



Essex County
Fire & Rescue Service

A photograph of a severely damaged, overturned black car in a grassy field. The car is crushed and mangled, with its roof and front end completely destroyed. The background shows a grassy hillside with some trees and buildings in the distance under an overcast sky.

RTC REDUCTION AND ROAD SAFETY STRATEGY

#30831

DOING MORE THAN WE HAVE EVER DONE TO MAKE ESSEX SAFE



RTC REDUCTION AND ROAD SAFETY STRATEGY

bruises, slight cuts,
shock requiring
roadside attention
only.

VISION

To make the people of Essex safer

PURPOSE

This strategy document provides a framework, and information, within which decisions and choices are made about the direction and nature of the way in which Essex County Fire and Rescue Service can extend its ongoing work in protection, prevention and response to road users in Essex. It is hoped in the near future to support this strategy document with a comprehensive list of available research and signposts to other stakeholder organisations.

Road safety and RTC reduction remains a priority both nationally and locally. The majority of road accidents occur when a road user fails to cope with the environment, with 95% of all accidents involving some form of human error. In 2005 in the UK there were 2913 fatalities, 25,029 serious injuries and 170,793 slight injuries attributed to RTC's. The subsequent cost to society was estimated to be £13b. Costs were £1.428m for a fatality and £160,480 for serious injury. Slight injury was £12,370. An ICU bed for 1 week cost £28,750. (Department for Transport)

Fatal injury – Includes only those cases where death occurs in less than 30 days as a result of RTC

Serious Injury – fracture, internal injury, severe cuts, burns, concussion, shock requiring hospital treatment, detention in hospital either immediately or afterwards, death 30 or more days later from injuries sustained at an RTC

Slight injury – Sprains including whiplash not necessarily requiring medical treatment,

Government policy, outlined in a document titled 'Tomorrows Roads – Safer for everyone' calls for the following targets to be met by 2010

- A 40% reduction in persons **Killed or Seriously Injured** on our roads
- A 50% reduction in child **KSI**
- A 10% reduction in the slight injury rate

The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 sets out a statutory duty for Fire Authorities in respect of road safety. Improving road safety is, unfortunately, not a concept that has a standard scientific definition. Road safety measures may be directed at any element of the road system; land use, the road itself, road furniture, traffic control measures and devices, motor vehicles, enforcement and road users and their behaviour.

Section 8 of the FRS Act 2004 states with regard to Road Traffic Collisions:

'A Fire and Rescue Authority must make provision for the purpose of protecting people from serious harm, to the extent it considers it reasonable to do so, in the event of RTC's, in its area'

This statutory obligation is reinforced by our moral obligation to protect the communities we serve, and also by our general duty of care towards our employees and those affected by our actions.

ECFRS acknowledge that our work will be delivered throughout Essex including New Essex (the Essex area excluding the 2 Unitary Authorities) and the Unitary Authorities of Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock.

ECFRS undertake to provide resources to actively reduce the number of KSI's and RTC's. The subsequent outcome is likely to be a reduction in our response attendances.

Essex County Council, Southend Council and Thurrock Council, acting as Highways Authorities, have statutory obligations to prepare and carry out a programme of measures designed to promote road safety (Road Traffic Act 1998, Section 39)

The Highways Agency has responsibility for trunk roads and motorways throughout Essex. These networks account for a third of all casualties.

Methodology

This document sets out 5 phases of activity, in pursuit of excellence, and provides information, resources and advice to support decision making. The document is not intended to be linear but iterative, with a continuous feedback loop linking each phase.

Foundation activity

Road risk is dependent on several factors including the amount of travel, the level of traffic, driver behaviour and the resources available to protect road users from injury. Whilst ECFRS are able to exercise little control over the amount and level of traffic, we have very clearly defined responsibilities, obligations and skill in prevention, casualty care and extrication. The Government currently spends 25x more money on keeping traffic moving than it does on road safety. (Department for Transport)

In looking to prioritise measures for casualty reduction, a balance between success in the short and long term needs to be made. Low cost engineering measures, such as vehicle activated warning signs, bring instant benefits. Education, training and publicity have their place alongside short term measures now, but over the long term assume even greater importance. Further impacts will depend on developing sound education and awareness programmes in the broadest sense. To achieve this it still remains necessary to explore attitudes to road safety and the safety expectations that users have of our road systems.

