

ETSC PIN Talk London 6 February 2013

Concluding remarks

In his concluding remarks Richard Allsop recalled from the presentations and discussion that:

- Fred Wegman and Stephen Hammond had both emphasised the human dimension to risk on the roads. Every casualty is a real person with real family and friends. In human terms, reducing death and injury on the roads is comparable with providing social care for vulnerable children and adults. Some local authorities seem to need to be reminded of this.
- Emphasis had been placed upon the importance of reducing injury, especially lasting injury, alongside reducing deaths. In some countries, the trends in numbers of serious injuries differed strongly from those in the numbers of deaths, and this had led Fred Wegman to suggest that the UK should no longer use KSI as an indicator. But in the UK the medium to long term trends in deaths and KSI had been very similar. It would therefore be premature to abandon KSI at least until the trend in lasting injury within the serious injury category had been established and shown to differ substantially from that in deaths.
- One role of top level leadership in road safety had been identified as being to win commitment from the whole range of road safety stakeholders and to make it attractive for them to work together.
- Claes Tingvall had challenged us to think about the relationship between safety culture and cost-benefit analysis: In the UK context this might not be seen in quite the same way as it is seen in Vision Zero, but it does call for continual consideration.
- Road safety policy and practice had been recognised as needing continually to adapt to changes in society, especially just now in relation to safe provision for active travel and the importance of sustainability.
- Stephen Hammond had given assurance that government was there to help in delivering road safety. He had emphasised the balanced approach to enforcement of traffic law, including driver improvement, and referred to shared responsibility among those using the roads in different ways, but without mention of shared responsibility between system providers and users of the system. He had referred to things that government could do within the context of localism to make it easier for local authorities to do the right things. The new speed limit guidance was an example of this. He had recognised the challenge to reduce the risks to the more vulnerable groups of road users.
- The importance of promoting adoption of ISO 39001 had been mentioned – perhaps starting with public commitment by some prominent organisations, public as well as private.
- Several speakers had advocated the Safe System Approach. Policy and practice in the UK had evolved strongly towards this over much of the last 30 years but this seemed to have been lost sight of since 2010. The challenge now was to move back explicitly to it, especially in terms of management that leads to implementation.
- The value of synergy between road safety and public health in policy, funding and information systems needed to be recognised and acted upon.
- Human nature could not be changed, but there was scope for influencing the mindset of drivers through improved novice driver training for continuing lifelong learning, and opportunities for learning throughout the driving lifetime.