

Implementing a Safe Transport System

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How well is NZ really doing?

Great? 2013 – lowest road crash deaths since 1950; hospitalised now below 3,000: total injuries around 12-13,000

Are you satisfied with just incremental gains?

Because around another 20,000 Kiwis will be seriously injured or killed before the decade is over

Safer Journeys vision – “.. increasingly free of death and serious injury”

Vision is of further incremental gains

* but why do we unquestioningly tolerate an enormous ongoing level of trauma?

“Road Toll” - the term is used extensively
: a toll is a price we have to pay!

Officially, we trade trauma

1. The transport model – freight productivity and personal mobility rule and trauma is a by-product to be managed
2. The economic model – put a \$ value on delay, fuel use, emissions and trauma and use c:b analysis to make trade-off decisions
3. Policy makers accept the popular myths about safety just like everyone else

In other words, we have the level of trauma we are prepared to accept – “safety at reasonable cost”

We evolved a fundamentally unsafe system and the cost of remediation – and risk of full accountability - seem overwhelming!

Safety at reasonable cost

Who defines reasonable?

- politicians on **our** behalf, so **we** have the whip hand if we choose to use it
- so what prevents us from using it?

Public accepts “official” view. Why?

1. We blame the victim (inoculation by daily media)



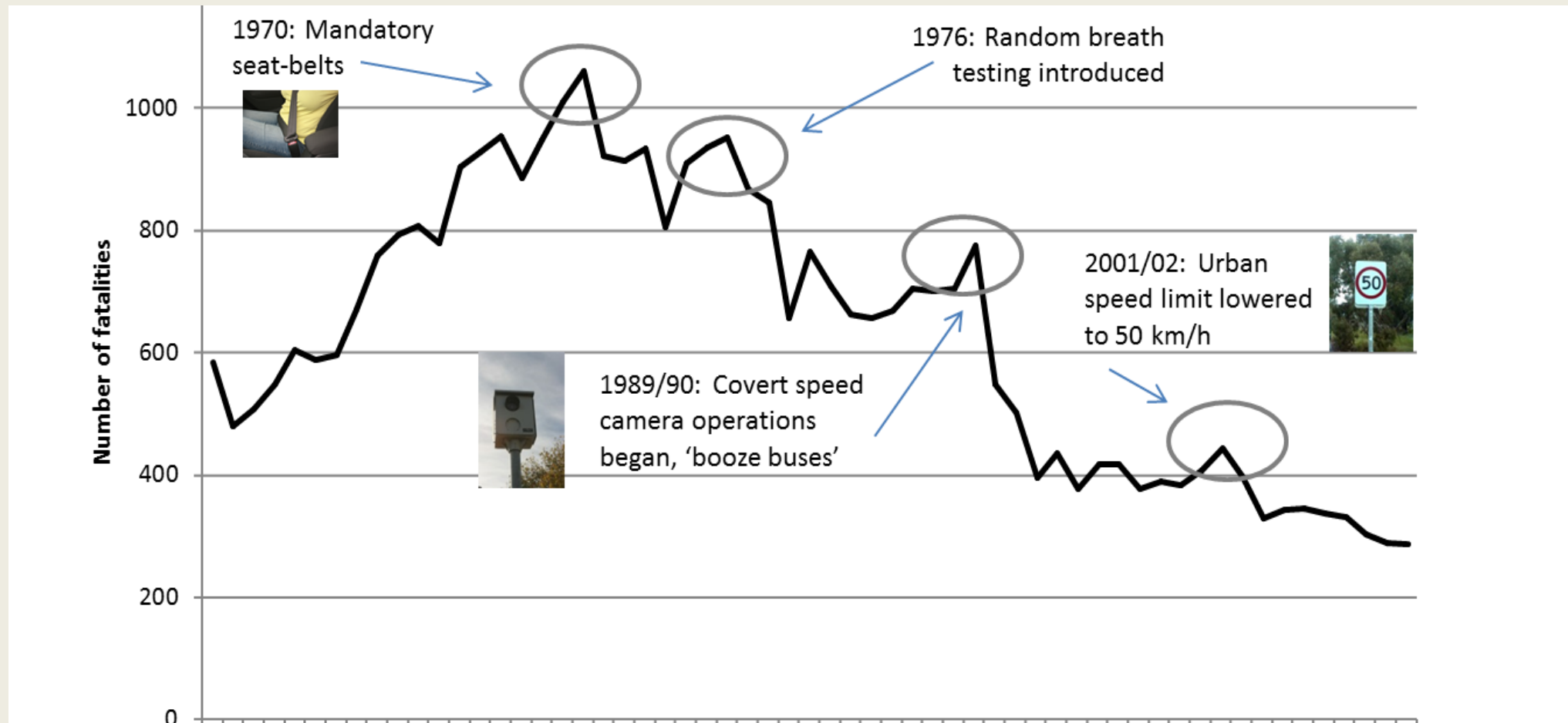
Steven Johnstone was almost four times over the blood alcohol limit when his car crashed at high speed. He died along with four friends. Can this carnage be stopped or are youth beyond the reach of road safety messages?

