

# Road Safety

Session hosted by the Surveyor's Department of the Isle of Wight  
County Council

Road Safety Education                      Brian Crane

Engineering Roads for Safety              Peter Taylor

Session chaired by Martin Pay

## Road Safety Education

The Isle of Wight has the second lowest rate of road traffic accidents for a County in England, yet it was pointed out that the rate for Avon was even lower and it was suggested that this was because Avon has made a special commitment to road safety.

The Island has 60 miles of coastline, is 24 miles East West, 13 miles North South and has 783 Km of road. The school population is 18K divided between 69 schools and 6 private schools.

Road safety is focused on four Es: Engineering, Education, Enforcement and Encouragement. The County has a road safety plan that is regularly updated.

It was thought that the Isle of Wight is fairly unique in having a dedicated Traffic Education Centre that is used by schools, the police etc.

Mr Crane was convinced that road safety education had to fit into the National Curriculum. 'One-off' sessions performed in the school are of very little lasting value. Training needs to concentrate on individuals who are changing their road usage e.g. from pedestrian to cycling, cycling to cars, as at this stage people are particularly vulnerable. An attempt is being made to persuade each Island school to formulate its own policy for road safety. There is also a plan to send a series of 5 booklets, at regular intervals, to pre-school children to promote road safety.

The Education Centre undertakes a regular series of campaigns. A current campaign relates to tyre safety. Cars are being stopped at checkpoints and are being checked for tread depth and tyre pressure. Drivers that have tyres that are illegal are not being prosecuted but are given several days to rectify the fault and then report to a checking centre.

## Engineering roads for safety

The Island has no high speed roads and the severity of accidents is generally less than it is on the mainland.

Accidents attended by, or reported to the police, have a comprehensive Stat 19 accident form completed. Copies of this form are passed on to the County Surveyor's Department. This enables 'black spots' to be identified, although there are few such spots on the Island. It was pointed out that the public's perception of what constituted a dangerous stretch of road was often at variance with locations identified by the 'experts'.

Several areas on the Island had been subject to 'area' action e.g. the Pan Estate where sleeping policemen had been installed.

A single site that had been identified through Stat 19 accident forms was described in detail. The Forest Road/Gunville Road junction had seen a number of accidents since it was 're-engineered' some 2 years ago.

The Stat 19 accident forms were analysed systematically (see diagram), but the problem only became clear when witness statements, that had been made to the police, were examined.

Several other road re-engineering projects were illustrated (see photographs).

The Island does appear to have a high rate of single vehicle accidents, especially including motor cycles. This was thought to be partly due to over familiarity with the roads and young road users treating winding country roads as a challenge.

