News From The Centres

CESVIMAP—Spain (Continued)

Presentation to the National Association of Claims Adjusters of the newly updated CESVIMAP Paintwork Times and Materials scales

Ignacio Juárez, CESVIMAP General Manager, and Rubén Aparicio, in charge of the Department of Paintwork, were invited to the APCAS (Spanish Association of Insurance Claims Adjusters and Breakdown Commissars) meeting held in Madrid. There, CESVIMAP presented to this association the newly updated version of its scale, which is a tool for the evaluation of paintwork jobs: ***Paintwork Times and Materials.*** The main improvements which have been made to the scale, leading to this update, have been to extend evaluation to all types of vehicles (people carriers, all terrain vehicles, vans and passenger car derived vehicles), the creation of a fifth level of damage (for superficial repainting jobs) and the inclusion of the formulas needed in order to evaluate repair jobs on plastic parts, which now take their place alongside metal parts.

It was representatives of professionals working in the claims adjustment field themselves who pointed CESVIMAP towards these improvements for the use and effective updating of the scales. The updated scale was also presented to the repair shop world, and a collaboration agreement has been signed in relation to the scale.

This updated Paintwork scale is included in the **2005 Catalogue of Publications** that CESVIMAP issued recently. The basic aim of this Catalogue is to offer information to individuals and companies about the various publications that the Centre has made. It is divided into groups: books, of which CESVIMAP has distributed more than 34,000; IT tools for repair shop management; applications for road traffic accident reconstruction; and DVDs which show repair processes for bodywork and paintwork, together with the dismounting, reassembly and adjustment of the electromechanical components of the automobile which are directly influential on a vehicle´s safety.

Safety precautions for accident prevention in the bodywork and paintwork repair shop make up another type of material offered to the customer in the new catalogue. The publications catalogue can be acquired with an accompanying CD-Card, which will allow the user to browse through the range of CESVIMAP products, and look at a video which shows the work of the Multimedia Area where products are prepared for publication.

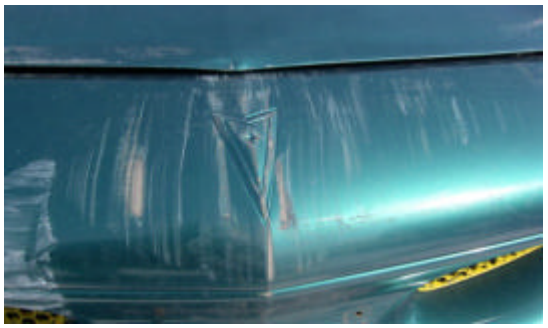
(CESVIMAP is at: www.cesvimap.com)

News From The Centres

MPI—Canada

Manitoba Public Insurance Research team has collaborated with a labour database supplier and an adhesive manufacturer to develop a bumper repair matrix to provide standardised times to repair various types of bumper damage. The intent for this effort is to make repair a first choice when appraising bumper damage thereby increasing the bumper repair/replace ratio.

Since bumpers are the parts with the highest collision frequency the repair option provides an obvious opportunity to reduce severity. Bumpers are not inexpensive items with OE pricing ranging from $300 to $900, with many bumpers for popular North American models retailing at the $500 mark (all CDN $). Although alternate parts such as recycled and aftermarket parts do provide a savings compared to their OE counterparts these still carry a hefty price tag with most alternate bumpers retailing at about 50-60% of the OE list price. Increasing the repair/replace ratio will not only provide cost reductions for the insurer but can also provide increased profits to the repair facility.



One sided repairs

Two sided repairs for cuts or splits in the base material

Repairing a bumper can also further help contain rising claims costs by reducing cycle times. Waiting for parts deliveries or for back-ordered parts can add substantially to loss of use costs and unnecessarily tie up production space in a repair outlet. In addition to reducing repair severity the repair option fits in with today's environment conscious world by reducing the number of discarded plastic parts going into landfills.

The team working on developing the repair matrix has completed the initial time studies. The project had set as a goal to arrive at a repair formula that could be easily applied to the majority of repairable damage. For this reason repair times were set based on surface area of the repair with specific allowances for tab and tear repairs. The formula also takes into account repairs that can be done with the bumper mounted on the vehicle (another severity reducer) or repairs that require a two-sided operation to achieve structural integrity.

