

Technical Committee C2 – Safer Road Operations
Working Group C2.1 - Comparison of national road safety policies and plans

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Executive Summary:

Technical Committee C2 held its final meeting during the XXIV World Road Congress in Mexico City, 26-30 September 2011.

Background:

Technical Committee C2 comprises of three work groups:-

TC C2.1 – Comparison of national road safety policies and plans.

TC C2.2 – Best practices in road safety campaigns by public administrations.

TC C2.3 – Cost effectiveness of safety measures and allocation of resources.

TC C2 is also tasked with updating components of the World Road Association's Road Safety Manual.

Meeting Outputs:

Discussion at the meeting led to the finalisation of the reports of each work group. Some translation of the reports into French and Spanish has commenced. However, the PIARC Secretariat has been requested to assist with the translation task.

XXIV World Road Congress:

The theme for the Congress was "Roads for a better life: mobility, sustainability and development" The Congress was opened by the President of Mexico, Felipe Calderon Hinojosa. Over 3,000 people attended the Congress.

TC C2 conducted a half day forum at the Congress at which it presented a summary of its work and findings. The forum was very well attended.

A panel session was included in the forum to enable interaction between congress participants and some members of TC C2. There was much discussion and some queries about the Safe System. There was also much interest in the Technical Committee's work with developing nations and discussion centred on how PIARC intends to further assist developing nations as part of the UN Decade of Action.

Conclusions made from the TC C2 forum, include:-

- Developing nations did not adequately engage in the study of national road safety policies and plans. The presentation of surveys in English only may have been a barrier. In future, prepare surveys in various languages.

- The proposal to prepare a new WRA Road Safety Manual was outlined. Congress participants look forward to the new manual and expect that it will help guide road safety improvement in developing nations.
- Many of the issues discussed at the forum centred around the need for PIARC to be of more relevance to developing nations. It is recommended that PIARC explores new ways of arranging technical committee work to make it easier for developing nations to participate. A regional approach may be a way of achieving this. Sub-committees of the main Technical Committee could be established in regions so that meetings can be better attended. A representative of each Sub-committee attends the main Technical Committee meeting on a yearly basis to ensure there is a strong link in the work of the committees. Capacity building in road safety in developing nations is critical and this is where organisations like PIARC can make significant impacts.

World Road Association Safety Manual:

A separate taskforce has been established to develop a new road safety manual. The new manual will be a comprehensive international reference manual that reflects the current state of knowledge. The new manual will consider different types of contexts (urban and rural roads, arterial and local roads), the various road users, and be relevant to countries at different stages of development of their road network. Special consideration will be given to the road safety needs and high impact mechanisms for middle and low income countries. For developed countries with well established road safety strategies and action plans, the new manual could be used to benchmark their country against international standards, guidelines and practices.

Development of a new road safety manual is regarded by the PIARC Executive as a high profile project that will make a significant contribution to the UN Decade of Action.

Dissemination:

The final version of the TC C2.1 report has been forwarded to the Austroads Safety Taskforce Chair. When the report is translated into French and Spanish it will be uploaded into the World Road Association website.

Conclusions:

Working in TC 2, particularly as a Work Group Leader, has provided me with valuable networks and the opportunity to better understand the work being done in road safety around the world. TC C2 conducted road safety seminars in developing nations – Malaysia, Mexico, South Africa, Costa Rica and Argentina. These seminars were much appreciated by the host nations. The feedback received so far on our report has been very favourable.

It has been a valuable experience for me and an opportunity to market VicRoads, Austroads, Victoria and Australia.