

Road Safety West of Scotland looks ahead with 2020 vision

Overall road casualty figures across the West of Scotland area have been falling steadily over the past decade, but encouraging statistics should leave no room for complacency with a lot of hard work ahead to meet challenging new targets set by the Scottish Government for 2020.

This is the message from Road Safety West of Scotland's incoming Chair, Bailie Gerald Leonard, currently serving as Executive Chairman of Glasgow City Council's Road Safety Working Group: "Local Authority members are naturally immensely proud of all that has been achieved over recent years. All 10-year targets set by the UK Government in 2000 for 2010 have not only been met but exceeded.

"In many ways, however, all we have achieved together over the past decade has made us victims of our own success and has now given us an even steeper hill to climb if we are to reduce casualties further – especially in respect of the unacceptable level of fatalities – in line with the milestone decreases now set for 2015 and the tough final targets which must be attained by 2020."

About Road Safety West of Scotland

Road Safety West of Scotland is made up of representatives from all 12 Local Authorities (Argyll & Bute, East Ayrshire, North Ayrshire, South Ayrshire, East Dunbartonshire, West Dunbartonshire, Glasgow City, Inverclyde, North Lanarkshire, South Lanarkshire, East Renfrewshire and Renfrewshire) which embraces a diverse mix of urban and rural areas comprising over 2 million residents, about two-fifths of the entire population of Scotland. The Group also includes representatives from Strathclyde Police, Strathclyde Safety Camera Partnership and Strathclyde Fire and Rescue.

The main activity of the Group centres around raising public awareness about key road safety issues through educational and training programmes, event organisation both locally and regionally, extensive PR activity and high profile TV, radio and print advertising campaigns. Over the past year, Road Safety West of Scotland has tackled such subjects as safer winter driving, the disproportionately high casualty rates among young drivers and their passengers, driving appropriately in residential areas and the hidden dangers of driving on country roads.



The facts

The figures that tell the real story of road casualty reduction in the West of Scotland area over the past 10 years speak for themselves.

UK Government national targets for 2010 set in March 2000 were based on statistical averages for 1994-1998 and aimed to achieve the following:

- A 40% reduction in the number of killed or seriously injured (KSIs)
- A 50% reduction in child KSIs
- A 10% reduction in those slightly injured*

*rate per 100 million vehicle kilometres travelled

The fact is that by the end of 2010, Road Safety West of Scotland had significantly surpassed all these targets with figures that few, if indeed any, other comparably sized regions across the UK could match.

- 63% reduction in overall KSIs – exceeded national target by 23%
- 78.4% reduction in child KSIs – exceeded national target by 28.4%
- 50.1% reduction in slight injuries* – exceeded national target by 40.1%

*based on 2009 million vehicle kilometres rate

(Source: Strathclyde Police)

The future

Whatever may have been achieved in the past, the disturbing fact remains that road traffic collisions are one of the West of Scotland's biggest killers. Comparative records compiled by Strathclyde Police clearly show that fatal road traffic casualties persistently exceed violent deaths attributed to murder or culpable homicide, year on year – sometimes, by as much as 50% or more.

This clearly puts into perspective the immense task faced by the Group and its partners in the years ahead. Bailie Gerald Leonard again: "Although fatality rates are falling, a single death on our roads will always be one too many. What we have achieved over the past 10 years can only be seen as proof in performance of the benefits of working closely with like minded organisations whose policies and commitment reflect our own dedication to making West of Scotland's roads a much safer place for all.

"As an inspiring incentive, 2011 marks the start of the World Health Organisation's Decade of Action for Road Safety which aims to save 5 million lives worldwide over the coming decade – an ambitious aim which Road Safety West of Scotland and its partners wholeheartedly endorse and support with a shared determination to dramatically cut avoidable road fatalities and injuries, right here at home in the West of Scotland region."

For more information on the work of the Road Safety West of Scotland, please visit www.roadsafetywestofscotland.com