

Second Report of recommendations

Ongoing Improvement of the Road Safety Record

Executive Summary

Québec is on the right track in the area of road safety. Despite a surge in the number of licenced drivers and vehicles on the road, the province's record in this area has been improving significantly since the early 1970s.

However, the death toll has climbed steadily from 2001 to 2006, suggesting that conventional intervention techniques can no longer be relied upon to reduce the number of road accidents on their own.

In keeping with the spirit of Road Safety Year and the tabling of the First Report of recommendations by the Table québécoise de la sécurité routière in 2007, the government and its partners have implemented a number of measures aimed at reducing speeding, impaired driving, and hand-held cell phone while driving, and reinforcing the rules governing gradual access to a driver's licence.

It is very encouraging to note that the number of road fatalities was lower in 2007, and again in 2008. There were 557 road fatalities in 2008, 64 fewer than in 2007, which constitutes a 10% decline. This is the best result in the past 60 years. However, if we compare Québec to the jurisdictions that have achieved the best performances in road safety and that have succeeded in developing a true road safety culture, we note that there is room for improvement.

The Table québécoise de la sécurité routière (TQSR) is now in its fourth year of existence. This standing forum for interaction and discussion has maintained its mandate of submitting recommendations to the Minister of Transport with a view to improving the road safety record. Road safety is not only a very broad field, it is also of great importance to Québec society.

The TQSR comprises 45 members who represent road users, the municipal sector, the police, government agencies and departments, and other sectors of activity.

At the conclusion of this second phase of its work, members have achieved a consensus with respect to additional measures to be adopted with a view to reducing the number of fatalities and injuries on Québec's roads.

This second report contains recommendations from members pertaining to eight topics: youth, impaired driving, pedestrians and cyclists, speed limit management in urban environments, driver health, penalized drivers, enforcement and penalties, and distractions while driving. All of the TQSR's 27 recommendations appear on the following page.



Table québécoise de la sécurité routière

<p>Youth</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Apply the zero-alcohol rule to all new drivers. 2. Encourage the school system (school boards) to appoint a Traffic Safety Officer to align the needs of schools with the available traffic safety activities. 3. Formulate and implement a pilot project aimed at increasing awareness of the importance of road safety among secondary students.
<p>Impaired driving</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Impose an immediate brief (24-hour) administrative suspension of the driver's licence for any driver who has a blood alcohol concentration level of 50 mg/100 ml or more. 5. Launch a campaign to increase public awareness of the new measures, and develop enforcement activities. 6. Implement an integrated approach aimed at reducing road accidents caused by driver fatigue. This effort should include awareness-raising, training and multi-faceted activities adapted to the level of understanding in this area. 7. Consider amending the <i>Act respecting Roads</i> so that the "service areas" mentioned in Section 5 (and subject to a policy at the ministère des Transports du Québec respecting the development of highway rest area) are designated as "rest and service areas."
<p>Pedestrians and cyclists</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Include the needs of all users of public roads in terms of safety, accessibility and mobility in the planning, design, development and maintenance of the road system. 9. Develop and implement an integrated approach to urban and regional planning and transportation by emphasizing active and alternative transportation modes at both the municipal and regional levels. 10. Develop design standards and integrated guides to best practices that promote the safety of pedestrians and cyclists and that are tailored to the hierarchies and functions of public roads. 11. Develop and deploy, on a permanent basis, educational and awareness-raising activities aimed at drivers, pedestrians and cyclists, accompanied by increased police enforcement. 12. Introduce new provisions into the <i>Highway Safety Code</i> in order to enhance the safety of pedestrians and cyclists.
<p>Speed limit management in urban environments</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 13. Define a global framework for speed limit management in urban environments, and revise technical literature for municipalities and applicable regulations, where appropriate. 14. Design analytical and awareness tools to ensure better management of resident concerns over speed in residential neighbourhoods.
<p>Driver health</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 15. Continue to develop and implement educational and awareness-raising campaigns pertaining to highway safety aimed at seniors and their family and friends. 16. Promote the inclusion of a medical assessment of the ability to drive in training for healthcare professionals, and continue to increase the awareness of healthcare professionals in this area. 17. Increase awareness among drivers of the importance of reporting to the SAAQ any illnesses or disabilities that may affect their ability to drive. 18. Determine methods for detecting medically at-risk drivers.
<p>Penalized drivers</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 19. Encourage the development and use by police organizations of systems designed to detect suspended drivers and vehicles that are not authorized for use on the roads (e.g.: a licence plate recognition system). 20. Following implementation of a new road safety education program (driving courses, learning tools, tests, etc.), update examination for drivers who are reapplying for a licence following revocation due to demerit points, along with appropriate awareness raising tools.
<p>Enforcement and penalties</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 21. Introduce more severe penalties for street racing and car surfing. 22. Ask the ministère de la Sécurité publique to enhance its efforts in the area of road safety training for police officer trainees.
<p>Driver distraction</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 23. Inform drivers and employers of the dangers of distractions while driving and the importance of eliminating these distractions. 24. Promote adequate enforcement of installation standards for traffic control devices. 25. Produce a best practices guide in order to help the road authorities to more effectively consider all messages present within the driver's visual field (signs, advertising, etc.), with a view to eliminating interference with official traffic control devices and information overload. 26. Promote the adoption of self-regulatory policies among employers aimed at reducing the likelihood of employees becoming distracted while driving. 27. Set up a series of activities aimed at reducing the use of cell phones while driving.