Tab Repairs

Stretch/deformation

The project objectives also set out to develop a repair matrix that could be used for all plastic types relying on one popular repair method. Since not all plastics are of the same chemical composition, the matrix contains a menu for variations in plastic types that may require additional repair steps, such as applying adhesion promoters.

(MPI is at: www.mpi.mb.ca)

News From The Centres

VAT—Finland

New Technical Director at VAT

Tapani Alaviiri and Rainer Tuomainen

We were sad to say goodbye to Rainer and Aune Tuomainen at the 2004 RCAR Conference in Berlin, but we are delighted to welcome Rainer's replacement as Technical Director of VAT, Tapani Alaviiri.

Tapani is 44 years old and was born in Lapland, North-Finland, very close to the Artic Circle, where in the summer months the sun shines at midnight as well as at midday! He is married and has 6 children, the youngest is 5 months and oldest 14 years. His hobbies are karate (just a beginner) and motor cycling, Moto Cross and also street biking, both of which he enjoys with his eldest boy. He also has some winter hobbies: snowscootering, snowboarding and slalom.

Tapani's father started his insurance career in 1965 and worked for more than 30 years in different insurance sale works, so Tapani has been very close to insurance since he was 5 years old. He started his professional career from vocational school, where he started studying as a panel beater and painter. After graduation he worked as such in a repair shop and simultaneously continued studying to be a technician and then for an engineering degree. During this time he also worked as a voluntary school teacher, in a repair shop as a shop manager and in an insurance company as a damage assessor and team leader.

Over the past few years he has worked as a head of vehicle and boat damage assessment at the biggest insurance company in Scandinavia. His area of responsibility was Finland's 75,000 motor and boat damage claims. Cash flow was about 100 Million Euros. For a couple of years prior to that he was area manager in South-Finland, responsible for motor claims inspections and claims handling. During those years he has completed studies for an eMBA degree (banking and financial). During the past two years he has also been the chairman of VAT´s steering group.

Thus Tapani has either worked in or studied insurance or car repair for most of his life. He feels that his new job at VAT is the best place to use his experiences in claims and the repair industry. He says he knows that he will find the work challenging and that Rainer will be a hard act to follow, having held the post for 18 years. In Finland they have a saying: "Somebody left big boots behind him". So now Tapani says he will try to grow into those boots.

We look forward to welcoming Tapani Alaviiri to the RCAR meeting in Milan in September.

News From The Centres

KTI—Germany

KTI have a strong background in the repair of aluminium alloys in automobiles. Indeed the centre for some time has conducted courses training international delegates in aluminium welding and repair technology for the Audi A8. However more recently a new model of the Audi A6 has been introduced. This model uses a whole range of new technology which poses a major challenge to the repair of the vehicle in the field. A mix of material is used, including HHS—High Strength Steel, aluminium alloy, plastics and magnesium. These all pose repair problems which embrace such considerations as the segregation of tools (Al and Fe), which impacts on shop layout, coding of welders and their constant updating Other considerations include new processes for joining materials, ie movement from an emphasis on welding to soldering or bonding using various adhesives.

There are a range of challenges being assessed at present by KTI, but there is a need to work with other centres within RCAR and to adopt a joint approach to vehicle manufacturers over the question of introducing new technology that has an impact on the repair process.

A further consideration is that because the repair process is complex, rectification by repair reduces but rectification by replacement increases, as does the cost of overall repair as the size of the replacement modules grow.

The photographs show a damaged Audi A6 at the top of the page and below the vehicle being repaired.

(KTI is at: www.k-t-i.de)

Highway Safety—A Review of Progress

By Brian O'Neill
President, Insurance Institute for Highway Safety

Deaths and injuries from motor vehicle crashes constitute one of the biggest public health problems in the world today. A recent World Health Organization (WHO) report estimates that each year in high-income countries there are almost 120,000 motor vehicle crash deaths, and in low- and middle-income countries a staggering 1 million plus deaths occur; this brings the annual worldwide total to more than 1.1 million deaths. The burden on health care systems from nonfatal injuries is huge; for every death it is conservatively estimated that 15 injured people require hospital treatment.

All road users are at risk of being involved in a motor vehicle crash. However, there are big differences in the risks of death and serious injury. In low-and middle-income countries pedestrians and riders of two-wheel vehicles account for most of the deaths and serious injuries, whereas in high-income countries occupants of passenger vehicles are the biggest part of the problem.

