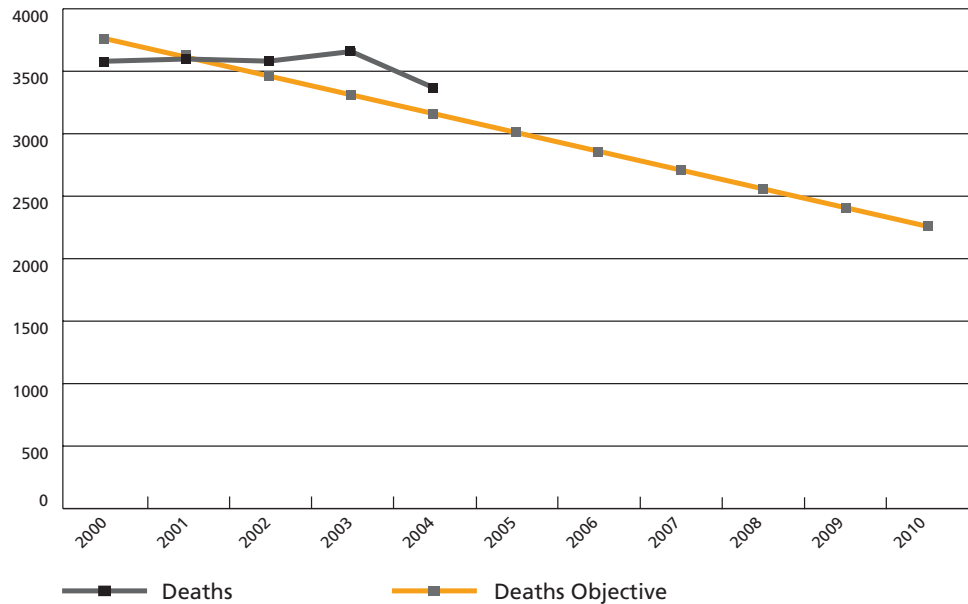


6.25 UK



General Road Safety: The UK's road deaths continue their downward trend giving one of the lowest EU average number of deaths per million: 56 in 2004. Great Britain's national road safety strategy, *'Tomorrow's Roads - Safer for Everyone'* (2000) set out a new framework for delivering further improvements in road safety over the next decade. A new *'Roads Policing Strategy'* (2005) was drawn up by the Department for Transport, Home Office and the Association of Chief Police Officers. The strategy identifies specific enforcement actions including *'a highly visible police presence on the roads'*.

Northern Ireland and Scotland each have their own Road Safety Strategies and Roads Policing Strategies and different targets. These are regularly reviewed, up-dated and, in the case of Scotland, monitored by the Scottish Executive. In addition to their strategy ACPOS's *'Scottish Policing Priorities,'* includes two targets relating specifically to road deaths. Key to the UK's policing approach is the 'National Intelligence Model'. This new model for policing ensures that information is used by police senior managers to prioritise operational policing. The Serious Organised Crime and Police Act (2005) will allow police to retain revenue from fixed penalties resulting from automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) operations, including driving without insurance and failure to wear a seatbelt.

Speed: The UK has led the way with its approach to lowering speed through a combination of measures linked to introducing speed cameras. Approximately 6,000 fixed or mobile cameras sites are used and are complemented by mobile controlling patrols. Some police cars are fitted with on board video surveillance systems with the ability to gauge the speed of a vehicle. Section control is also being introduced using the SPECS system which measures average speeds between two cameras. Another measure being introduced to tackle speeding alongside the long-standing driver improvement training are speed awareness courses. These are intended primarily for offenders caught at speeds just above the current threshold for prosecution. A driver will only be offered one course during three years.

Alcohol: New roadside evidential testing will be introduced in England and Wales. This is already available in Northern Ireland. Random roadside breath testing for alcohol, as included in the Enforcement Recommendation, is not permissible in the UK. At present police can stop drivers whom they suspect to have been drinking and test them at the roadside. Moreover, police have the power to stop any vehicle without suspecting an offence. Police can also test drivers they consider to have committed a moving traffic offence. Lastly, in case of an accident, police also conduct a breath test. In Northern Ireland police are assessed according to an indicator which includes drink driving detections. Individual Police Commanders are thus held accountable. The UK has also been successful in introducing a Drink/Drive Rehabilitation scheme.

Seat belts: Seat belt enforcement is undertaken during part of everyday policing and specific local campaigns. Part of intelligence-led policing focuses police enforcement activity on 'crash locations' where seat belt wearing will also be scrutinised. In England and Wales once an offence is detected it is generally left to the discretion of the police officer as to whether a verbal, written warning or a fixed penalty fine is given. In Scotland officers also initially may give either a verbal warning, issue a ticket or submit their report to the Procurator Fiscal. However, the normal course of action is to issue a ticket and fine of £30. In Northern Ireland, since 2001 a fixed penalty fine is always given. This has translated into a real increase in the seat belt wearing rate there of 67% to 77% (rear) and 86% to 91% (front) between 2001 and 2004.

Follow up of offences: In the case of automated speed enforcement, the driver is responsible and is identified via the license plate. But the "registered keeper" of the vehicle is responsible for identifying the driver. In England and Wales it is the case for all motor offences that it is up to the discretion of the individual police officer as to what action to take in response to any apparent offence.

Information: Campaigns on Road Safety are conducted by the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO), Association of Chief Police Officers Scotland (ACPOS), the Government's Think! Road Safety Campaign, the Scottish Road Safety Campaign and local authorities. ACPO runs a Drink Driving campaign at Christmas and in the summer which is linked to increased enforcement. Think! Road Safety have ongoing campaigns covering different issues including drink driving, speed and child restraint use which are part of a coordinated campaign calendar. These campaigns are research and intelligence led. Local Authorities also conduct their own campaigns targeting particular priorities in their area. Northern Ireland runs especially hard-hitting speeding and drink-driving advertising campaigns, as well as its 'Roadsafe Roadshow' targeting new and pre-drivers.

In conclusion, speed enforcement efforts remain high although speed compliance rates are under half in urban areas and on the motorways. Drink driving enforcement in England and Wales has continued to fall, from 715,000 in 2000 to 534,000 in 2003. A total of 16% of deaths in 2003 and 18% in 2004 were attributable to drink driving. Seat belt wearing rates are amongst the highest in the EU with a high number of offences recorded for 2003.

Recommendations:

- Allocate more resources for enforcing speed with mobile units alongside the fixed camera networks.
- Introduce a lower BAC level and increase police powers to conduct breath tests.
- Conduct separate intensive checks on seat belts particularly focusing on the back seat.