

Road Safety

Despite improvements in road safety over the past decade, incidents involving transportation are still the number one cause of unintentional injury related deaths in the province.¹ Road conditions, weather, speed, vehicle factors, and use of safety devices all influence whether a crash with resulting injuries will happen.² A driver's age, health and whether they are distracted, impaired, or fatigued are also important. Strategies for the prevention of transportation injuries are not simple, and require input from many stakeholders with varied backgrounds.

Feature: The Capital Regional District (CRD) Traffic Safety Commission (TSC)

The Program

The Capital Regional District Traffic Safety Commission (TSC) was created in 1985 and continues to be unique in British Columbia as an ongoing community collaborative to enhance road safety. The Commission's members are stakeholders from multiple sectors in Greater Victoria and its goal is to "prevent injuries, save lives and contribute positively to a safer traffic environment". The TSC receives annual core funding from the Capital Regional District and undertakes projects that are results-focused, evidence-based, and co-funded on a partnership basis. The TSC was recognized as a valuable road safety partnership by the BC Office of the Superintendent of Motor Vehicles (now RoadSafetyBC).

Program Delivery & Materials

Members of the CRD meet on a monthly basis and work to create results-oriented, community-wide approaches to traffic safety through enforcement, education, and prevention.

The following are a few examples of CRD TSC initiatives:

Older & Wiser Driver: In 2003, the TSC co-developed a program with the University of Victoria's Centre on Aging, titled: "The Older & Wiser Driver: A Self-Assessment Program." Older drivers attended driving self-assessment education sessions, which were arranged in collaboration with agencies serving seniors on the Saanich Peninsula. Senior drivers were asked what would make them safer drivers, and were given information packages including a 74 minute audio CD



Photo: Syda Productions/Shutterstock

The risk of a
collision
or near collision is
**2.5 times
greater**
for an experienced
driver when using a cell phone³



produced by the Commission with input from the RCMP and municipal police forces, ICBC, and the Centre on Aging.

Summer Malahat Safety Project: The Malahat Drive is a 25 kilometre section of Highway #1 that runs along the west side of Saanich Inlet, and is the only major paved connection between the CRD and the rest of Vancouver Island. The winding, steep route has gained a reputation for an increased risk of crashes, fatalities and collision-related road closures. During the summer of 2011, the CRD Integrated Road Safety Unit, a partner in the CRD TSC, undertook a summer safety project on the Malahat which included a notable increase in police presence, notice signs, and increased enforcement of violations, including speeding.

“The Traffic Safety Commission brings regional partners together to reduce traffic fatalities, injuries and crashes in Greater Victoria.”

- Office of the Superintendent of Motor Vehicles

Awareness and Education Campaigns: Used to raise general road safety awareness among targeted groups.

- » **Be Seen and Not Hurt:** Released in the fall of 2010 and aimed at vulnerable road users—pedestrians and cyclists, this campaign includes posters and other promotional materials reminding individuals to wear reflective materials when they are out cycling, walking after dark or out in poor weather.
- » **Stupid Distractions Campaign:** Targeted to drivers of all ages, this campaign is comprised of messages delivered on vinyl displays on the side of a variety of vehicles. Partners included the health authority, municipalities, University of Victoria and BC Transit.

Partnerships

Members of the TSC include RoadSafetyBC, Police and RCMP from area detachments, members of the Integrated Road Safety Unit, School Districts, the media, the University of Victoria, ICBC, Regional District elected official, traffic planners, BCAA Community Impact, Public Health, Medical Health Officer, cycling liaison, ambulance, and the Coroner’s Office.

Evaluation

Older & Wiser Driver: Participants reported that the information provided in the sessions could be useful in helping older adults talk about driving concerns with their families. Many participants reported that as a result of attending the education session they planned to make changes to their driving behaviours.

