

Drink driving developments in Northern Ireland

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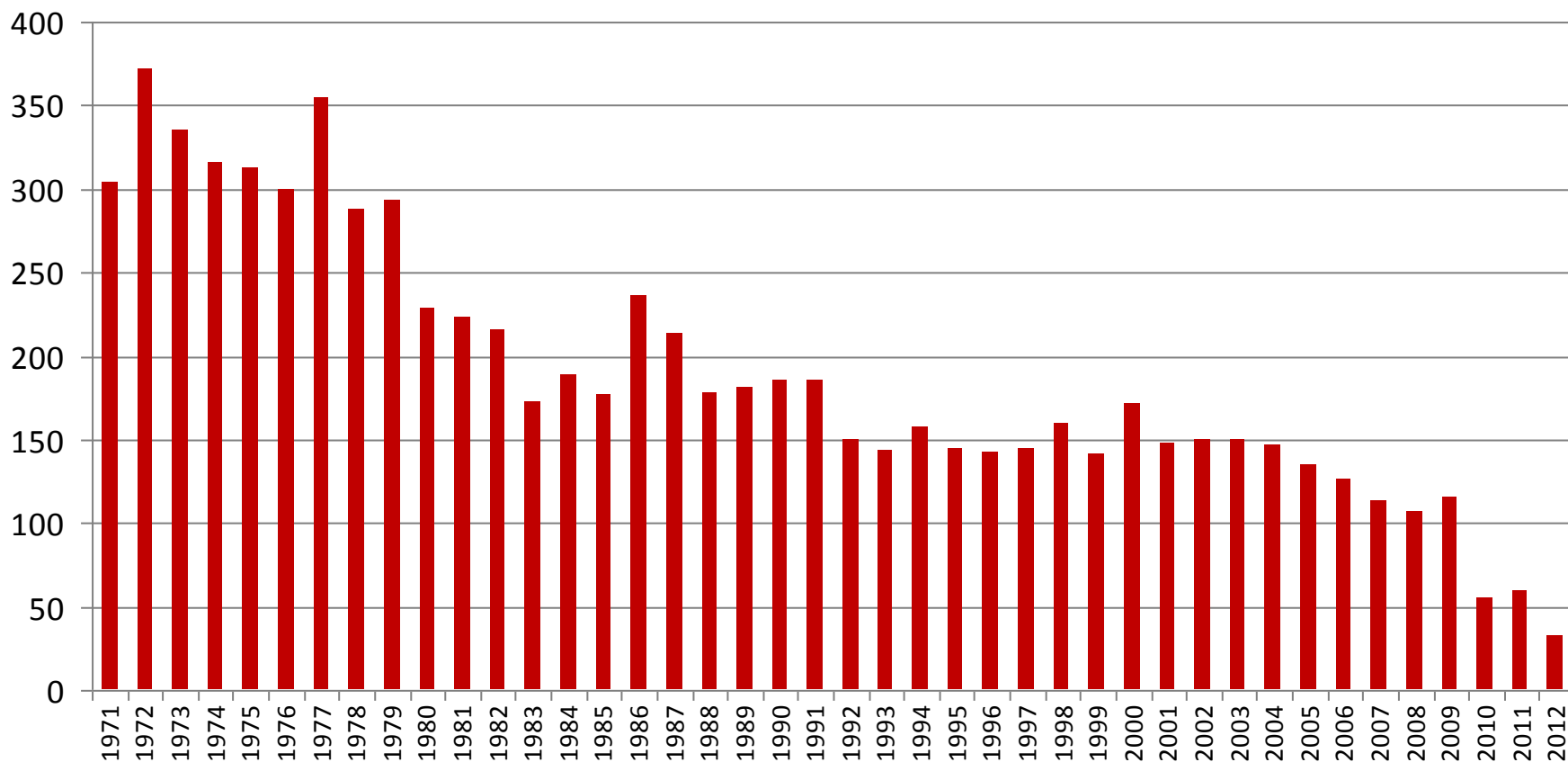
Part 1: General road safety developments and plans

