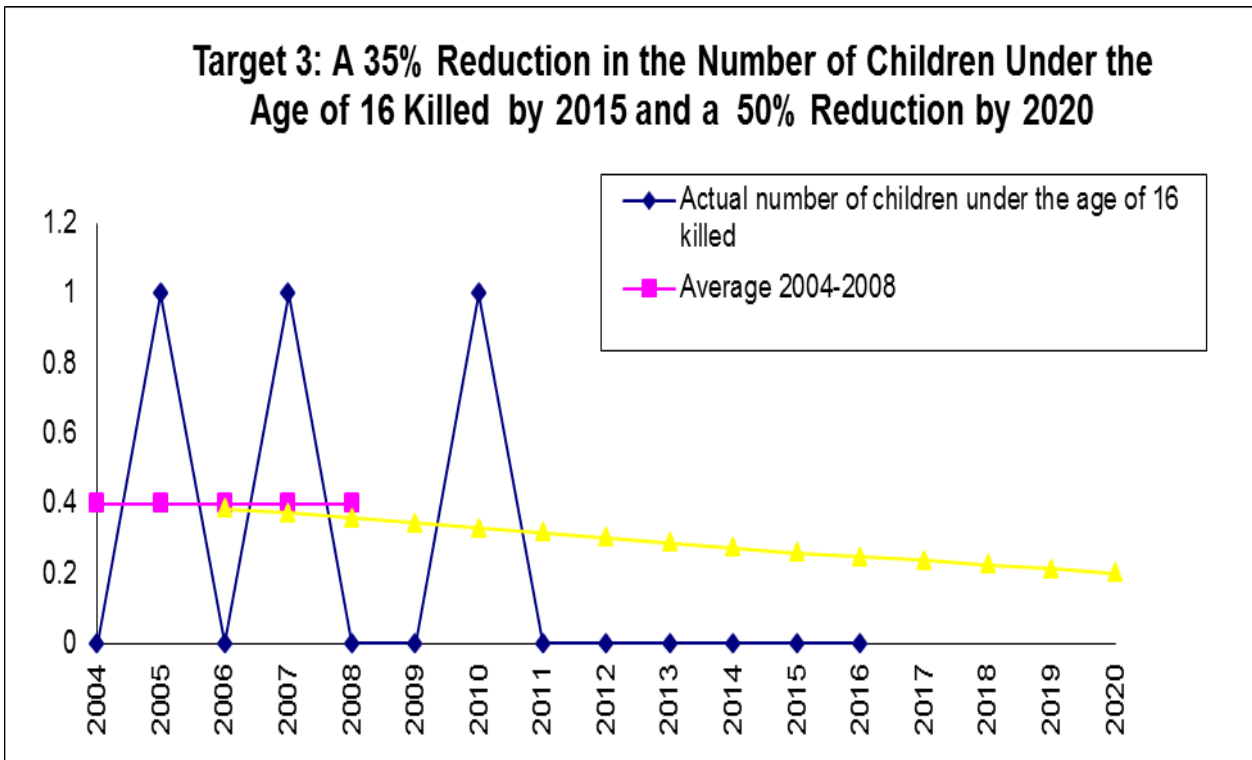
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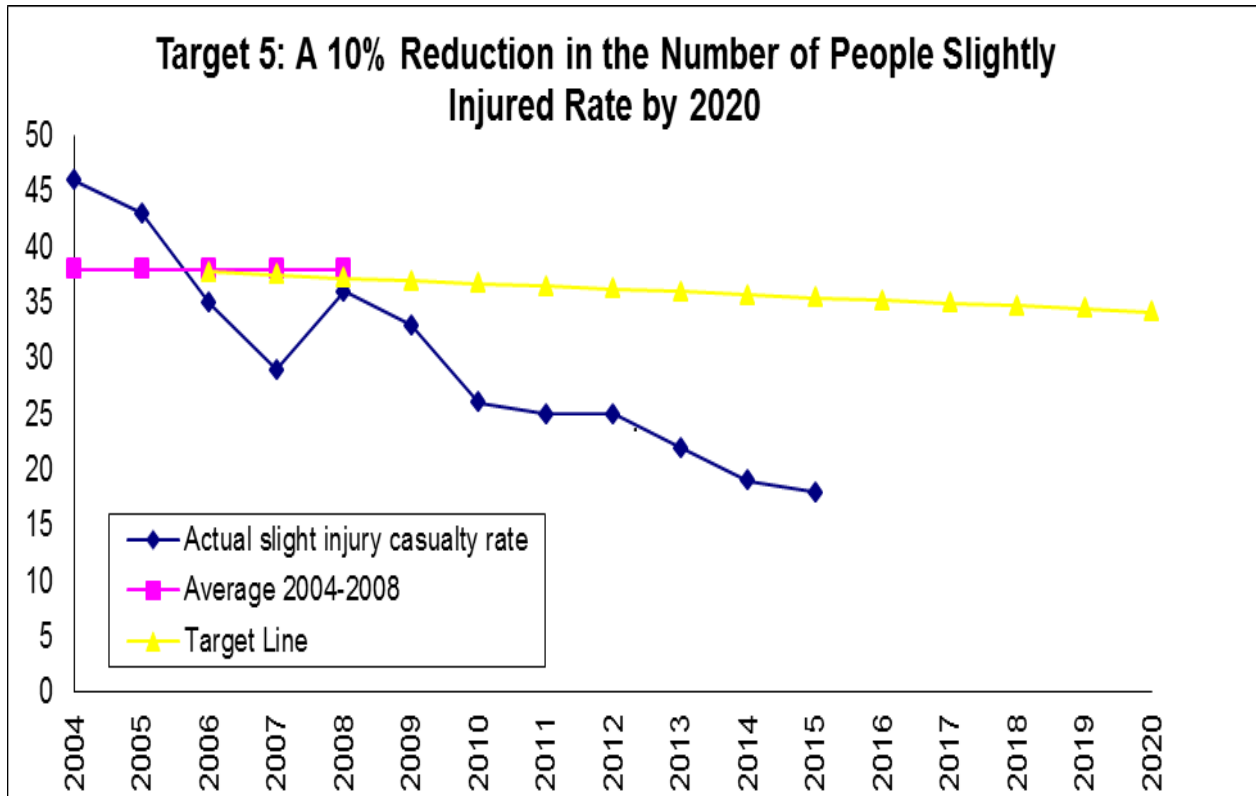
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Appendix B
Progress Towards National Target Reductions

	Target 1		Target 2		Target 3		Target 4		Target 5	
YEAR	Killed	National Reduction Target	Serious	National Reduction Target	Children <16 killed	National Reduction Target	Children <16 serious	National Reduction Target	Slight	National Reduction Target
Ave 2004-2008	12.4		94.6		0.40		8.2		37.8	
2004	11		94		0		6		46	
2005	16		126		1		9		43	
2006	10	12.4	79	94.6	0	0.40	7	8	35	38
2007	16	12.0	84	90	1	0.38	10	7	29	38
2008	9	11.6	90	86	0	0.37	9	7	36	37
2009	13	11.2	91	81	0	0.35	9	7	33	37
2010	9	10.8	86	77	1	0.34	6	6	26	37
2011	6	10.4	64	72	0	0.32	3	6	25	37
2012	10	9.9	69	68	0	0.30	5	5	25	36
2013	4	9.5	76	63	0	0.29	5	5	22	36
2014	7	9.1	61	59	0	0.27	1	5	19	36
2015	7	8.7	60	54	0	0.26	3	4	18	36
2016	12	8.5	65	52	0	0.24	8	4		35
2017		8.2		50		0.23		4		35
2018		7.9		47		0.22		3		35
2019		7.7		45		0.21		3		35
2020		7.4		43		0.20		2.9		34
Annual reduction required to 2015	0.410		4.500		0.016		0.410			
Annual reduction required to 2020	0.255		2.270		0.012		0.250		0.252	