

Introduction

Risk of serious injury and death to road workers whilst carrying out routine maintenance and major road construction is very high. Road workers are exposed to potential harm from works vehicles and equipment as well as from road users' vehicles passing the work zone.

Ideally, policy decisions and practice to reduce these risks should be evidence-led. Understanding how and where incidents occur will help road authorities adopt effective approaches to manage risks.



“You cannot manage what you do not measure”

BRoWSEr (Baselining Road Works Safety on European Roads) aims to address inconsistency in data recording for road worker accidents by developing a European Road Worker Casualty (**EuRoWCas**) database. The BRoWSEr project is funded under the CEDR Call 2012: Safety which is a Transnational Road Research Programme, funded by Belgium/Flanders, Germany, Ireland, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

The **BRoWSEr** project (<http://browser.zag.si>) has the overall aims of:

- Collecting data on worker injuries and near misses by country, road administration and employer
- Understanding which road works layouts help road users approach and travel past road works without injuring workers or themselves



Establishing a case for EuRoWCas

Twelve road worker safety stakeholders were interviewed in nine EU countries to score National Road Authority (NRA) performance against:

- Road worker safety strategy, vision, targets and monitoring
- Collection and use of road works accident and near miss data
- Level of information about road work schemes implemented

Results from EU NRA assessment

- Practice between NRAs varied very greatly, with no NRA scoring well across all relevant areas of working
- Most NRAs were keen to learn from the experience of others and those currently not collecting data were enthusiastic about starting
- There was a strong desire to use good data to monitor performance and so manage European road worker safety more effectively

Benefits case for EuRoWCas

The NRAs were also asked for their views of implementing EuRoWCas and potential challenges to achieving this. All the NRAs interviewed were extremely positive about the potential for implementing EuRoWCas, recognising that consistent pan-European data on road worker safety would help them to improve safety for their workers.

The main benefits identified for **EuRoWCas** by interviewees were :

- Benchmarking (including over time):
 - Externally between EU NRAs
 - Internally within a country/region, or between NRA suppliers
- Assessing impact of safety interventions
 - Quantifying impact of policy decisions
 - Determining effectiveness of approach/principles:
 - Source of data on what is effective (and what is not)
- Provision of a larger data source / evidence base to inform:
 - Pan European research on worker safety
 - EU standards and policy development
 - Policy development in smaller EU member states
- Case building for investment
 - Quantification of resourcing for road worker safety vs benefit



Next steps

The full data requirements of **EuRoWCas** are currently being defined. This work will form the basis for a data collection exercise and the definition of the precise requirements for **EuRoWCas**. Key outputs will be developed from analysis of collected data. These will include:

- Annual benchmarking of road worker safety within Europe
- Practical recommendations for improving consistency of road works
- Recommended minimum standards and guidance for road works layouts throughout the EU