The three
leading causes
of motor vehicle fatalities are²



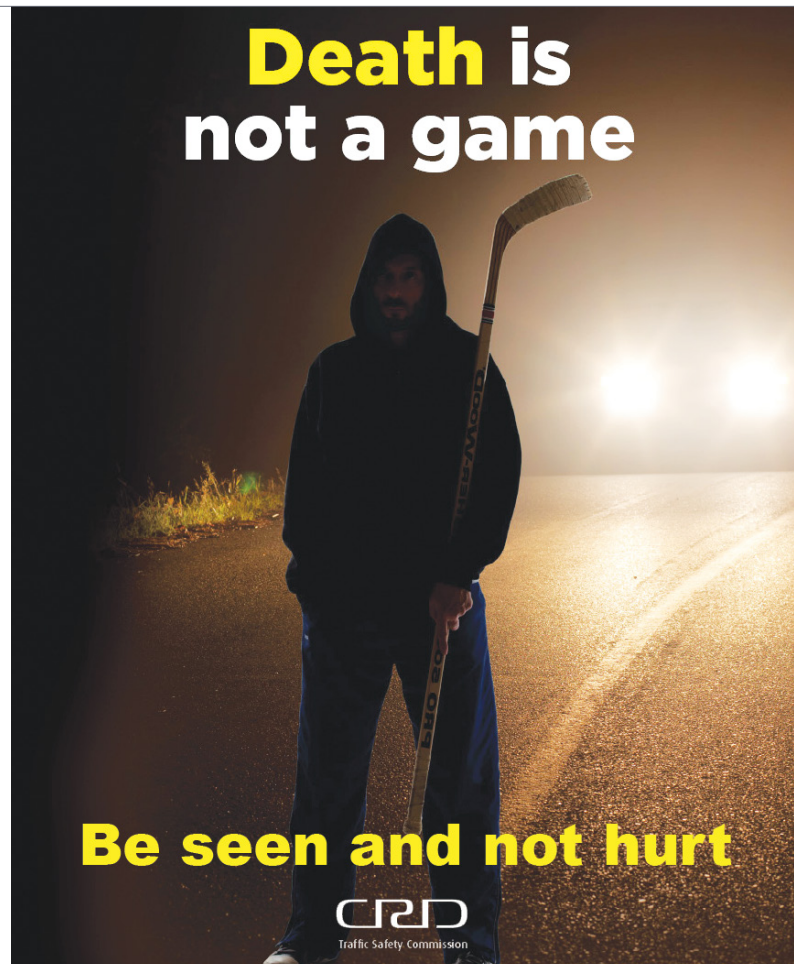
Speed
Related
33%



Distracted
Driving
28%



Impaired
Driving
27%



Resources

- » RoadSafetyBC [Link →]
- » www.icbc.com
- » Canada’s Road Safety Strategy 2015 [Link →]



Would you like more information on this case study?
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Summer Malahat Safety Project: Excessive speeding was reduced by 30% and no fatal crashes occurred during this 2011 summer safety initiative.⁴

Awareness and Education Campaigns: Evaluation of the vinyl displays on vehicles with road safety messaging found this to be an effective means of raising awareness among vehicle occupants and vulnerable road users. These displays have been used extensively by the TSC for numerous campaigns.

References

1. British Columbia Vital Statistics Agency, Ministry of Health, 2013.
2. Business Information Warehouse – Traffic Accident System North Vancouver, BC: Insurance Corporation of British Columbia; 2015.
3. Klauer SG, Guo F, Simons-Morton BG, Ouimet MC, Lee SE, Dingus TA. (2014). Distracted driving and risk of road crashes among novice and experienced drivers. *New Engl J Med.* 2014;370(1): 54–59.
4. British Columbia. Vancouver Island Health Authority Motor Vehicle Collision Report 2012: Health Impacts of Traffic Mishaps and Opportunities for Road Safety. Victoria, BC: Vancouver Island Health Authority & Office of the Chief Medical Health Officer, 2012. Available from: <http://www.viha.ca/NR/rdonlyres/BBE6759F-01C3-4F73-816E-E9991214AEB3/0/VIHAMVCRreport2012.pdf>