Blaming the victim

Proportion of crashes attributable to illegal or reprehensible behaviour:

- 40 % of fatal crashes
- 10% of non-fatal casualty crashes

Uni. Adelaide 2011



2. We are always told how well we are doing, not what we (officially) tolerate as acceptable



3. We are ignorant of the real trauma (deaths vs serious injuries)

4. We don't want more control over our freedom to go where, when and how we like

In short, the blockers to fundamental change are that we:

- * are repeatedly told we are winning (eg lowest since 1950)
- * never consider what we (implicitly) accept (eg 20,000 in next 6 years)
- * focus on deaths not serious injuries (1:10; 1:40)
- * believe its (almost) all about bad behaviour
- * want safety at minimal cost (restrictions and \$s)
- * won't trade (mostly imagined) personal gain for communal benefit

Enablers Vs Game Changers

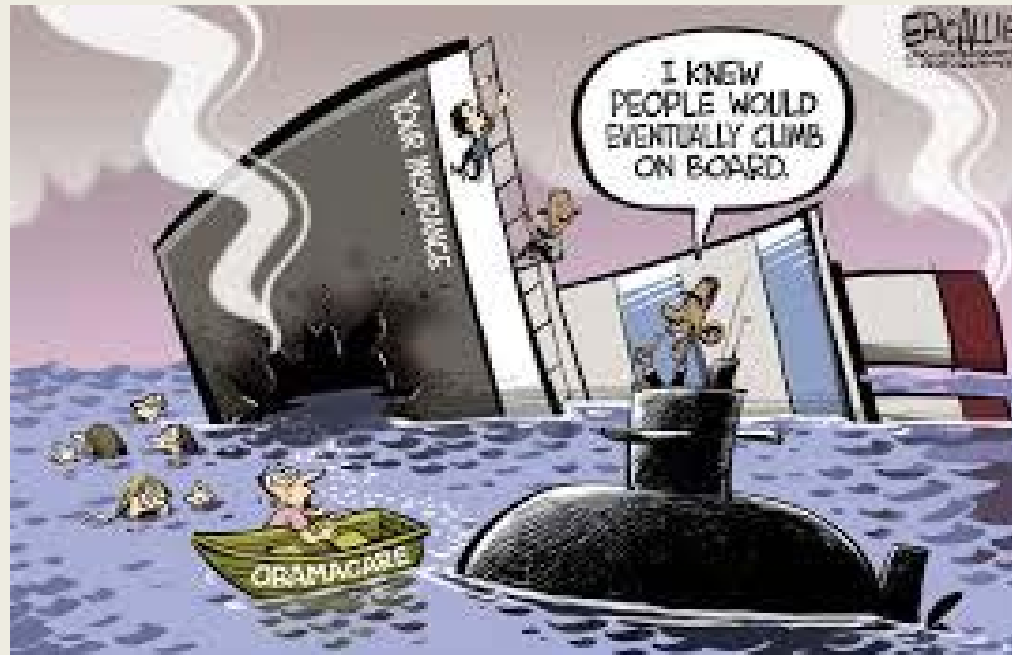
SAFE SYSTEM thinking and planning has been a giant step forward

- SS is very well described in *Safer Journeys*
- the training courses being run across the country are excellent

BUT, like Australia, implementation is relatively slow and patchy

- there is more **talking the talk** than **walking the talk** at political (national and local) levels.

Without a public constituency for safety – a fundamental change of prevailing mindset – the SAFE SYSTEM will remain an enabler and not a game changer



The dilemma of the commons

Tension between individual and communal benefits
(WIFM rules)



Daily experience of risk

- Risk of a casualty crash at the individual trip level is extremely low – less than one fatal crash per 100 million vehicle kms
- Every day each of us uses the roads (often several times) without incident

Yet road use is our most risky daily activity (per hour)

AND a low risk multiplied by a huge exposure results in a high absolute number of crashes

WIFM

Perceived benefits easily outweigh perceived costs in most trips.

eg speed-up to beat changing lights vs risk of crash

Benefits are immediate and costs are remote from personal experience

Preventive medicine

Rose: “It is a common irony of preventive medicine that many people must take precautions to prevent illness In only a few.”

