Road Safety Analysis 2013
THE BAHAMAS

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Index

Introduction ......................................................................................................................... 1  
Country information ........................................................................................................... 2  
The Bahamas’ situation relative to the Latin American and the Caribbean region .......... 3  
Key road safety indicators in The Bahamas ...................................................................... 4  
Compliance with the Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011-2020 .... 6  
Road safety milestones in The Bahamas .......................................................................... 8  
SWOT analysis and suggested courses of action ............................................................. 9

Summary

In 2012, The Bahamas had 12.1 road fatalities per 100,000 population, significantly below the Latin American and the Caribbean regional average (17.2 fatalities per 100,000 population), although still well above the average in high-income countries (8.7 fatalities per 100,000 population). This rate was relatively stable between 2006 and 2012, with only the significant increase in 2009 being an outlier. About half of road fatalities during 2012 were vulnerable road users; of which 29% were pedestrians. The National Road Safety Strategy 2010-2020 established as an objective a 20% reduction in the number of serious injuries and fatalities over the strategy’s life.

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Introduction

The IDB’s Road Safety Strategy is considered groundbreaking in the region. With this effort, the Bank aims to lead a process of change that will promote road safety actions in Latin America and the Caribbean with a goal of permanently reducing the region’s high rate of traffic accidents.

More than 1.2 million people die each year on the world’s roads, and approximately 50 million suffer nonfatal injuries. The latest surveys of road safety in Latin America and the Caribbean¹ show that the region’s road fatality rate is approximately 17 fatalities per 100,000 population, compared to an average for high-income countries of less than 10 fatalities per 100,000 population. By 2020, these figures are expected to jump to 24 fatalities per 100,000 population. Should these estimates for 2020 prove accurate, Latin America and the Caribbean as a region will have the highest road fatality rate in the world.

The Road Safety Strategy is aligned under the five pillars of the “Decade of Action”² with the intention of implementing concrete actions – and measurable results – that contribute towards meeting the target set by the United Nations of reducing the number of road fatalities by 50% by 2020. Specifically, the Bank seeks to:

1. Strengthen the institutional and technical capacity, as well as the integration of actions among stakeholders such as ministries of health, education, transport, etc.

2. Create an attitude of civil responsibility in the subject of road safety, by means of awareness and communication campaigns.

3. Enhance the capacity to mobilize resources for road safety.

4. Support regional dialogue among different stakeholders, in order to place road safety as a priority on the political agendas of the region’s governments (including different sectors, even Ministries of Finance).

5. Promote the transfer of knowledge and best practices in the field of road safety.

6. Support the regulation of vehicle safety standards.

To achieve these goals, it is necessary to understand the situation in the Latin America and Caribbean region. For this reason, the IDB is publishing a collection of Road Safety Analyses for countries in the Latin America and the Caribbean region, of which this Analysis is a part.

¹ Diagnostic 2005-2009 y Diagnostic 2010-2012
The Bahamas

Demographic and economic data

Population trend in The Bahamas

Source: United Nations

Gross domestic product per capita (US$)

Source: Bahamas Department of Statistics and International Monetary Fund

Trend in the gross domestic product (%)

Source: Bahamas Department of Statistics

Motorization rate

The motorization rate (number of motorized vehicles per 1,000 inhabitants) decreased slightly in the period 2008-2012.

Motorized vehicle fleet in The Bahamas: 133,515
(Source: Ministry of Works and Transport, 2012)

Road infrastructure

Road network length: 2,693 kilometers
(Source: International Road Federation, 2000)

Unpaved roads

Paved roads

Paved road network in The Bahamas (2000)
Key road safety indicators in The Bahamas

Road fatalities

Evolution of the number of deaths within 30 days after the accident

Source: Road Traffic Department

Road fatalities per 100,000 population and per million vehicles

Source: Road Traffic Department
Key road safety indicators in The Bahamas

Vulnerable road users (2012)

48% of fatalities that occur within 30 days of the accident were vulnerable road users, namely users of motor vehicles with 2 or 3 wheels, cyclists or pedestrians.

