

Ellen Townsend Abstract:

Does Enforcement Work?

Results from ETSC's Enforcement programme and the publication "Traffic Law Enforcement across the EU - Time for a Directive" (2007) highlight the importance of traffic law enforcement. The presentation will show how the EC Recommendation on traffic law enforcement (EC 2004) in the areas of speeding, drink driving and seat belt use have been implemented in different Member States in the past years. In the area of speeding fixed camera networks continue to be rolled out in different countries. As a result of this, average speeds are coming down, but average compliance still tends to be way above the speed limit and this remains the main cause of all traffic deaths in the EU. As regards drink driving, only one country has changed its legislation to introduce random breath testing, namely Ireland. Drink driving checks in most of the countries surveyed have increased but not nearly enough to combat drink driving effectively. All EU countries have seen a change in seat belt and child restraint legislation introduced through the transposition and implementation of a new Directive. The level of seat belt wearing is increasing but the number of countries engaging in intensive seat belt and child restraint enforcement is still in the minority.

Only with a Directive the EU will be sure to introduce the minimal requirements to achieve high standards in the enforcement of legislation as set out in the Commission's Recommendation on traffic law enforcement (EC 2004). The legislative proposal on the cross border dimension will also be presented. This legislation will ensure that drivers respect the traffic law in whichever EU country they are driving.