Widespread low risk requires population change
(speeding, belt wearing, red light running, etc)

Enablers

Safe System (the “old” 3 Es)

1. Safe Vehicles
 2. Safe Roads and Roadsides
 3. Safe Road Users
 4. Safe Speeds
- + Better management



Game Changers

The 6 Cs

1. Constituency
2. Committed Leadership
3. Climate of Safety
4. Capacity Building
5. Cooperation/Coordination
6. Courageous Patience

C 1 and C 2: Constituency and Committed Leadership

Constituency – without public demand there can be no political salience

Committed Leadership – political, agency, business and the community

Leadership ↔ Constituency

- * **Political** (national and local) – lead zero harm debate, set vision, become accountable
- * **Bureaucratic** - stop opening speeches with progress
 - communicate the “real” state of play
- * **Business** - mobile phones, vehicle choice, fatigue etc
 - corporate culture, role modelling
- * **Community** – victims groups, sports stars, media

The fundamental role of “company” culture

- ❑ Challenger space shuttle
- ❑ News of the World
- ❑ NSW based trucking company
- ❑ Mornington Shire in Victoria

C 3: Climate of Safety (culture change)

Five cultures from industrial safety research:

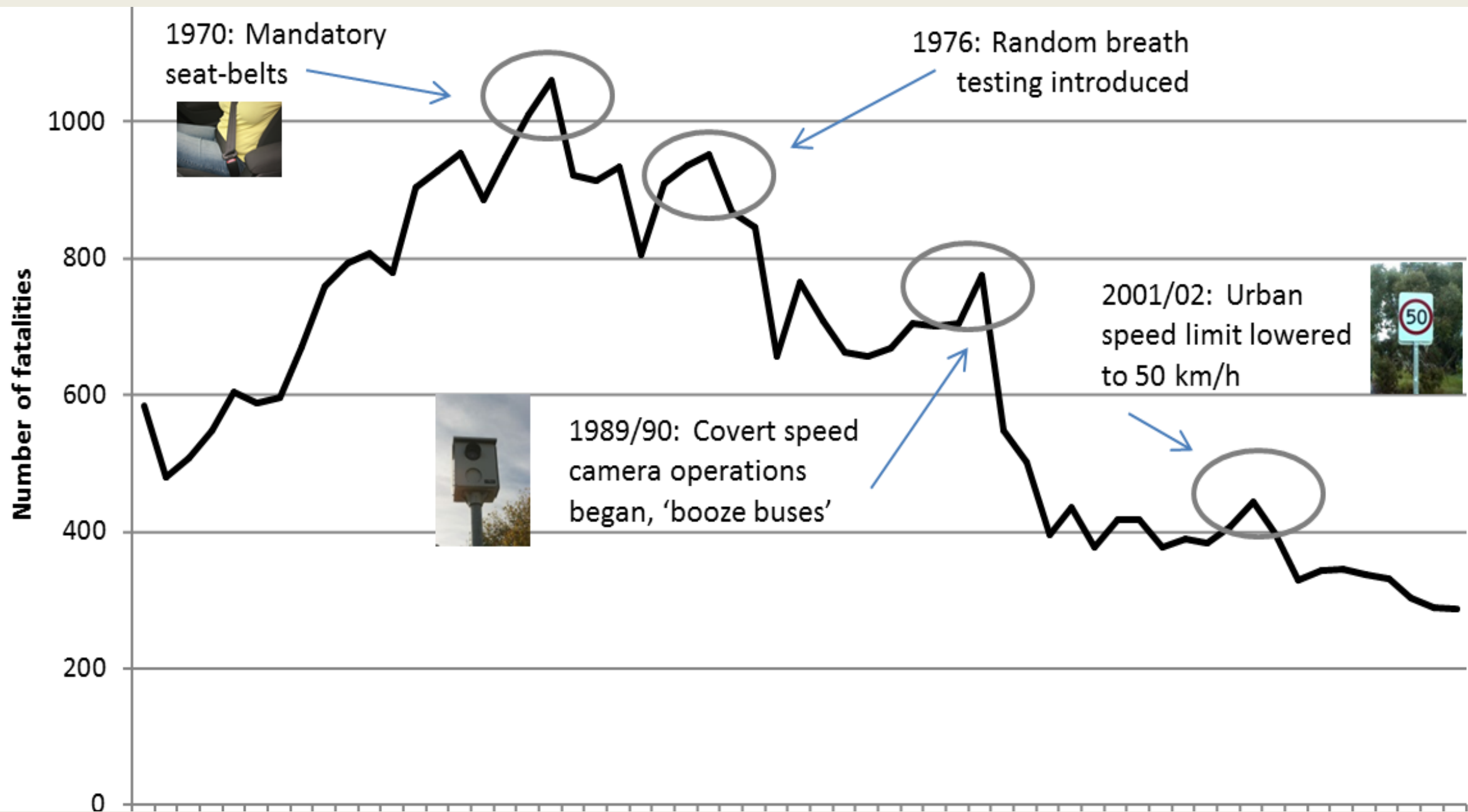
- * Pathological
- * Reactive
- * Calculative
- * Proactive
- * Generative

So where is road safety at?