Even though there are significant differences in the patterns of crash deaths and injuries in the different parts of the world, the fundamental problems and the approaches that have been shown to be effective are remarkably similar.

Highway Safety – the Early Efforts

High income countries such as the United States, which had significant motor vehicle traffic early in the last century, were first to experience the epidemic of crash deaths and injuries and first to formulate programs to address this problem. The almost exclusive focus of these early efforts, which continued into the 1960s, was on trying to prevent crashes by educating road users. Many modern approaches such as preventing injuries during crashes with seat belts, for example, were not considered.

These early highway safety efforts in the United States and elsewhere were largely failures. They didn't prevent many crashes, and the problem continued to worsen as more and more people used motor vehicles.

Highway Safety – The Public Health Approach

In the 1960s an alternative science-based public health approach started to replace the older education-oriented approach, and soon more effective countermeasures began to be adopted. Thus, for example, in 1961 the State of Victoria, Australia, at the urging of some physicians, made motorcycle helmet use compulsory. In 1967 the U.S. Congress passed legislation authorizing the federal government to set safety standards for new vehicles including standards for features to reduce injuries during crash events; as a result vehicle safety designs began to improve. In 1969 Victoria, Australia, made seat belt use compulsory. In the 1970s the U.S. federal agency responsible for road building for the first time set standards for the "safety" of roadsides requiring, for example, the use of breakaway sign supports and clear zones along the sides of highways, thereby starting a program to eliminate the numerous hazards that previously had unthinkingly been part of road design. This variety of approaches highlights a key difference in the public health approach, compared with earlier efforts: There should be countermeasures aimed at all aspects of the problem.

Another key aspect of the public health approach is that the efficacy of countermeasures should be scientifically evaluated before widespread adoption. The early highway safety programs were adopted because the advocates were so certain they would be effective they never felt the need to determine whether or not they actually worked, and they mostly didn't.

Today it is accepted that we need a range of effective countermeasures aimed at road users, vehicles, and the road environment.

Human Factors

Even though traffic patterns and exposure and the types of road users most at risk differ around the world, many of the problems and effective countermeasures are very similar. Road user behavior problems involve speed,

Highway Safety—A Review of Progress (Continued)

alcohol-impairment, and lack of belt and helmet use. Countermeasures that have been shown to be effective against these behavioral problems, with some local adjustments, can work in most countries. Thus, for example, it repeatedly has been demonstrated that well-enforced and publicized traffic laws are the keys to improving road user behavior. Traffic laws are effective when motorists become convinced that they risk apprehension and punishment if they violate them. Education alone fails because most motorists don't believe they will be in a crash and that it is other bad drivers who need to change their behavior, not themselves. It shouldn't be surprising that education fails when survey after survey in many countries reveal that virtually all drivers believe they are above average or at least average in their driving abilities, so they don't believe that their driving is a problem.

Road and Traffic Engineering

The road infrastructure plays an important role in highway safety. Separation of the different kinds of traffic, especially pedestrians and fast moving motor vehicles, reduces crash risks. Where separation isn't feasible, traffic calming schemes can slow down vehicles in residential urban areas. The use of traffic roundabouts instead of traffic signals at intersections reduces crashes. Using cameras to automate enforcement of laws against speeding and red light running also reduces crashes.

In many lower-income countries the road infrastructure poses major challenges, however. In countries such as India the roads frequently are shared by pedestrians, animal-drawn carts, motorcycles, three-wheeled motorized rickshaws, cars, trucks, and buses. Under these circumstances special localized countermeasures need to be developed.

Making Vehicles Safer

Changes to motor vehicle designs to make them safer are key components of modern highway safety efforts and of particular interest to RCAR members and our supporting insurers. Tremendous progress has been made in improving vehicle safety designs in the past 40 years.

This progress has occurred in two major stages. Beginning in the late 1960s it began to be recognized that governments needed to play roles in establishing minimum safety standards for automobile design. The first comprehensive set of vehicle safety standards was issued in the United States in 1967. These included requirements for features such as energy-absorbing steering columns, high-penetration resistant laminated windshields, head restraints, lap and shoulder belts, etc.

Within a few years similar sets of safety standards for new vehicles were adopted in Europe, Australia, Canada, and elsewhere. Today variations of European or U.S. standards are used in most countries. While there are some differences in the standards around the world (e.g., U.S. and European side impact protection requirements use different mobile deformable barriers as impactors and different crash test dummies), there are many similarities and the same aspects of safety performance tend to be covered.