The Department for Transport (DfT) provides advice and directives for works carried out on

our road network and set national standards for driver training and vehicle standards. The DfT

also promotes national road safety campaigns that are supported throughout Essex.

The Essex Casualty Reduction Board

The ECRB is a wider partnership Board led by Essex County Council. Through agreements and membership of the ECRB Essex County Fire and Rescue Service has already committed to;

- Exploit our unique position to promote road safety
- Extend our existing education programmes to include road safety
- Continue to support our partners in the delivery and development of road safety initiatives
- Provide a timely response to RTC's
- Promote and carry out education, awareness and when appropriate, enforcement.
- Evaluate our performance, and share information and intelligence with our partners

Phase 1

INTELLIGENCE GATHERING AND ANALYSIS

The quality of our strategic decisions will be dependent largely on the quality of our information and intelligence. Information needs to be accurate, relevant and up to date.

Internally - ECFRS has no function at the present time in gathering, processing and analysing the huge amount of data available on road safety, and our attendance at RTC's. In strategic terms we need to decide how this will be managed in the context of informing our practice and recognising the implications to our organisation now and in the future. It is recognised that plans currently underway to introduce Incident Recording Systems contained within Chapter 9 of the Fire and

Rescue Services National Framework will have a likely positive impact into this.

Externally – Essex County Council, Southend Council and Thurrock Council have a statutory responsibility to collect, maintain and analyse Road safety data. The Police collect data at RTC's and pass the information onto Essex County Council (acting on behalf of themselves, Southend and Thurrock). Essex County Council maintains a 20 year database. The Police also pass this information to the Government. This standard reporting process is known as STATS 19.

ACCSMAP is a recently introduced top end tool belonging to Essex County Council. This is a Geographic Information System (GIS) based accident database which shows the location and detail of all injury accidents in Essex against a map base. Essex Police and the Essex Safety Camera Partnership share this system, which gives a mechanism to ensure that safety cameras, enforcement or engineering measures are all working together to target accidents and that there is no unintentional duplication at any site. With the data being examined from three different perspectives, and with regular meetings to discuss sites, it is hoped that treatable accident patterns will not be missed.

Essex County Council currently searches the existing accident database for accident clusters with similar accident types (loss of control, right turn, nose-to-tail, etc.) allowing a focussed and effective identification and investigation process to be conducted. Detailed investigation of the accident clusters is then carried out and sites suitable for cost effective remedial measures are recommended for appropriate treatment.

Following identification and investigation, sites recommended for treatment are prioritised through a cost/benefit ratio (cost of the treatment against the likely accident savings) to allow sites to be prioritised to provide a best value approach to accident reduction. There is no fixed numerical selection criterion for accidents at any location, as sites with the most cost effective treatments are prioritised. It is likely that these are sites with a high proportion or number of KSI's or a strong pattern of similar accidents.

It is likely that the majority of treatable accidents occurring in urban areas are

selected through this cluster analysis programme. Analysis also looks in detail at road user groups and their behaviour.

Phase 2

STRATEGY FORMULATION

Traffic injury is a growing global problem and prevention can only be accomplished by applying effective solutions.

There are nearly 1 million RTC's in the world each year.

The number of RTC's is falling but the number of fatalities is rising.

RTC's are now the 6th highest cause of death and the 3rd highest cause of disability adjusted life.

Inaction will cause the number of people killed and seriously injured in RTC's to increase, with the subsequent costs in both human and financial terms to be an unacceptable and preventable cost to society.

ECFRS are realistic about the type of work and the type of products we are able to contribute to, either working alone or in partnership with other organisations in the public, business and voluntary sectors.

