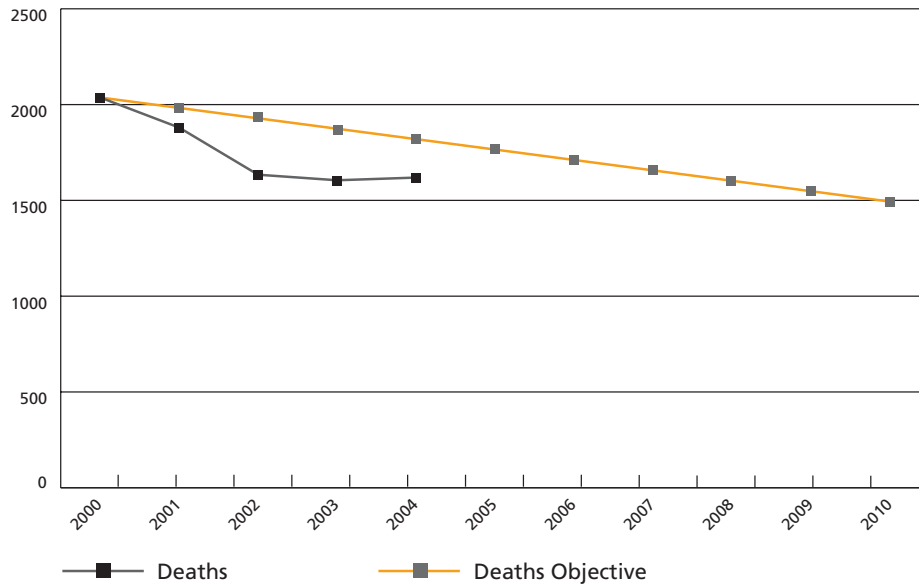


6.10 GREECE




General Road Safety: The original target as set out in the first Strategic Plan for Road Safety 2001-2005 was a 20% reduction in traffic deaths by 2005 and 40% by 2015 (baseline is the year 2000). By 2004, a reduction of nearly 25% was achieved. A new Strategic Road Safety Plan for 2006-2010 will include a target of 50% reduction by 2010. An Inter-ministerial Committee has been set up to coordinate road safety actions. It is chaired by the Minister of Public Order and includes Deputy Ministers from the Ministry for Environment, Physical planning and Public Works, Ministry of Transport and Communications, Ministry for Public Health. The Ministry of Public Order, is responsible for the traffic police. Each region has its own police department and each municipality also has its own local police department. The traffic police started intensified enforcement in May 1998, and checks have been increasing ever since, especially in the areas of drink driving and speeding. The main reasons for the impressive decrease in traffic deaths are the increase in police enforcement, new road infrastructure, increase in traffic density due to increasing vehicle ownership and other measures such as improved training and examining. Enforcement measures form part of the National Road Safety Plan.

Speed: Greece's national police employs mobile speed guns, in-car radars and speed guns with tripods. Fixed cameras are also being introduced at a local police level. New fixed speed camera sites have been introduced along the Athens-Thessaloniki stretch of 500km motorway. This will be extended along the rest of the inter-urban network in 2006.

Alcohol: In 2002, a new system of sanctions was introduced for drink driving which included a graded approach to the level of driving over the BAC. The maximum BAC limit is now 0,5 mg/ml with 0,2 mg/ml for professional and young drivers. The traffic police started intensified enforcement in May 1998 and random checks especially on alcohol have been increased ever since.

Seat belts: The application of the penalty points system was extended to seat-belt offences as of August 2003. Transposition of the new Directive has extended obligatory seat belt wearing to buses. Seat belt checks are undertaken in combination with other checks on all roads at all times. Enforcement is concentrated at city borders and on inter-urban networks. Enforcement activities linked to seat belt wearing campaigns only occur infrequently.



Follow up of offences: In the case of automated speed enforcement, the owner is primarily responsible. If the owner contests the charge then the offence is taken to court. Sanctions are followed up according to the offence committed. Tickets reported include the social security number of the offender, in order to oblige them to pay it whenever a future transaction with the public is needed.

Information: Campaigns are very scarce with one big national campaign organized every two years. The last nation-wide campaign was run in 2002 entitled “How are you driving?”. A specific localised campaign on drink driving was also run in the Thessaloniki area in 2003/2004 as part of the EU wide “Bob” designated driver campaign. Increased checks on speed and drink driving linked to press work are also undertaken before, during and after the six main national Greek holidays. The Ministry of Public Order, Ministry of Transport and sometimes private bodies such as insurers or private companies are responsible for campaigns. The police send monthly figures on speeding offences, alcohol checks and offences to the press.

Enforcement activities linked to seat belt wearing campaigns only occur infrequently and little seat belt wearing data are collected. That which exists suggests worryingly low wearing rates. Seat belt wearing offences have dropped between 2003 and 2004. Drink driving tests have continued at a high level and offences have dropped slightly. Approximately 45% of all deaths are reported as speed related and 2.4 million drivers were charged with speeding in 2003.

Recommendations:

- Implement the plan for extensive new fixed camera network along high risk stretches of inter-urban roads.
- Conduct regular “blitz” seat belt enforcement checks.
- Collect and analyse seat belt wearing rates and speed compliance data to plan enforcement activities.
- Organise more frequently nationwide campaigns on speed, drink driving and seat belt wearing linked to enforcement.
- Introduce measures including enforcement related to “aggressive driving”.
- Introduce a penalty point system.