❑ Proactive and generative result in the best **industrial safety** records

❑ Governments, for the most part, manage **road safety** reactively though there is movement towards being proactive

Safe System is proactive only if fully implemented and generative only if the vision is zero harm.



Community Leadership

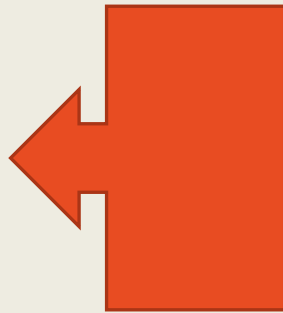
- Door openers
- Champions
- Affected groups (eg MADD)
- Early adopters as role models (eg sports stars, TV personalities)
- Media “crusaders”

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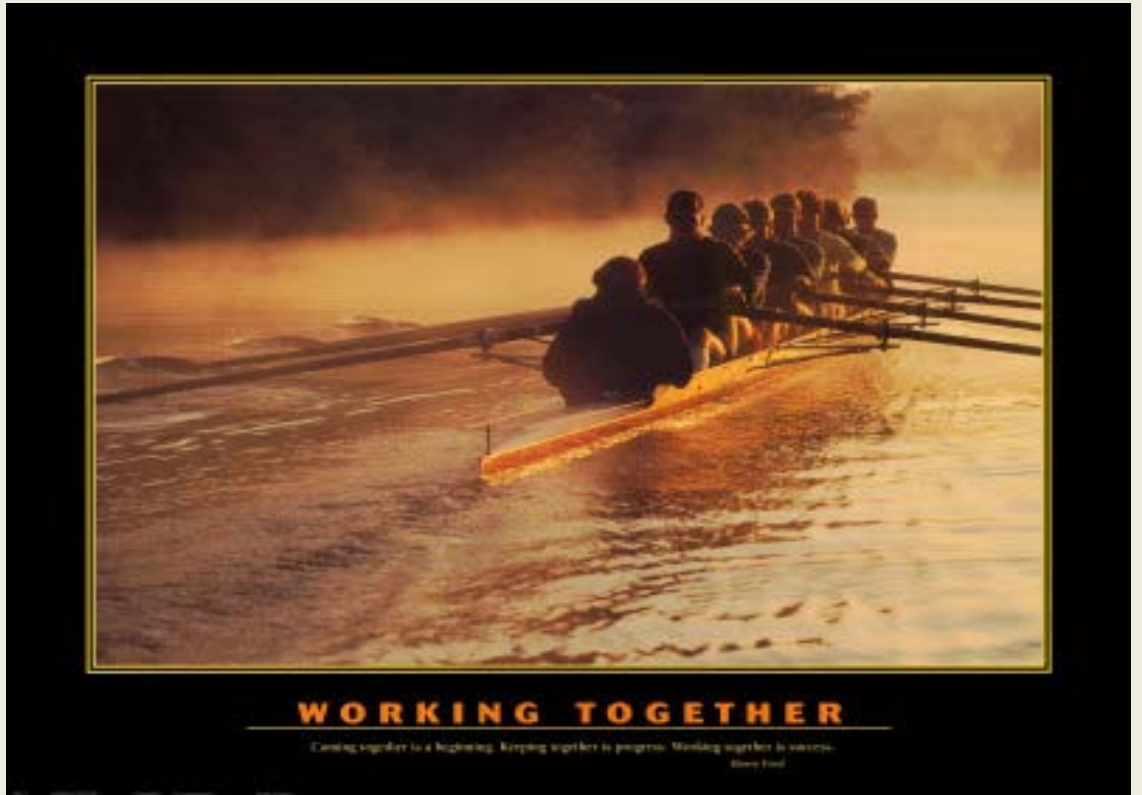
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C 4: Capacity Building

1. Decision makers,
2. Policy framers;
3. Transport practitioners (builders and operators)

C 5: Cooperation and Coordination

Results-driven
programs integrated
across all key agencies



C 6: Courageous Patience

The first 3 Cs – **the Game Changers** - (Constituency, Committed Leadership and Climate of Safety) will not be realised overnight

None appears in any road safety strategy!