Efforts in gathering and analysing data, information and intelligence at this time has defined the end users of our preventative work as:

- Motorcyclists (288 KSI in 2006)
- Young drivers and their passengers (17 – 24 years of age) (235 KSI in 2006)
- Road users who exceed the speed limits (176 KSI in 2006)
- Drink drivers and Drug drivers (100 KSI in 2006)
- Non wearing of seatbelts
- Areas of deprivation – Essex is already directing road safety activities towards known areas of disadvantage. A major study to identify the accident problems in the 30 most deprived areas in Essex has been completed and the schemes and

Safety groups.

Required action will only be achieved by a combination of measures and contributions from a wide range of organisations including ECFRS. Failure means that the above listed groups of people are most likely, at this time, to be on the receiving end of our response work. Success will require the introduction and support of local road safety schemes and initiatives, continuing publicity campaigns and improved driver behaviour.

Our involvement in the wider road safety arena has already been formalised within Partnership Agreements and our strategic membership of the Essex Casualty Reduction Board. ECFRS have already agreed to work with our partners;

- To reduce casualties and collisions in line with agreed Government targets
- To provide a safer highway network for all road users
- To raise awareness, change behaviour and provide skills to make road users safer, particularly those at high risk
- To encourage and support those road users making sustainable transport choices and equip them with the skills to do so safely
- To integrate road safety and RTC reduction into the ethos of all service areas of Essex County Fire and Rescue Service

We will work with our partners to contribute to a multi-agency approach to improve road safety, reduce casualties and, when required, offer a consistent level of casualty care and rescue from damaged vehicles. There are many valuable partners who share the same objectives or have a stake in reducing road casualties.

Our key partners are Essex County Council, Southend Council, Thurrock Council, Essex Police, East of England Ambulance Service, CFOA, local area Road Safety Officers, the Media, Essex Safety Camera Partnership, the Driving Standards Agency, the Institute of Advanced Driving Examiners, Driver training organisations, Alcohol Industry groups, the

Phase 3

STRATEGIC PROJECT PLANNING AND INTEGRATING STRATEGY INTO PROJECT PLANNING AND DELIVERY

It is anticipated that a number of road safety projects will emerge in Station plans, Community Command plans and in the Business and Activity plans of the different divisions within the Service Directorate.

When formulating projects the following strategic questions should always be considered:

- What needs doing, and are we the best people to be doing it?
- Is the idea new? If not, where does it live and who does it belong to?
- Does it duplicate existing work?
- Is it aligned with the aims of the Service and the Road safety strategy?
- Is it complex, and how can this complexity be reduced?
- How much will it cost, and who is going to pay?
- Branding and ownership. Who will the idea belong to?
- Can I create useful alliances to deliver the project, and for future working together?
- How will I establish outcomes and how will these be proved?
- Is it solving the problem?

A typical framework for delivering an idea is as follows :

- Proposal – identify the idea
- Initial investigation – possible requirements and solutions
- Detailed investigation – feasibility study and decisions about the best option
- Development and testing – building the solution
- Trial – piloting the solution with real people

To assist, a project flowchart is attached in **Appendix 1** of this document.

All Road safety projects and products will be maintained centrally in a master portfolio within the Safer Communities Directorate and this will help ECFRS to prioritise, sequence, schedule and effectively monitor success.

We acknowledge and support that the 5 key areas of Fire Service activity in the reduction of RTC'S will be **Engagement, Education, Emergency response, Enforcement and Evaluation – the 5 E's.**

Engagement – The Fire Service has a unique position in society to promote the wider road safety agenda. This position enables us to engage with groups who often feel alienated and disenfranchised from other agencies. We also have our resources and facilities all over the County, in both urban and rural areas and have already successfully formed working partnerships throughout the business, public and voluntary communities. There are already many successful Road safety schemes operating throughout Essex. Often our involvement can add real value to existing work streams.

Education – ECFRS accepts that the communities we serve are far more likely to suffer death and serious injury through RTC's than fire. ECFRS will

- extend our existing educational programmes to include Road safety and RTC reduction
- continue to support our partners in the delivery of Crucial Crew, Roadrunner and others
- develop new initiatives with our partners to reach those most at risk from KSI.