Source: Road Traffic Department

Successful experiences in The Bahamas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HUMAN FACTOR</th>
<th>INSTITUTIONAL FACTOR</th>
<th>VEHICLE FACTOR</th>
<th>INFRASTRUCTURE FACTOR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National Road Safety Strategy for The Bahamas 2010-2020</td>
<td></td>
<td>Carrying out road safety inspections and audits on projects with multilateral funding</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Compliance with the Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011-2020 in The Bahamas

PILLAR 1: Road safety management

COORDINATING BODY: Road Traffic Department

COUNTRY STRATEGY: National Road Safety Strategy for the Bahamas 2010-2020

TARGETS: The broad objective of the Plan is to reduce the number of seriously injured and fatalities in traffic accidents by 20% in the period of implementation of the National Strategy.

FUNDS: Financing through public budgets

PILLAR 2: Safer roads and mobility

INDEPENDENT EVALUATIONS: Carrying out road safety inspections and audits on projects with multilateral funding.

PILLAR 3: Safer vehicles

VEHICLE INSPECTION: Private vehicles must pass a technical test once a year, while public vehicles must do so twice a year.
Compliance with the Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011-2020 in The Bahamas

PILLAR 4: Safer road users

- SPEED LIMITS: Legislation and enforcement
- ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION AND DRIVING: Legislation
- SAFETY BELT: Legislation and enforcement
- HELMET ON MOTORCYCLES AND MOPED: Legislation and enforcement
- CHILD RESTRAINT SYSTEMS: Legislation and enforcement
- AWARENESS: Campaigns to raise road safety awareness
- LEARNING TO DRIVE: Theoretical and practical exams and medical examination

PILLAR 5: Response after accidents

- EMERGENCY RESPONSE NUMBER: Nationwide emergency telephone system (911 or 919)
- PROFESSIONAL TRAINING: Specific training for doctors and nurses
- COMPULSORY INSURANCE: Required by law
Road safety milestones in The Bahamas

This chapter presents the number of fatalities that occurred within 30 days of an accident as a result of injuries sustained in the incident and forecasts for the decade 2011-2020 according to UN estimations in the Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety.

![Graph showing road fatalities and forecasts](image)

- **Road fatalities (30 days)**
- **Expected increase without actions**
- **Expected decrease if measures are taken**

Evolution of road fatalities within 30 days of the accident
SWOT analyses

STRENGTHS
- A comprehensive road safety plan with objectives and funding
- Strong legal framework for road safety
- Road accidents victims monitored for 30 days

OPPORTUNITIES
- Actions taken in urban areas could result in a significant reduction in accidents, especially involving vulnerable users
- The establishment or strengthening of a leading entity could exert great influence in civil society and in road sector

WEAKNESSES
- Deficiencies concerning accident data collection and subsequent analysis, including information about urban accidents and vulnerable road users
- There is not an independent entity exclusively dedicated to road safety
- Training and education in road safety needs improvement
- Medium-low level of enforcement. No alcohol tests are performed on drivers. Professional drivers do not have minimum rest periods and there are not specific regulations for school transport
- Mobile phone use is permitted while driving

THREATS
- Road fatalities have not been reduced in the last three years

Suggested courses of action

SHORT TERM
- Improve systems for collecting accident data and preparing annual reports
- Include the improvement of safety for vulnerable road users (pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists) as a priority and encourage the development of specific activities for urban road safety
- Promote a road safety agency and ensure funding for road safety
- Strengthen enforcement

MEDIO PLAZO
- Ensure the availability of road safety professionals
- Foster the identification and resolution of accident hotspots and enforcement of road safety inspections and audits
- Support the introduction of vehicle safety standards
- Involve road safety training at all schools

LONG TERM
- Include medical care after accidents in road safety policies
- Promote research and development