



THE DANISH ROAD SAFETY COUNCIL



## DENMARK LAUNCHES SAFETY CAMERA INITIATIVE TO COMBAT SPEEDING

*3 September 2008, Copenhagen* – While Denmark continues to be amongst the safer EU countries, its recent lack of progress has cast serious doubt over its ability to reach the 2010 EU target on time. The number of road deaths decreased here by as little as 6% in 2001-2007, and last year the country has seen a staggering increase of 33% in road deaths. 2008 seems no better, according to the country's Minister of Justice. Speaking today at the Road Safety PIN<sup>(1)</sup> Talk in Copenhagen, organised by the European Transport Safety Council (ETSC)<sup>(2)</sup> and the Danish Road Safety Council<sup>(3)</sup>, she unveiled a new camera control initiative which will eventually expand to the whole country's road network.

The 2007 setback, the worst result among all 27 EU Member States, has nearly relegated Denmark to the underperformer league. While in 2006 the number of road deaths per million population here was 56, in 2007 it notched up 75. This is still lower than the 2007 EU average of 86, but this trend needs to be reversed <sup>(4)</sup>.

The 6% decrease in road deaths in 2001-2007 is almost seven times less that what is needed to reach the EU target of halving the number of road deaths by 2010. At this disappointingly low rate Denmark will see its 2001 number of road deaths halved by as late as 2019, with an almost 10-year delay. This translates in thousands more of lives lost and immeasurable suffering caused <sup>(4)</sup>.

Speed remains a key road killer in Europe, and the introduction of a higher 130 km/h speed limit on half of the Danish motorway network in 2004 was feared by many to lead to increased numbers of deaths and injuries. The effect of the new speed limit has now been analyzed and results were made public at the PIN Talk by Lars Klit Reiff from the Danish Road Directorate.

Speaking at the event, Mrs. Lene Espersen, Denmark's Minister of Justice said: *"The number of road deaths in Denmark is at the moment on the same high level as in 2007. That is not acceptable and we have therefore decided to launch an experiment with fixed safety cameras on selected roads to deter speeding. We hope to see a positive result that can give grounds for the establishment of a permanent and nationwide safety camera network. The Danish Road Safety Commission has a goal for 2012, which is maximum 200 road deaths per year, and this is one of many steps toward that goal."*

Denmark's efforts in decreasing mean speed have been lagging behind those of France, Switzerland and Belgium, the European front-runners. The impressive French experience in combatting speed and reducing road deaths was presented by Jean Chapelon of the French Road Safety Observatory.

Antonio Avenoso, Executive Director of the European Transport Safety Council (ETSC) said: *"Speed is a key policy area for boosting improvements in road safety and we welcome today's news that Denmark will introduce fixed safety cameras. The French experience presented today in the course of the discussion is exemplary for speed reduction effectiveness in terms of fatal accidents' reductions and significant improvements in the overall level of safety in the country. Denmark should do its best to get back on the positive trend after the bruising experience in 2007 and to speed up the pace of road deaths reductions"*.

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**Notes to Editors:**

(1) **The Road Safety Performance Index (PIN)** Programme was launched in June 2006 to compare country road safety performances. It currently includes 30 countries. [http://www.etsc.be/PIN\\_new2.php](http://www.etsc.be/PIN_new2.php)

(2) **The European Transport Safety Council (ETSC)** is a Brussels-based independent non-profit making organisation dedicated to the reduction of the number and severity of transport crashes in Europe. The ETSC seeks to identify and promote research-based measures with a high safety potential. It brings together 40 national and international organisations concerned with transport safety from across Europe. [www.etsc.be](http://www.etsc.be)

(3) **The Danish Road Safety Council**, founded in 1935, is an association of authorities and national organisations in Denmark currently comprising 45 members. The Council works to increase public road safety through information campaigns and public education.

(4) ETSC 2<sup>nd</sup> Road Safety PIN Annual Report 2008, [www.etsc.be/PIN-publications.php](http://www.etsc.be/PIN-publications.php)

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