The second stage began when car companies recognized the importance of the marketplace. Until relatively recently most car manufacturers firmly believed that safety would not sell cars. Mandatory standards were presumed to be the only way to improve vehicle safety without putting individual manufacturers at a competitive disadvantage. Except for companies like Volvo and Mercedes-Benz safety was not featured in marketing. It was not until 1987 that a Ford executive admitted that the myth about safety not selling was "yesterday's news. Times have changed. People are interested" (Table 1).

Table 1
Percentage of new car buyers for whom safety features are "extremely important" or "very important" reasons for buying

1981	64%
1983	67%
1985	73%
1987	74%
1989	76%
1991	77%
1993	79%
1995	83%
1997	83%
1999	84%
2000	85%
2001	85%
2002	81%
2003	81%

Source: DaimlerChrysler New Vehicle Experience

Highway Safety—A Review of Progress (Continued)

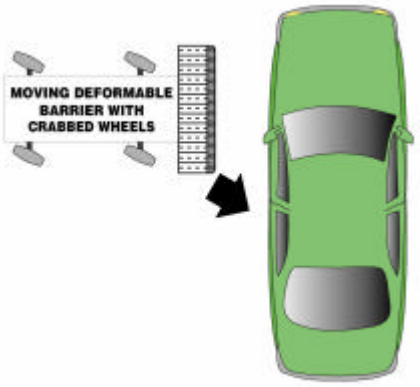
Now virtually all automakers are moving faster on safety advancements than government regulations require, and they are featuring safety advancements in advertising.

Crash testing new vehicles for consumer information, which began more than 20 years ago in the United States, has become an established source of comparative vehicle safety information. These tests have been very effective in prompting automakers to improve their crashworthiness designs.

The first crash tests conducted for consumer information were the U.S. federal government's New Car Assessment Program (NCAP) impacts, begun in 1979. Frontal tests in this program are 35 mi/h (56 km/h) full-width impacts against a flat, rigid barrier. Vehicle ratings are based on injury measures from belted Hybrid III dummies in the driver and right front passenger seats. These measures indicate the risk of serious and life-threatening injuries to the head or chest in serious frontal crashes. NCAP results are summarized in star ratings; 5 stars represent the best performance, 1 star the worst.

The program expanded in 1997 when side impacts were added to the frontal tests. U.S. NCAP side impacts use a moving deformable barrier (MDB) with a deformable front end weighing 3,014 lb (1,367 kg) representing the height of the front of a car to strike the sides of the vehicles being assessed at 38.5 mi/h (61.9 km/h). Star ratings indicate the chance of life-threatening chest injury for the driver and a rear passenger (Figure 1).

Figure 1
NHTSA NCAP side impact test



Barrier weight: 3,014 lb (1,367 kg)
Impact speed: 38.5 mi/h (61.9 km/h)

The crabbed approach makes this test equivalent to a 35 mi/h (56.3 km/h) impact Into the side of a vehicle moving at 15 mi/h (24.1 km/h)

U.S. NCAP recently was expanded again, this time to include rollover resistance ratings. These are based on each vehicle's width and center of gravity height and its performance in handling tests. As with the front and side programs, star ratings are used to indicate performance.

