

**Private and Public Road User Awareness and Educational Campaign
Supporting the Decade of Action for Road Safety in Puerto Rico**

ABSTRACT

The Governor of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico signed a Proclamation in 2011 supporting the worldwide initiative approved by the United Nations General Assembly known as the Decade of Action for Road Safety: 2011-2020. The Proclamation and other supporting evidence from the Highway Traffic Safety Commission and Public Works crash database recognize significant reduction in fatalities in the last decade in our highway system; nevertheless, there are over 220,000 reported crashes every year, 340 fatalities, 30% which involve pedestrians, 22% motorcycles, 40% alcohol consumption and 46% speed related. These fatal, injury and reported crash statistics are alarming for an Island of 3,500 square mile and 26,866 centerline-km highway network.

The UN Road Safety Collaboration created a Global Plan aimed to reduce the 1.3 million fatalities and over 50 million major injuries and disability related crashes. The framework of this action plan is classified in five major pillars; building road safety management capacity, improving the safety of road infrastructure and broader transport networks, further developing vehicle safety, enhancing the behavior of road users, and improving post-crash care.

This paper will address innovative programs that have been demonstrated to be successful in Puerto Rico during the first three years of the Decade of Action for Road Safety. Initiatives associated with the establishment of the Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) combined with ongoing programs by the private sector to raise awareness regarding crash prevention and reducing fatalities is also presented. It includes educational campaigns at all age groups as well as testimonies from road user victims, victimizer, leaders and administrators of profit and nonprofit organizations. The impact of implementing a mobile educational safety park around the Island developed by MAPFRE Institute of Highway Safety is also highlighted. A five-year action plan for raising road user awareness and updated with the findings of the SHSP is also documented.

Keywords: Decade of Action, Educational Safety Program, Highway Safety, Road User Awareness, Strategic Highway Safety Plan.