

SAFETY OF ROAD TRANSPORT SYSTEM AND ROAD SAFETY PROGRAMMES IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

Jiří Kozlovský¹, Ivo Drahotský²

Road transport system

Nowadays, use of road transport system is increasing. Construction (and upgrade) of road transport infrastructure lags behind the rate of growth in passenger and goods transport. Increasing of traffic density means more conflict situations and consequently more traffic accidents. Road transport system is the most dangerous transport mode for people. Other transport modes (air, rail, water) use modern technology, such as radar and computer technology. Movement of aircraft, trains and ships is often secured by sophisticated technological processes (traffic management). The result is that planes can safely fly in high-speeds and kilometres above the Earth's surface. Although trains are limited by fixed transport routes (rails) and their heavy weight makes them difficulties to stop, they are still much safer than road transport. The current road transport system is burdened with the human factor. Almost no tolerance of human failure exists. Every human error can mean loss of human lives.

History of road traffic accident in the Czech Republic

Road traffic system has been monitored in the Czech Republic (CR) since the 1950s. The increase of accidents has been observed since the early 1960s and it is associated with a gradual growth in motorization. The most people died in car accidents in 1969, it was 1 758 people. In the first half of the 1980s the Czech Republic (former CSSR) belonged to the states with relatively low accident rates. The least people died in 1987, it was 766 people. The reason could be the socio-political system that enforced the discipline for drivers with various restrictions, prohibitions and high penalties.

Between the 1980s and 1990s the socio-political conditions were liberated. Rapid motorization was followed by an increase of the accident rate (up to the first half of the 1990s). A new “record” was in 1994, when 1 474 people died in car accidents. The CR is getting one of the last places in Europe. The government has solved the situation. The

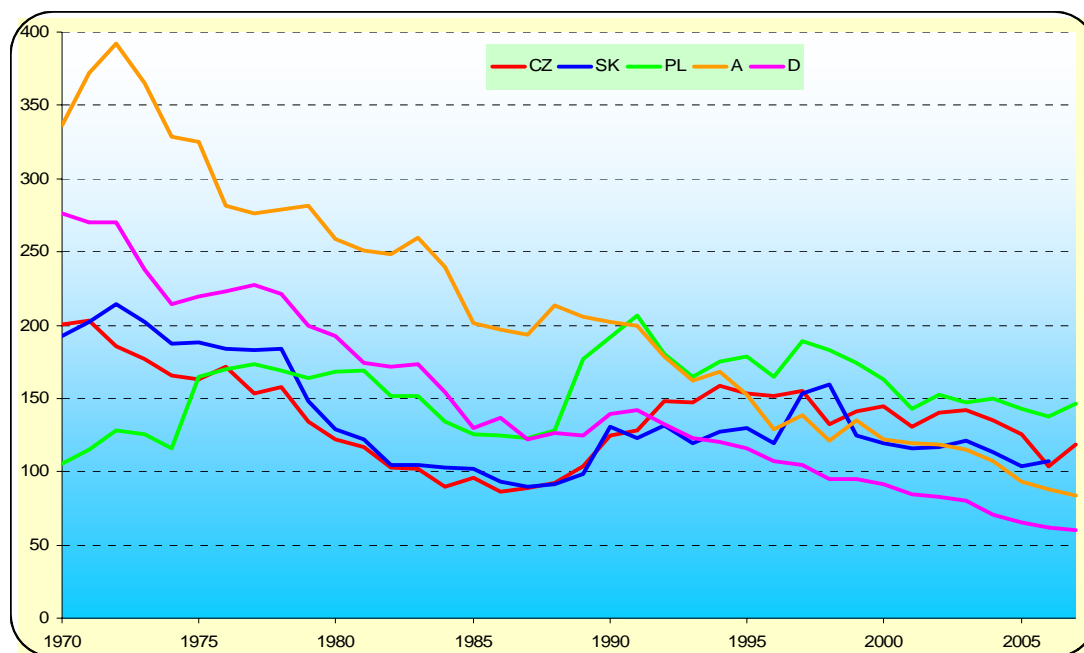
¹ Ing. Jiří Kozlovský, Univerzita Pardubice, DFJP, Katedra dopravního managementu, marketingu a logistiky, Studentská 95, 532 10 Pardubice, st18375@student.upce.cz

² doc. Ing. Ivo Drahotský, Ph.D., Univerzita Pardubice, DFJP, Katedra dopravního managementu, marketingu a logistiky, Studentská 95, 532 10 Pardubice, ivo.drahotsky@upce.cz

situation is improving gradually. In 2004 the government accepted the "National Road Safety Strategy". Its objective was to reduce the number of deaths in road traffic to 50% in the comparison the year 2002 by 2010. The introduction of the point system influenced on a significant decrease in car accidents. Unfortunately the defects of point system were published and discussed in the media. The point system was often violated by politicians without penalties. Therefore the accident rate started growing again. In 2007 the Czech Republic reached the penultimate place in Europe. Next years were fortunately positive. The objectives of the "Strategy" were not achieved, in 2011 a revised "National Road Safety Strategy 2011-2020" was accepted.

