PROJECT PROFILE

Title	**Contributory factors to accidents on Irish roads and potential for improvement**
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Start date	Jan-11
End date	Dec-12
Status	Complete
Type of project	TII Research Project
Project reference	NRA04250

Description	Roads are highlighted as being a contributory factor in collisions with the suggestion that they are possibly a bigger contributory factor than was previously accepted. Generally, roads as a contributory factor range from 2.5 to 25% of crashes. The reason for the wide variation is partly due to the perceived extent of road as a contributory factor in individual crashes with the 25% including all crashes where the road contributed in any way to the collision and the 2.5% being those crashes where the road is attributed as the primary cause of the collision, excluding weather conditions. These figures are based on international studies and have been accepted as being generally applicable in developed countries. However, there hadn't been a detailed study into the exact causes of individual crashes which looked at the mechanics of collisions, systematically analysed the extent of the various contributory factors in individual crashes and then extrapolated the data to identify combinations of contributory factors that might prove to be particularly hazardous.
Objectives	From a preliminary analysis of crashes some of these contributory factors are evident. It is known that there is seldom a single primary cause for a crash: there are usually a number of interacting contributory factors. This is why collision databases are compiled and analysied to try to identify collision clusters with a view to implementing "accident" remedial measures. Used properly the same dataset can be used to guide policy in regard to road safety education and enforcement.
Benefits	The benefit of this research is the best use of the information in the collision database and identification of current trends in relation to the causes of accidents thereby adding to the relevant knowledge available. It enables the identification of the combinations of environment and other factors which acting together create the worst crashes and verifies the extent to which road factors contribute. This assists in targeting resources in these critical areas most likely to make a significant contribution to the reduction of serious injury and death.
Outputs	Outputs include: 1. Analysis of collision database and identification of contributory causes 2. Report on extent to which road factors contribute to accidents in Ireland 3. Recommendations for the targeting of resources