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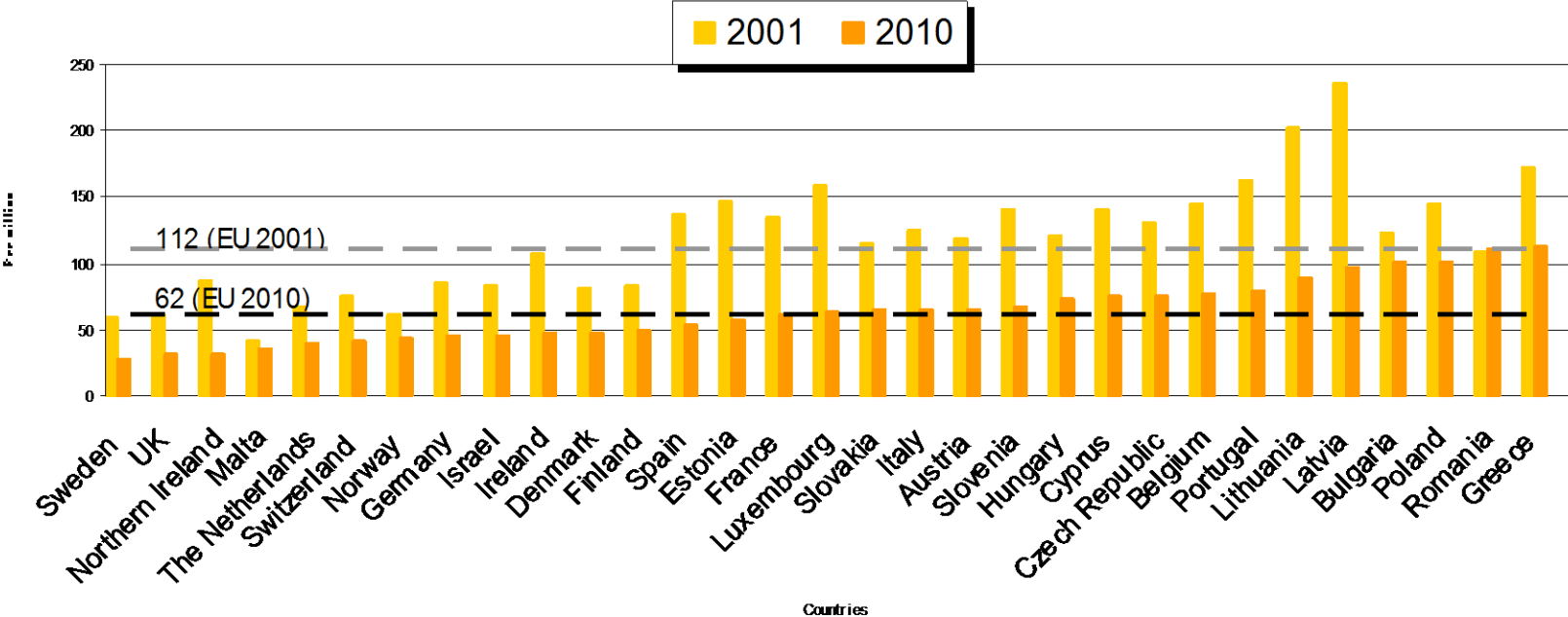


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Fatalities on Northern Ireland's roads