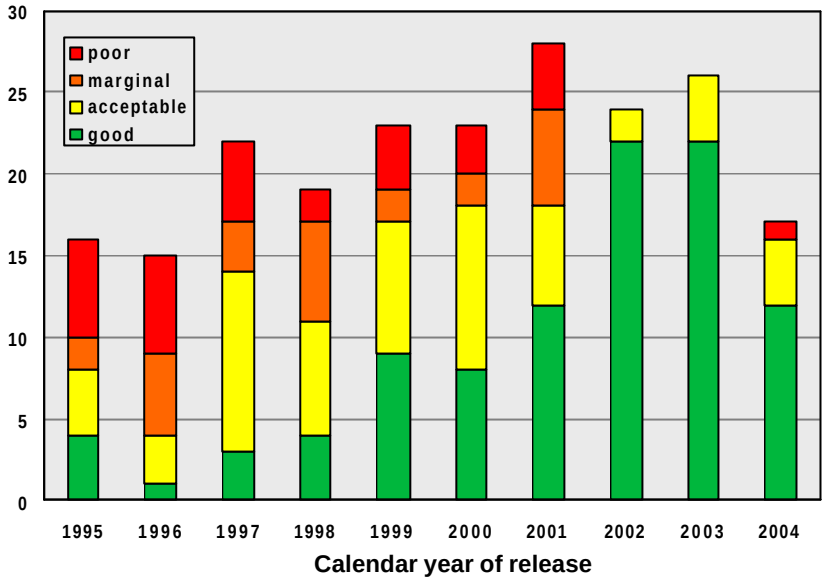
IIHS Crashworthiness Evaluations

In 1995 IIHS began frontal offset crash tests of new passenger vehicles to provide additional consumer information about crashworthiness. In these tests 40 percent of a car's front-end width strikes a barrier with a deformable element at 40 mi/h (64 km/h). Each car's overall evaluation is based on three aspects of performance. Foremost is structural performance based on measures indicating the amount and pattern of intrusion into the driver space. Injury risk indicators are obtained from a belted 50th percentile male Hybrid III driver dummy. How well the restraint system controls dummy movement during the crash also is assessed. Each tested car gets an overall evaluation (good, acceptable, marginal, or poor) based on these three aspects of performance.

As with U.S. NCAP, this offset test program quickly has produced improvements in vehicle performance. In 1995 when the program began and for several years, many of the vehicles tested were poor performers. Now almost all of them are rated good or acceptable (Figure 2).

Highway Safety—A Review of Progress (Continued)

Figure 2
IIHS frontal crash worthiness evaluations, 1995-2004

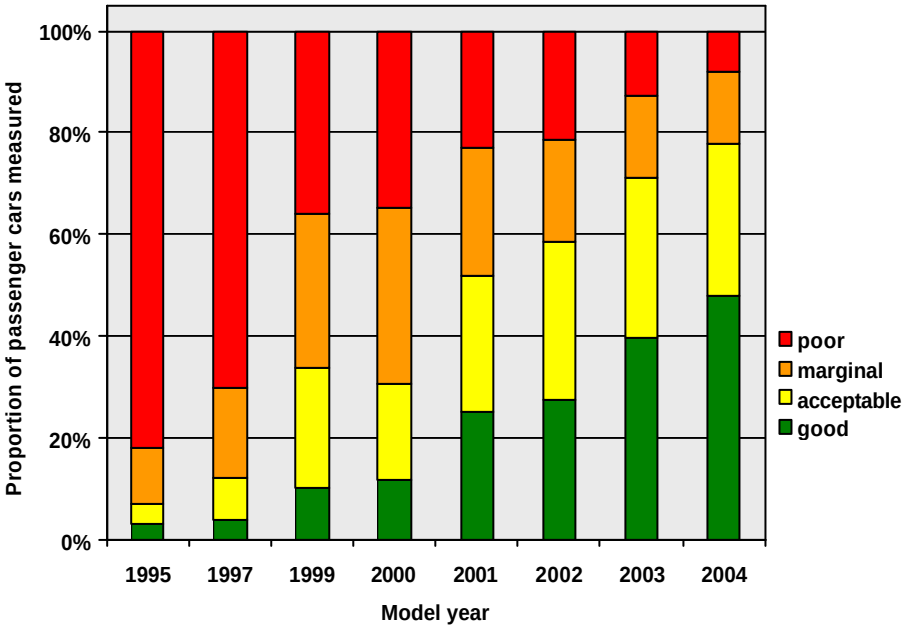


In 1995 IIHS also began rating the geometry of head restraints. These rating procedures became the basis for the RCAR standard on head restraint geometry. This program has resulted in dramatic improvements in the geometry of head restraints in the U.S. market (Figure 3).

Last year, in conjunction with several other RCAR centers, IIHS added dynamic tests of seats and head restraints to its geometric rating. We expect this program to result in further improvements to seat and head restraint designs to prevent whiplash injuries.

The changing vehicle mix in the United States resulting from the growing populations of SUVs and pickups and high risks to occupants of cars struck in the side by taller vehicles such as SUVs or pickups, led IIHS to begin a new side impact testing program for consumer information in 2003. For this program the U.S. government's side impact MDB was modified so the front end represents the higher geometry of a typical SUV or pickup. The resulting barrier is higher off the ground, taller, and contoured compared with the federal MDB.

