

## Launch of the Decade of Action for Road Safety

Church House  
11<sup>th</sup> May 2011



Dear Colleague,

Welcome to the UK launch of the Decade of Action and a hugely significant day for road safety. Today's event here in London has drawn together over 40 organisations who have each pledged a commitment of action for the coming decade. The coming together of these organisations and the potential this creates for future partnership working and knowledge sharing is an achievement in itself.

This morning we will hear from Lord Robertson of Port Ellen, Chairman of the Commission for Road Safety and the Secretary of State for Transport, Philip Hammond MP, along with other speakers who will show how new thinking and innovation will deliver the objectives of the five pillars of action which form the basis for the global plan of action.

Meanwhile, the Decade launch is being marked throughout the country, with the following giving just a snapshot of today's events. Aberdeen Safer Community Trust, Grampian Police and Grampian Fire and Rescue are running a Road Safety Road Show for pedestrians, passengers and drivers to highlight the number of casualties in the area, common causes of road accidents and prevention advice. Nottinghamshire Police and the Nottinghamshire Road Safety Partnership are announcing a cycle helmet road safety project to encourage cyclists to wear helmets under Pillar Four of the plan: safer road users. Calderdale Safer Roads Group is coordinating a multi-agency effort in Halifax, West Yorkshire to tackle key road safety issues.

These local events showcase the dedication and enthusiasm of our road safety sector. But as well as thinking nationally, we should recognise the importance of this day on an international scale. Road crashes kill an estimated 1,300,000 people each year globally, and injure up to 50 million more. If trends continue, road traffic injuries are projected to kill more people than HIV/AIDS by 2030.

As we launch the Decade here today, similar events are unfolding in over 90 countries around the world. The Decade tag will be projected onto buildings and structures, such as the Palace of Culture and Science in Poland, the highest building in Warsaw, and the iconic Sydney Harbour Bridge in Australia.

Events are taking place on both national and local scales. Michael Schumacher is joining Jerzy Buzek, President of the European Parliament, for the European Launch in Strasbourg, while school children in Barbados will be making posters with road safety messages. Roads police and volunteers from youth organisations will distribute brochures for road users in Uzbekistan.

Many governments are using this opportunity to demonstrate their commitment to road safety by launching strategies and targets. In Thailand, where there is a daily average of 25 road deaths and the annual economic cost from road traffic deaths and injuries is 2.8% of the country's Gross Domestic Product, the government is committing to halving fatalities by 2020. Malaysia's Transport Minister will unveil the Road Safety Plan of Malaysia 2011-2020 at an event attended by all road safety stakeholders from the government, private sectors and NGOs. The Prime Minister of Mozambique will launch his government's National Multi-sector Strategy for Road Safety.

After the incredible effort which has gone into this launch day, the challenge will be to keep the momentum going for the next ten years. I hope that the commitment and coordination demonstrated by our organisations here today will continue throughout the decade. In the meantime, I hope you enjoy the event this morning, and look forward to working with you in the future.

Robert Gifford  
Executive Director  
PACTS