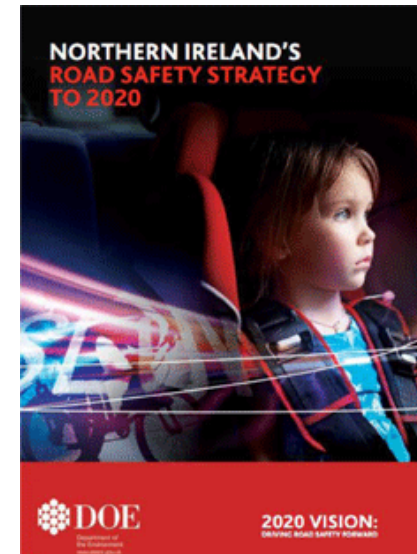


Road deaths per million population

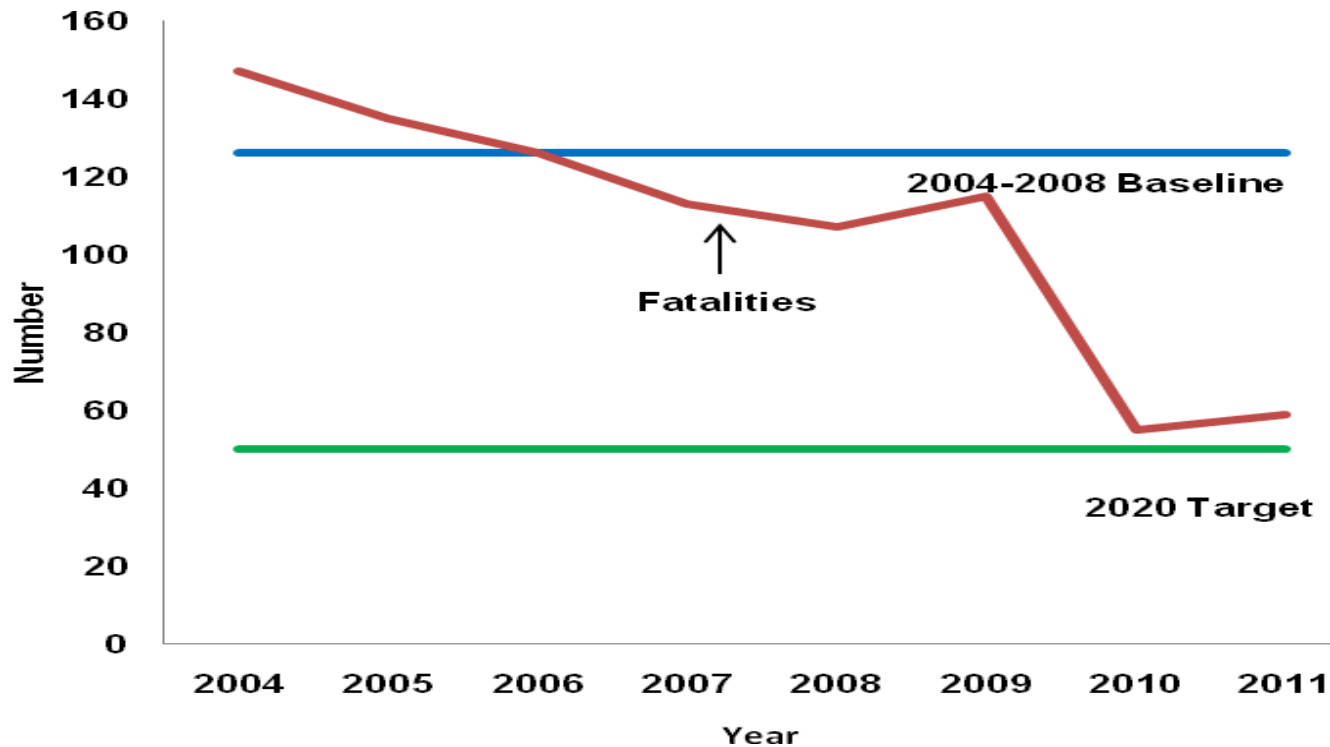


The NI Road Safety Strategy to 2020

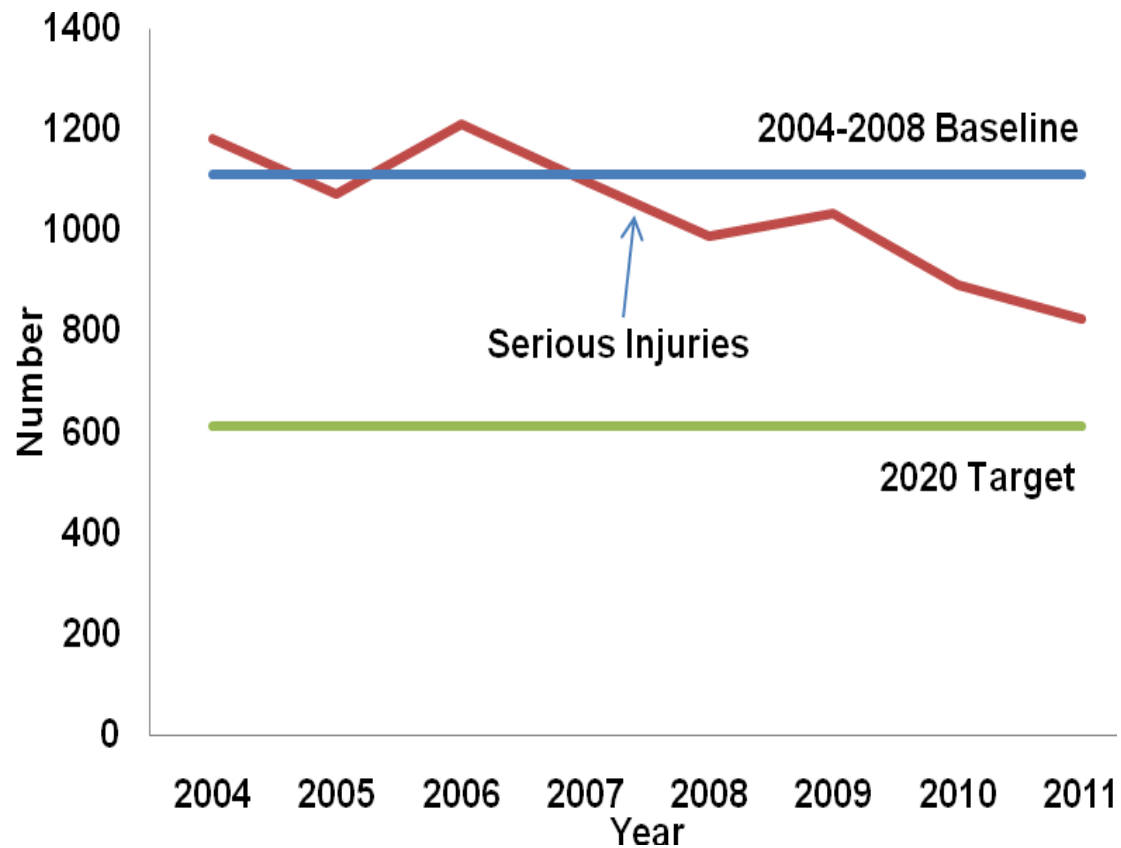
- Vision – ‘to make a journey on Northern Ireland’s roads as safe for all road users as anywhere in the world’
- Published 2011 after NI Executive Committee approval
- 199 action measures