Figure 3
Evaluations of head restraint geometry, passenger cars, 1995-2004



Highway Safety—A Review of Progress (Continued)

The test configuration is a 31 mi/h (50 km/h) perpendicular impact into the driver side of a passenger vehicle. The MDB striking the test vehicle weighs 3,308 pounds (1,500 kg). In each side-struck vehicle are two instrumented SID-IIs dummies representing small (5th percentile) females, one in the driver seat and the other in the rear seat behind the driver. This program, begun in 2003, already has prompted manufacturers to begin improving side impact protection (Figure 4).

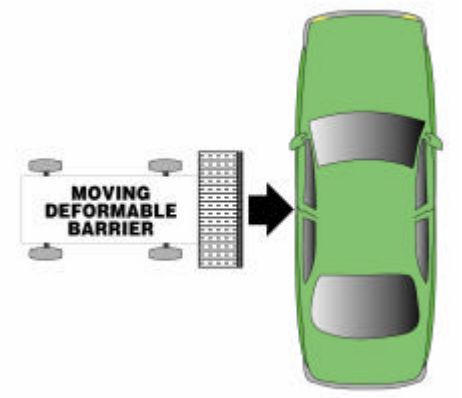
Figure 4
Typical passenger car and NHTSA and IIHS MDBs

NHTSA MDB **IIHS MDB**

Other NCAP Testing

Since the mid- to late-1990s crash testing programs have provided consumers with comparative vehicle safety information in a number of countries. European NCAP (EuroNCAP) began providing consumer information in 1997. In this program each vehicle model is subjected to a 40 mi/h (64 km/h) frontal offset test and a side impact test. The MDB in the side impact test is sized like the front end of a car, but this barrier weighs less (2,094 vs. 3,014 lb) and has a different deformable barrier face than the one used in the U.S. side impact NCAP tests (Figure 5).

Figure 5
European side impact test



Barrier weight: 2,094 lb (950 kg)
Impact speed: 31 mi/h (50 km/h)

Each vehicle's overall evaluation using star ratings is based on performance in both tests, together with performance in an optional (18 mi/h (29 km/h)) side-into-pole test to assess head airbags if they are offered (the MDB used in the side impacts does not assess head protection).

Highway Safety—A Review of Progress (Continued)

EuroNCAP also conducts tests to assess pedestrian protection. A series of tests are conducted to replicate collisions involving the heads and legs of child and adult pedestrians.

The Australian New Car Assessment Program (ANCAP) gives consumers information on the occupant and pedestrian protection of new vehicles using the same tests and rating system as EuroNCAP.

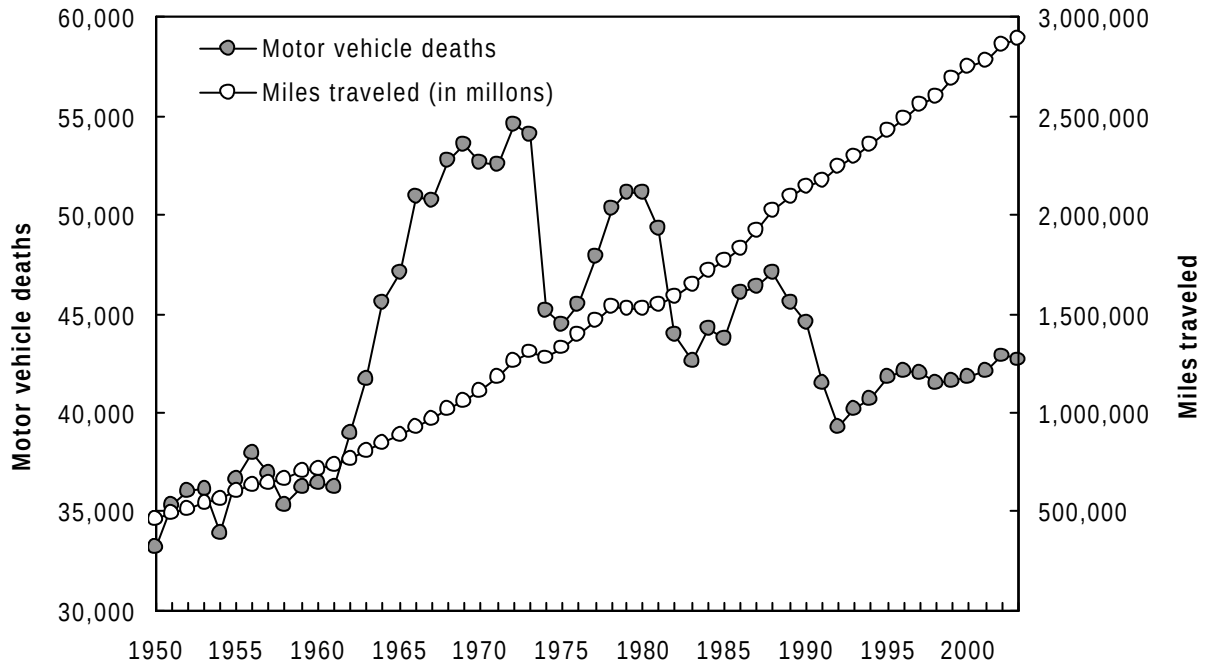
The Japanese NCAP began in 1996. The current program includes three tests of each vehicle: a full frontal impact, a frontal offset impact, and a side impact. The results of all three are combined to get an overall rating from 1 (poor) to 6 (good) stars.