Emergency Response – We will continue to provide, in line with our statutory responsibilities, an emergency response to

minimise the effects of RTC's by providing competent and good quality casualty care and rapid extrication using modern equipment and techniques.

Enforcement - We acknowledge and support the pivotal role that enforcement has in making our roads safer. With our partners in the Police and road safety teams, we will promote and carry out education and awareness programmes in support of enforcement activities.

The Police play a key role in respect to the enforcement of speed limits and other traffic management regulations. They also attend RTC's, and record data that is vital for monitoring and the instigation of accident remedial programmes. In their own road safety policy Essex Police state that they will:

- Achieve a safer community through the prevention of road accidents
- Minimise the effects of congestion by maintaining the free flow of traffic in a safe environment
- Enhance the quality of community life by minimising the effects of vehicle misuse and targeting unacceptable driver behaviour.

Evaluation – In order to measure the effectiveness of our work and direct our resources to the area of most need and most benefit, we will measure the impacts, outputs and outcomes of our road safety work and develop inter-agency protocols for sharing information and intelligence.

Phase 4

STRATEGY COMMUNICATION

We are relying on many internal and external partnerships. It is essential that everyone knows and understands the role that ECFRS have in reducing KSI's and what our expected outcomes are. Essentially the message to all is that a successful road safety strategy will reduce the number of KSI and, quid pro quo, reduce the amount of responses that we as a Service have to make to them. In terms of organisational role out, the strategy can be

defined, in Kepner-Tregoe terms as 'need to know and support'

Phase 5

MAKING IT HAPPEN

Road safety means different things to different groups. For ECFRS it means increasing our preventative work and reducing the need for our attendance at KSI RTC's.

The ambitious Government 2010 targets are yet to acknowledge that Essex has increasing traffic and increasing population.

The task of reducing accidents is not going to become easier but ECFRS is fully committed in working towards achieving these targets.

Performance, particularly our preventative work in reducing RTC's will need to be effectively monitored. We will continue to work with our partners on the ECRB with a commitment to share good practice. There is still much to be achieved.

Attitudes and behaviour can be changed. This is well demonstrated by the radical change in attitude towards drink driving in the last 20 years. The previously socially acceptable is now pariahed by the vast majority.

Such significant changes have a significant effect on casualty figures, the number of KSI attributed to drink driving has halved in this period. However the modification of societal attitudes is a slow and gradual one. A continuous and comprehensive programme of education, training and publicity is seen as essential.

ECFRS will continue to support the work carried out by the Road Safety service and the Police throughout Essex to raise the profile of road safety through local campaigns, publicity and the promotion of different initiatives.

We need to ensure that all members of the Service, whatever their role, believe and value road safety work in preventing death and serious injury to road users. This needs to become a part of the way in which our staff, particularly operational fire crews, thinks about using their practice and their resources. We have already undergone changes to our structure to allow for far greater emphasis on preventative work and our management style, processes and systems fully support this. We must ensure that opportunities for training and development support and encourage embracing the road safety ethos, and reducing RTC's can become an important and integral part of appraisal and setting and achieving goals.





Road Safety Project Flowchart

Find out which causes of RTC's you most need to warn your community about by searching

RTC facts and statistics
↓
Core RTC prevention messages
↓
Community partnerships and local Road Safety teams

Identify and agree the topic(s) you wish to work on

eg: Child car seats, Drink driving, Drug driving, Motorcycle safety, Cycle safety, Speeding, Mobile phones, Young drivers, Seatbelts, Children

Tailor your message to reach your audience

eg: The general public, 17-25 year olds, company car drivers, LGV drivers, children and young people, older people, repeat offenders, people with disabilities, curriculum support in schools and colleges, ethnic communities

How do you get your message across?

eg: Publicity, PR events, the press and media, funding, internal resources

How do you measure what you got right?

eg: Go back to facts and statistics, core messages and partnerships

Evaluate and Review

Did it work well and solve the problem?