

Long list of Canadian road safety efforts support Vision 2001

Raising awareness, improving collaboration, toughening enforcement and improving data collection across this great land

Last week, you may recall that I started talking about my recent experience at Transport Canada's *Vision 2001* conference.

Officially launched in 1996, *Vision 2001* is a partnership between all levels of government and public and private stakeholders.

It has four main initiatives in its scope:

1. raise public awareness of road safety issues
2. improve communication, cooperation and collaboration among road safety agencies
3. toughen enforcement measures
4. improve national road safety data quality and collection

The recent improvements in traffic safety I spoke about last week have been achieved thanks to number of initiatives undertaken to support the above four priorities.

Here's a quick overview of the nation's efforts to date. Keep in mind,



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the initiatives I'm going to talk about have come about because of *Vision 2001*, and don't include the many other road safety initiatives occurring outside of *Vision 2001*.

National efforts

Supporting the "raising awareness" priority is Operation Impact, an annual event led by the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police. Front-line officers from more than 2,000 police service locations across Canada conduct one-day blitzes, informing motorists of the benefits of proper seatbelt and child restraint use, and of the dangers of drinking and driving. MPI and Manitoba police forces have indirectly supported this initiative by holding our own targeted enforcement campaigns,

and through free car seat checks.

Graduated licensing also falls under the "raising awareness" umbrella. Graduated licensing, currently under review in Manitoba, has been adopted in many other provinces and territories. The system, in its many variations, is designed to allow novice drivers to acquire their driving skills gradually, in low-risk driving situations.

Vision 2001 has also sponsored many campaigns promoting the proper use of child restraints, school bus safety, designated community safety zones and winter driving skills.

Moving on to point #2, *Vision 2001* has concentrated on creating or enhancing nationally representative task forces, committees and project groups to address emerging or ongoing road safety issues. I, for example, am Manitoba's representative on a national subcommittee addressing the needs and safety issues of older drivers.

In addition, several police and government agencies are developing a

pilot project mandated to provide a model for police agencies, teaching them how to better match their resources against high-risk user behaviours.

Strengthen safety standards

And lastly, *Vision 2001* has focused on increasing cooperation among all truck and bus stakeholders to strengthen the safety standards in the National Safety Code, and improve the safety performance of commercial vehicle transportation.

Canadian officials have responded to #3, toughened enforcement measures, by enhancing government initiatives, police enforcement and fines, and implementing harsher penalties for repeat offenders to deter drinking and driving. You may recall that Manitoba has led the way by implementing some of the toughest drinking and driving laws in the country.

Lastly, there is the less "public" but extremely important data collection component. Finally, road safety

professionals like myself have access to better national traffic collision data, and for the first time, exposure (vehicle kilometrage) data that allows us to more readily identify problem areas, and come up with solutions faster than ever before.

They've also started to develop a national computer- and communications-based system called the System for Technological Applications in Road Safety, or STARS (you know it's got to be good when it has a cool acronym like that) which automates traffic collision and related administrative functions.

I'll explain a bit more about what vehicle kilometrage, or exposure data, is next week.

Until then, be **RoadWise**.

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