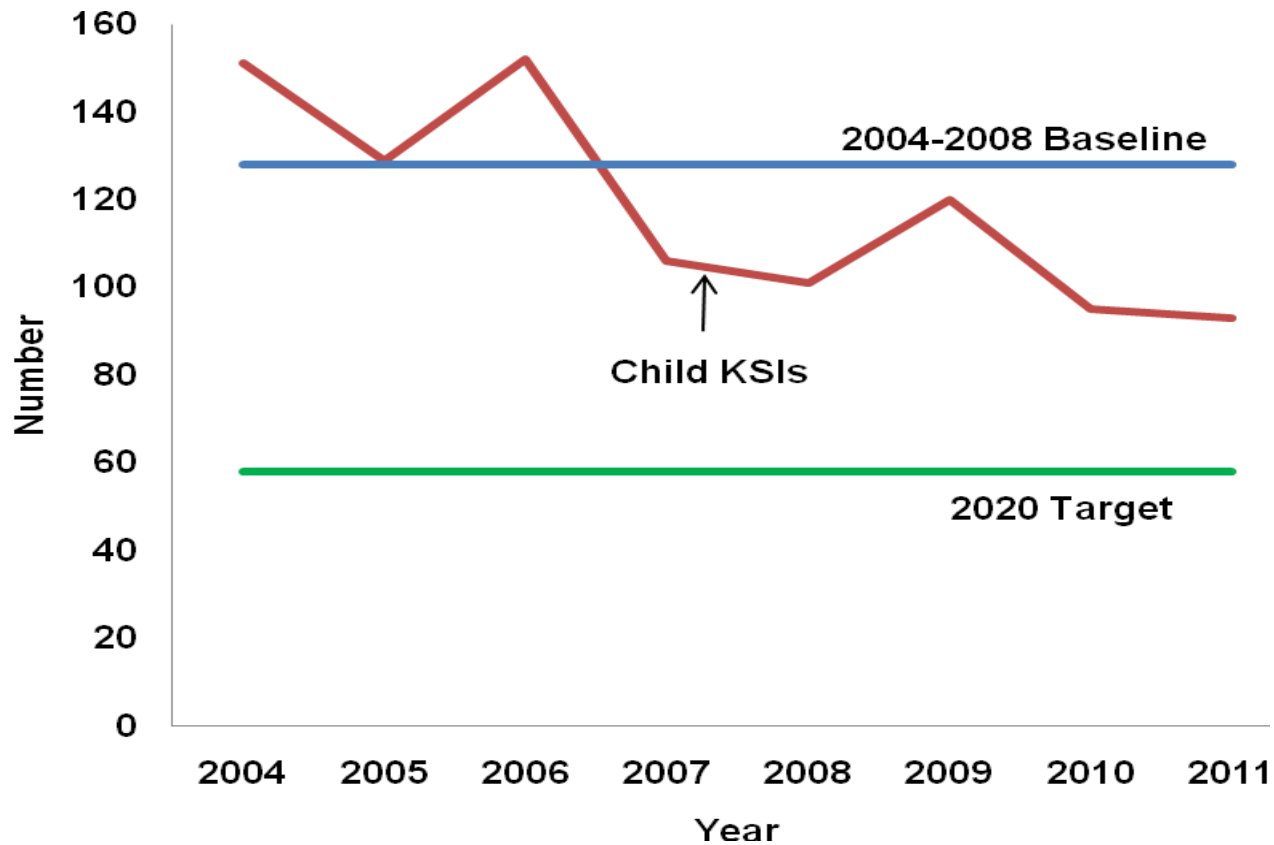
Road fatalities by year



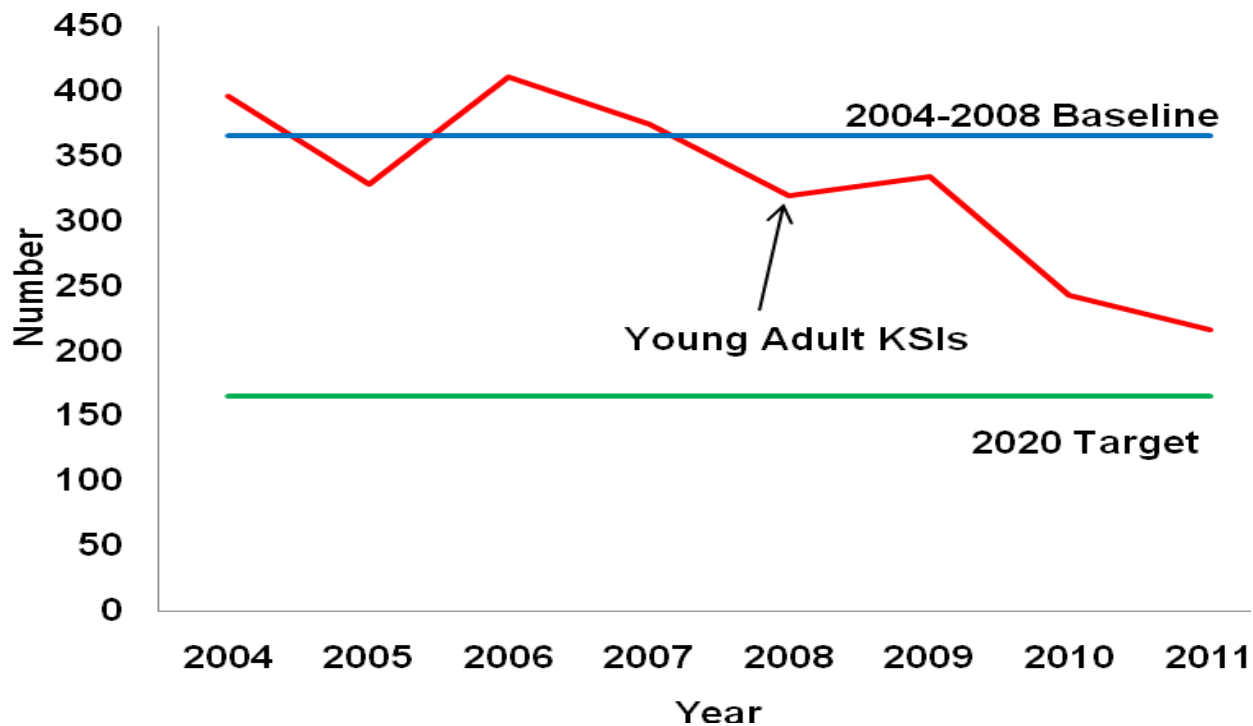
Seriously injured by year



0-15 year old KSIs



16-24 year KSIs



Completed measures

- Introduction of overhauled Goods Vehicle Operator licensing
- Introduction of taxi operator licensing
- Development of a research programme – and publishing research on older road users
- Implementing requirements of 3rd EU Driving Licence Directive
- Changes to the driving test
- Reviewing the Road Safety Educational Service