Conclusions

Since the modern approach to highway safety was adopted in the late 1960s, motor vehicle crash deaths in the United States have declined dramatically. In the early 1950s, more than 35,000 crash deaths occurred annually. Deaths increased dramatically through the 1960s, peaking at just over 56,000 deaths in 1972. Since then the annual number of crash deaths has been on a long-term decline albeit with some short-term upswings, and today deaths number about 42,000 per year.

Unfortunately in recent years the decline in deaths actually has reversed, indicating that we can never be complacent about highway safety. These increases can be attributed in part to increases in travel speeds, increased motorcycle use by older riders (many of whom ride unhelmeted), and a slowdown in efforts to combat alcohol-impaired driving (Figure 6).

Figure 6
Motor vehicle crash deaths and total miles traveled, 1950-2003



Many other high-income countries have seen similar, or in some cases even larger, reductions in motor vehicle crash deaths from the 1970s to today. Unfortunately in many low- and middle-income countries, deaths are increasing dramatically. It is imperative that these countries with high death tolls learn from both the early mistakes and the more recent successes in the United States and other high-income countries. There can be no substitute for a science-based public health approach to the problem.

Highway Safety—A Review of Progress (Continued)

Brian O'Neill is President of the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety and the Highway Loss Data Institute, research and communications organizations dedicated to reducing deaths, injuries, and property damage on the nation's highways. Both organizations are funded by auto insurers.

A highway safety expert consulted frequently by both print and electronic media reporters, Mr. O'Neill appears regularly on NBC Dateline, on other TV news magazine shows, and on network news programs.

Mr. O'Neill joined the IIHS research department in 1969, was a founder of HLDI in 1972, and became president of both organizations in 1985. He is the author of numerous scientific papers, co-author of *The Injury Fact Book*, and has served on the boards and committees of many highway safety groups.

Educated in England with a degree in mathematics and statistics, Mr. O'Neill came to the United States in 1966 and now resides in Falls Church, Virginia.

Euro NCAP Results

Euro NCAP released their latest results on 2 March to coincide with the Geneva Motor Show.

For the first time the 36 point list score was breached by a Super-Mini and makes history as the highest score achieved by any car. The car—Peugeot's 1007—also achieved the top Five Star occupant protection rating.

Results published for recently tested vehicles are as follows:

Small MPV	**Occupant**	**Child**	**Pedestrian**
Honda FR-V	4 Stars	3 Stars	3 Stars
Super-Minis			
Peugeot 1007	5 Stars	3 Stars	2 Stars
Suzuki Swift	4 Stars	3 Stars	3 Stars

Related sites:

Australia	www.nrma.com.au
Japan	www.crashtest.com
USA	www.nhtsa.gov/cars/testing/ncap
	www.highwaysafety.org

Research Council for Automobile Repairs

Pound House
Lockeridge
Marlborough, Wiltshire
SN8 4EL United Kingdom

Phone: +44 1672 861072
Fax: +44 870 705 8565
Email: michael.smith@rcar.org

Dates For Your Diary

SAE 2005 World Congress is to be held in Detroit, Michigan, 11-14 April 2005. (**www.sae.org/congress)**

Automotive Testing Expo 2005 Europe is to be held in Stuttgart, Germany, 31 May—2 June 2005. (**www.testing-expo.com)**

International Bodyshop Industry Symposium (IBIS) is to be held in Montreux, Switzerland, 8-10 June 2005. (**www.ibisworldwide.com.)**

19th ESV 2005 will be held in Washington, USA, 6-9 June 2005 . (**www-esv2005.nhtsa.dot.gov)**

Annual RCAR Conference 2005 is to be held in Milan, Italy, 4-9 September 2005 and will be hosted by CESTAR.