For international comparing and measuring it is possible to use IRTAD ("International Road Traffic and Accident Database"). The aim is to record and explain the causes leading to high levels of road traffic accidents in the road transport system. Other international surveys have been carried out within the project SARTRE 1 (1991), 2 (1998) and 3 (2004) ("Social Attitudes to Road Traffic Risk in Europe").

Fig. 1. Accident rates – The number of fatalities per million inhabitants (1970–2007) [2]



Road Safety Programmes in the CR

"The National Road Safety Strategy for the period 2011–2020"

It is based on the European transport policy ("White paper"). "National Strategy" was approved on 10th of July, 2011. The official national document coordinates the efforts to improve road safety. The main objective is to reduce the number of deaths in road transport to

the average level of the EU by 2020 and to reduce the number of seriously injured people by 40%.

Nadace partnerství (“Partnership Foundation”)

“Partnership Foundation” implements its own transport campaign. It monitors and presents the latest knowledge in transport. It contributes to the development of friendly modes of transport; it initiates and supports the measures that increase the safety of all road users. Priority topics are: traffic calming in towns and villages, health and safety the most vulnerable road users (pedestrians and cyclists) and the development of sustainable transport, transport and civil society.

“BESIP”

BESIP performs preventive activities in the field of safety and traffic flows on the roads. Another focus is on preventive activities in the areas of human factors in the form of national campaigns, road traffic education and information. BESIP cooperates with other central government organizations that operate in the area of accident prevention. It provides preventive activities in the regions through its regional staff.

“BESIP Team”

This project provides a personal experience. The project which is designed for road users informs about basic traffic rules, use of car seats and bicycle equipment. It uses a car and motorcycle simulator, crash simulator and short educational films. The objective is to enhance road safety.

“The Action”

Multimedia prevention project was focused on young road users. It uses emotional experience of real impacts of traffic accidents. The topics are: permanent disability and death among young people, true stories of firefighters, paramedics, police officers and victims of road accidents. The project has been organized since 2004. More than 80 thousand of students have seen almost 200 performances with music and video clips.

Nemyslíš, zaplatíš! (“If you don’t think you will pay!”)

Nationwide internet and television campaign of the “Ministry of Transport” was aimed at drivers under 25 years and the most common causes of traffic accidents. The topics are

aggressive driving, drugs and alcohol. The campaign includes the testimony of the victims. It is very evocative and emotional.

Domluvme-se (“Designated Driver”)

The project was aimed at young drivers with the main theme of driving under the influence of alcohol. The concept is based on similar programmes from abroad (“EuroBob”, “Captain de Soirée”). The project has been organized since 2006 with the involvement of the “Responsible Brewers Initiative”. Today the project is partially replaced by similar project “Pij-s-rozumem.cz”.

Bezpečná obec (“Safe Community”)

The objective of the project was to offer complex solutions of road safety in towns and villages by providing the necessary information to responsible persons and institutions. The project implemented a series of ideas that were published in the “National Road Safety Strategy”. Main topics: management, coordination and analytical activities, traffic education, traffic engineering, communication activities, funding and legislation.

Bezpečné prejazdy (“Safe Train Crossings”)

“Safe Train Crossings” is the joint project of BESIP and the Czech Railways. The first part of the campaign was focused on hazardous road drivers. It started on October 2005. Another part of the campaign was focused on children and youths.

Conclusion

One of the commitments of modern European society is to reduce the number of accidents in road transport system. The priority is to reduce the serious injuries and to protect of the road users lives. Systematic care of quality infrastructure, the technical conditions of vehicles and education of the road transport users can do a lot. We should pay more attention to road safety as we do it now between transport and environment. A small mistake in transport can cause serious consequences. Overestimation of own abilities and underestimating of the risks in road transport may be the last mistake in our lives.

References:

- [1] Tesařík, J., Sobotka, P.: *Informace o nehodovosti na komunikacích České republiky za rok 2008* [online]. Policie České republiky. Dostupný na WWW: <http://www.policie.cz/clanek/statistika-nehodovosti-178464.aspx>.

- [2] *Revize a aktualizace Národní strategie bezpečnosti silničního provozu na období 2008 - 2010 (2012)* [online]. Ministerstvo dopravy. Dostupný na WWW:
<<http://www.ibesip.cz/Informace-BESIP/Narodni-strategie-BESIP/Narodni-strategie-BESIP-2004-2010>>.
- [3] *Dopravní politika České republiky na léta 2005-2013* [online]. Ministerstvo dopravy. Dostupný na WWW:
<http://www.mdcr.cz/cs/Strategie/Dopravni_politika/Dopravni_politika.htm>.

Referee: Ing. Andrej Dávid, PhD., University of Žilina
Enter to publishing: 30th October 2012