Progress

- HGV compliance rates increased from <50% to 70%
- Seat belt wearing now above UK average (98% - from 82% in 1994)
- MOT compliance now in line with UK average (96% - from 72% in 2002)

Work in hand (1)

- Graduated Driver Licensing, including
 - 12 month minimum mandatory learning period
 - Provisional licence at 16.5
 - Driving on a Motorway as Learner (under supervision)
 - National speed limits to apply when learning
 - 2 year novice driver period (replaces 12 month R period)
 - Passenger restrictions for 6 months for 24 and under (14-20 year old passengers)

Work in hand (2)

- Mutual Recognition of Penalty Points N-S
- Helmet wearing on quad bikes
- Revamped road safety education service
- Cross-government working eg. Safety centres
- Fundamental reform of taxi regulation
- Learning to Drive agenda
- Review of Cycling Proficiency Scheme

Road Safety Campaigns (1)

- We have developed, with a strong evidence based, a range of campaigns
- A number of these are (deliberately) hard hitting
- Video

Part 2: Drink driving proposals

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The current position

- Limit set at 80 mg/ 100 ml
- Preliminary test at scene and then evidential test
- Mandatory disqualification with mandatory retest
- Courses for Drink Drive Offenders an available sentencing option with 25% reduction of disqualification period

The results – in 2011

- Drink driving the most common single cause of fatal and serious collisions and casualties, resulted in 9 fatalities (15%) and 87 serious injuries (10.5%)
- 42.7% of these casualties were aged 16–24
- Most common single cause of driver KSIs (14.8%)
- 44,521 PBTs carried out, 3,347 positive
- 2,902 convictions, 1,329 referrals to CDDO (46%) and 747 take up (56% of referrals; 26% of convictions)

Consider that . . .

- Estimated that with reduction to 50mg *alone*, at least one life would be saved and 13 serious injuries prevented each year in Northern Ireland
- Up to 3 years later, the reconviction rate of those not completing NI's current drink drive course is 2.3 times higher and up to 8½ years later is 1.6 times higher than those who do

Recent history

- Policy direction by previous DOE Minister to investigate lowering the limit and taking other action to reduce drink drive casualties
- Public consultation in 2009 – key results
 - Public Support
 - Political Support
- Ministerial commitment to legislation, with pre-legislative consultation

Legislative proposals (1)

- Limit of 50 mg/100 ml
- Lower limit of 20 mg/100 ml for professional, novice and learner drivers - recognises higher risk with inexperienced and young drivers and the greater responsibility borne by professional drivers
- Mandatory road side testing
- Move to evidential test at roadside

Legislative proposals (2)

- Removal of 'Statutory Option' - the right in certain circumstances, to ask for a blood or urine sample to replace a breath test sample
- Points and fine (but not automatic ban) for new offences under 80 mg
- Automatic referral of offenders onto an approved drink drive rehabilitation scheme
- Repeat offenders – 2 proposals (graduated scheme, or 3 year ban for all second offenders)

Policy proposals

- Two additional policy issues –
 - (i) extending the role of registered health care professionals; and
 - (ii) Removing the need for preliminary breath testing when roadside evidential equipment is available

Responses to the consultation

- Closed 5 October; currently analysing responses
- General support for new lower BAC limits and graduated penalties
- No clear picture emerging on penalties for repeat offenders – need to explore further
- Legal and ethical issues on extending role of Health Care Professionals – need to explore further
- No major issues on removing preliminary test as pre-requisite to evidential test when roadside evidential equipment is available

The way forward from here

- Road Traffic Amendment Bill No 1
 - Drink driving
 - GDL
 - Crash helmets on quad bikes
- Introduce to Assembly, December 2012
- Royal Assent 2013
- Roll out – likely to be staged and pragmatic, eg:
 1. Mandatory Testing
 2. Lower Limit 50
 3. Lower Limit 20

Road Safety Campaigns (2)

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Summary

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Conclusions

- Northern Ireland has come a long way....
- ...and has further ambitions – vision zero
- Minister sees regulation as often a good thing, as is being radical and bold
- Amended drink driving legislation expected to be made in 2013