49th Annual Conference of the Association for the Advancement of Automotive Medicine (AAAM) is to be held in Boston, Massachusetts, 11-14 September 2005. (**www.carcrash.org)**

49th STAPP Car Crash Conference is to be held in Washington DC, 9-11 November 2005. (**www.stapp.org)**

NACE 2005 is to be held in Las Vegas, Nevada, 2-5 November 2005. (**www.naceexpo.com)**

The RCAR Network

Of the 25 RCAR Centres in 18 countries, 22 have web sites. Addresses are to be found on www.rcar.org. For convenience, web sites are also listed below.

AZT	www.allianz-azt.de
Centro Zaragoza	www.centro-zaragoza.com
Cesvimap	www.cesvimap.com
Cesvi Argentina	www.cesvi.com.ar
Cesvi Brasil	www.cesvibrasil.com.br
Cesvi Colombia	www.cesvicolombia.com
Cesvi Mexico	www.cesvimexico.com.mx
CESTAR Italy	www.cestar.it
Folksam Auto	www.folksamauto.com
ICBC	www.icbc.com
IIHS	www.highwaysafety.org
JKC	www.jikencenter.co.jp
KART	www.kidi.co.kr
KTI	www.k-t-i.de
Lansforsakringar	www.lansforsakringar.se
MPI	www.mpi.mb.ca
NRMA/IAG	www.nrma.com.au
State Farm	www.statefarm.com
Tech-Cor	www.tech-cor.com
Thatcham	www.thatcham.org
VIC/IBC	www.vicc.com
MRC Malaysia	www.e-mrc.com.my

From The Secretary General

Welcome to the March 2005 Newsletter. This is full of news from around the world and I am sure will be of interest to both RCAR Members and the global automotive community. The cover story celebrates the opening of the KART crash test facility which adds to the global investment of RCAR Members in the US, South America, Europe and Asia in these very important facilities. We congratulate the staff of KART and their colleagues in KIDI.

Work on head and neck injury is reported in the newsletter. It seems a long time ago since I wrote to NHTSA giving the RCAR view on head restraint geometry and this, together with submissions from State Farm, IIHS, ICBC and others has now worked through into the NHTSA Federal rule effective from 2009 model year (see IIHS news). Meanwhile RCAR centres are leading change both for the geometric and through the International Insurance Whiplash Prevention Group (IIWPG) for dynamic aspects of vehicle design to reduce head and neck injury. Members may also wish to review the recent RCAR news release, protocols and rationale on the RCAR web site: www.rcar.org/What's New?. Whilst on the subject of head and neck injury, congratulations to John Gane of ICBC and his team (see ICBC article) for the Head Restraint Measuring Device (HRMD). Dr Jocelyn Pedder, principal designer, is also in the ICBC photograph. Without this basic measurement tool scientific whiplash prevention activity would have died at birth.

Dismantling and recycling of vehicles remains a key issue. European centres, notably Folksam, CESVIMAP and VAT have been active for some time now. However this newsletter reports more global activity from Argentina and Japan. Recycling facilities generally are a major investment but clearly the combination of government regulation and commercial return provide good motivators for the capital outlay.

This newsletter's main technical article is contributed by Brian O'Neill of IIHS who reviews vehicle safety, bringing a global dimension to the subject. NCAP has grown internationally as has co-operation between insurance funded research centres that make up the RCAR community. My thanks to Brian, who is uniquely placed to write such an article.

Planning for the RCAR Conference 2005 has started and I am spending a day with Antonino Arrigo of CESTAR in Milan, Italy, shortly. Members responded quickly on the question of bringing the conference forward by one week to incorporate the F1 Grand Prix at Monza. New dates for the RCAR meeting are 4-9 September with the actual Grand Prix on Sunday 4 September 2005.

I send you all best wishes from England in Springtime.

Michael Smith