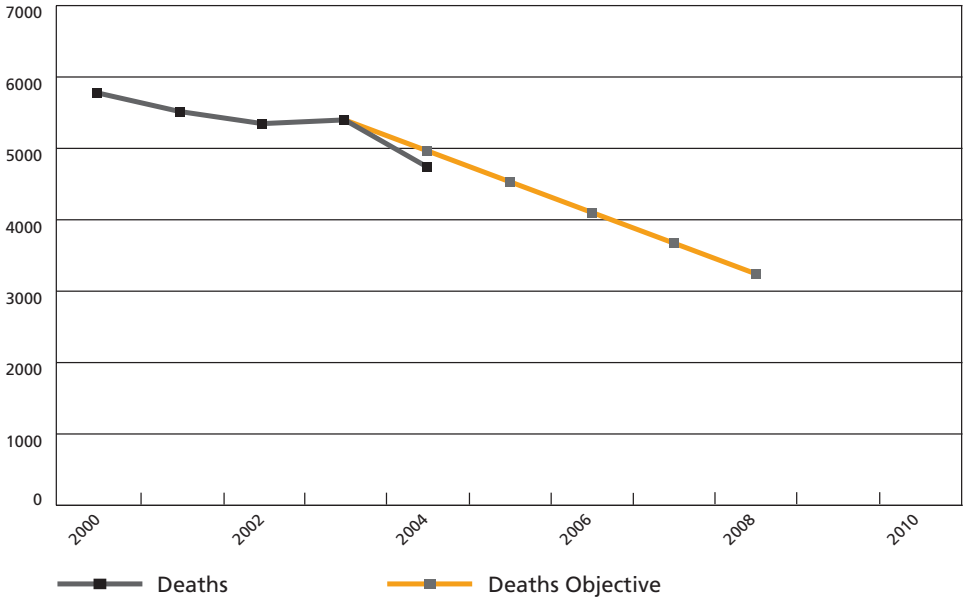
6.23 SPAIN



General Road Safety: Spain fatality rate has been continuing to drop over the past years especially between 2003 and 2004. Spain's death rate however is still above the EU average at 110 per million. The Ministry of Transport and the Ministry of the Interior are responsible for elaborating legislation on road traffic and safety. An annual Traffic Safety Plan is prepared by the Traffic Safety Inter-ministerial Commission. The National Road Safety Observatory was set up in June 2004. Its aim is to research road safety and directly apply the results obtained to road safety. Catalonia and the Basque country assumed full autonomous powers on traffic safety including managing their own police agencies on traffic law enforcement.

A Road Safety Strategic Plan has been prepared for the period 2005-2008. This strategy set a clear aim to reduce deaths by 40% (based on the 2003 baseline) by 2008. The plan includes specific actions relating to deterrence and enforcement. This includes introducing a penalty point licence system and increasing police surveillance.

Traffic law enforcement is carried out by Spain's different police bodies. This includes the local police, who are in charge of law enforcement in urban areas. The "Guardia Civil", who are in change of law enforcement on the national road network and on minor roads outside urban areas. the Basque police and the Catalonia police who are in charge of law enforcement in interurban roads into the areas of the Basque Country and Catalonia. The Traffic General Directorate manages and exploits traffic control centres and co-ordinates overall traffic management of the "Guardia Civil".

Speed: Mobile and fixed cameras are used to enforce speed limits in Spain. There are 300 mobile and 88 fixed cameras currently operating in Spain. Increasing this number to 800 (500 fixed plus the existing mobile cameras) is planned for 2006 and the target is to reach 1,000 speed cameras by 2007.

Alcohol: Both random and evidential tests are carried out to enforce the legal BAC limit of 0.5 mg/l and 0.3 mg/l for professional and novice drivers.

Seat belts: Spain has reinforced its law on seat belt use, introducing an obligation for children of three years and under to use an approved restraint system. The new rule entered into force on 24 July 2004. Blitz actions are carried out as part of campaigns.

Follow-up of offences: In Spain, Parliament approved at the end of April 2005 a new penalty point scheme, which is expected to start operating by the end of 2006. Drivers will receive an initial credit of 12 points and lose between 2 and 6 points for different types of traffic offences. They can recover up to 4 points by attending a 15-hour risk awareness course. To recover a driving license that has been withdrawn, offenders have to undergo a 30-hour risk awareness training. They can re-apply for a new license only after six months. Professional drivers will be able to accelerate the timing for participating in the course but penalty points will be the same as for other drivers. Drivers who do not violate any traffic rules for at least two years will gain up to six points extra.

A change in legislation meant that since 2003 police no longer need to actively stop speeding drivers and a fully automated enforcement has been introduced. The right to appeal against offences causes serious delays.

Information: Bi-annual nationwide campaigns are run in the media on seat belt use, speeding and drink driving. These are run with the Traffic General Directorate, the police, local and regional safety councils. Campaigns are linked to increased checks. Spain is also participating in both the BOB and Euchires campaigns. Information about speed cameras is at the roadside and also exists on the Internet. However, the exact position is not given.

In conclusion, speed enforcement has increased over recent years as have offences which reached 647,000 in 2004. Drink driving enforcement is also increasing: almost 2 million tests were carried out in 2003 (nearly 9% of the total drivers) followed by 2.2 million in 2004. The number of drivers involved in fatal collisions who were over the 0.5 BAC mg/ml limit remained at around 30%. Seat belt enforcement led to a slight drop in those fined for not being belted in 2004 to 155,774. Levels in the front are over 80% whilst back seat belt wearing levels are low at 40% according to latest available data from 2003.

Recommendations:

- Develop the automatic speed enforcement network as planned.
- Increase seat belt checks and continue separate blitz checks.
- Speed up the follow up of offences.