

TIRF

NEXT STEP



Canadian Coalition on
DISTRACTED DRIVING

DISTRACTED DRIVING: A NATIONAL ACTION PLAN

Traffic Injury Research Foundation, February 2017

The Canadian Coalition on Distracted Driving is a national partnership comprised of 24 key agencies representing government, enforcement, health, industry and communities. At the first meeting of the CCDD in June 2016, members examined a range of priorities that provided insight into potential tools that can support agency strategies to prevent distracted driving. There are no doubt many other gaps that require attention. The components of this National Action Plan were selected because they represent some of the most essential actions that can best meet the needs of the many different agencies with a vested interest in this issue. Some of the tasks included in the Action Plan are repeatedly duplicated by individual agencies because natural mechanisms to share information are lacking. This approach creates inefficiency at great cost, and the collective expertise of the CCDD members can help mitigate demands on staff within agencies that perform these tasks.

Most importantly, it is essential that coordinated action begin immediately due to the seriousness of the problem, and the increasingly negative consequences that will result if it is left unaddressed. In an era of heavy workloads, staffing cuts, and overwhelming demands, the most challenging step of any change process is to get started. As such, TIRF, DIAD, The Co-operators, and the members of the Canadian Coalition on Distracted Driving are committed to helping agencies take the first step. In the next six months, the development of a series of tools that can guide and assist agencies in their respective efforts will be produced by the Coalition. These tools will be shared with agencies across Canada to inspire action and inform the development of agency strategies to tackle distracted driving and increase safety on our roads.

There are 15 components of the National Action Plan:

Education & Prevention

1. Create a fact-sheet that summarizes the research about effective behaviour change strategies, including habits and strategies to change them, to inform the development of distracted driving campaigns.
2. Summarize key talking points that stakeholders can use with the public and the media to encourage the use of appropriate terminology to describe crash events.
3. Prepare a fact-sheet for stakeholders to use as part of media communications to describe the facts about the size of the distracted driving problem, the consequences and the costs.
4. Build a distracted driving repository of relevant information and an associated toolkit to share evidence-based practices that can be considered by stakeholders and shared with policymakers.



5. Organize a working group of health practitioners to select feasible strategies to educate and engage health professionals in this sector to create health strategies to reduce distracted driving.
6. Build partnerships with media outlets and journalists to enhance fact-based media coverage of distracted driving, beyond individual crashes, and share current knowledge and research about this issue.

Enforcement

7. Establish a working group of knowledgeable practitioners representing licensing, law enforcement, and justice to explore options to strengthen legislation for distracted driving offences and promote a comprehensive array of strategies to change behaviour.
8. Develop brief, educational materials for police agencies to increase awareness among officers about the risks associated with distracted driving and the importance of enforcement to change driver behaviour.
9. Identify the most significant in-vehicle distractions that put officers at risk and create a practical policy to help them minimize distractions behind the wheel.

Data & Research

10. Consult with enforcement, transportation and health agencies to explore the development of a standard, uniform definition of distracted driving for the purposes of data collection, as well as determine what specific types of distractions can be reasonably, reliably and consistently included in data sources. Practices to facilitate the reasonable collection of data will also be considered.
11. Document the sources of distracted driving data that are publicly available, as well as the types of data that these sources contain in order to increase awareness of data collection initiatives and facilitate research activities.



Technology & Industry

12. Facilitate the development of industry leadership, including vehicle and electronic device industries specifically, in concert with government consultation (as appropriate) to strengthen initiatives to track and safety test new features and products that will be widely used in vehicles to ensure they minimize distraction. Opportunities for technology providers to proactively block distractions and develop technology solutions will also be discussed.
13. Convene a meeting of insurance industry representatives to identify opportunities to improve data collection and tracking of distracted drivers, and to properly assess the risk posed by these drivers.
14. Develop a concrete business case that illustrates the costs to employers associated with distracted driving. Supplementary actions to support the business case will include compiling available information, tools, materials, templates and resources to guide, support and inform the development of reasonable workplace distracted driving policies.
15. Organize a working group that represents industries with employees that are more prone to distraction to develop practical policies that balance safety and productivity. Vehicle manufacturers can play an important role in this working group to help mitigate distractions. Vehicle manufacturers can play an important role in this working group to help mitigate distractions.



Traffic Injury Research Foundation

The mission of the Traffic Injury Research Foundation (TIRF) is to reduce traffic-related deaths and injuries. TIRF is a national, independent, charitable road safety institute. Since its inception in 1964, TIRF has become internationally recognized for its accomplishments in a wide range of subject areas related to identifying the causes of road crashes and developing programs and policies to address them effectively.

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Drop It And Drive

Drop It And Drive (DIAD) is a non-profit, international, British Columbia-based organization that has presented its reality-based seminars to more than 55,000 students, faculty and workers throughout Canada and the United States since its launch in late 2010. DIAD's mission is to prevent injuries and fatalities caused by distracted driving, distractions in the workplace and distracted walking. DIAD actively promotes the need for societal change to effectively address road, pedestrian and workplace safety.



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