



POST-EVENT SUMMARY OF SYMPOSIA AND WORKSHOPS AT ARSC2015 (As at 22 October 2015)

Thursday 15 October: 11:00am – 12:30pm

**Room 4
Workshop**

Road Safety Education Oman

Key Organiser:

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Overview:

During 2014 in Oman 816 people lost their lives due to road crash and a further, 3835 sustained severe injuries. In 2010 The Oman Research Council established the Road Safety Research Program (RSRP). A key goal of this program is to develop evidence based understandings of road crashes in Oman. The main objectives of the RSRP are:

1. Encourage researchers from inside and outside of the Sultanate to submit research proposals aimed at reducing the problem of traffic crashes in Oman
2. Increase research capacity in the field of road safety by supporting graduate students working on the research proposals submitted
3. Provide scientific research results to decision-makers in the relevant authorities for use in the development of evidence-based policies to prevent/reduce the problem of traffic injuries/fatalities.

To date the RSRP has funded four specific research projects. One project is currently being undertaken by John Hopkins University, another is being undertaken by Transport Research

Laboratories (TRL) and further two are currently underway at the Centre for Accident Research and Road Safety-Queensland (CARRSQ) within the Queensland University of Technology. The latter CARRSQ projects are the focus of this symposium.

Summary (Prepared by Dr Jason Edwards, CARRS-Q):

Queensland University of Technology's Centre for Accident Research and Road Safety – Queensland (CARRS-Q) and The Research Council of Oman (TRC) were pleased to jointly present a symposium focussed on road safety in Oman. With a road fatality rate amongst the highest in the world, road safety in Oman is a major public health concern. TRC has recently begun funding a broad range of research projects to understand and improve road safety in Oman. Through these projects, TRC seek to build road safety capacity within Oman and reduce the number of road fatalities which occur. CARRS-Q is currently conducting research funded by TRC examining novice driver safety, heavy vehicle safety and road safety policing. Through these projects, three Omani nationals are conducting their PhD research and another is currently enrolled in a master's degree. This symposium consisted of presentations from the Strategic Program Manager of the Road Safety Research Program at TRC as well as the emerging Omani researchers conducting higher research degrees within CARRS-Q. The presentations provided an overview of challenges faced developing road safety research in Oman, and demonstrating the progress which is being made.

Speakers included:

- Dr Abdullah Al-Maniri – Strategic Program Manager, Road Safety Research Program, The Research Council (Oman)
- Mr Hamed Al-Reesi – PhD Scholar, Sultan Qaboos University, Oman
- Mr Mudhar Al-Mazruii – PhD Scholar, CARRS-Q
- Mr Islam Al-Bulushi – PhD Scholar, CARRS-Q

Key themes and discussions shared included:

Building National Capacity in Road Safety Research within Oman

- Oman has one of the highest road fatality rates worldwide.
- TRC developed the Road Safety Research Program to:
- Encourage researchers from inside and outside of the Sultanate to submit research proposals aimed at reducing the problem of traffic crashes in Oman
- Increase research capacity in the field of road safety by supporting graduate students working on the research proposals submitted
- Provide scientific research results to decision-makers in the relevant authorities for use in the development of evidence-based policies to prevent/reduce the problem of traffic injuries/fatalities.

Social Influences on Risky Driving Behaviours among Young Drivers in Oman

- Young drivers represent approximately 20% of the Omani population, yet account for over one third of crash injuries and fatalities on Oman's roads.
- This study sought to explore young driver behaviour using Akers' social learning theory.
- A self-report survey was conducted by 1319 (72.9% male and 27.1% female) young drivers aged 17-25 years.
- Hierarchical multiple regression models revealed that socio-demographic characteristics and driving experience alone explained 14.2% of the variance in risky driving behaviour, social learning factors explained a further 37.0%, while a final 7.9% of the variance in risky behaviour could be explained by sensitivity to rewards and punishments.

Policing of Road Safety in Oman: Perceptions and Beliefs of Traffic Police Officers

- Within Oman, the Royal Oman Police's (ROP) Directorate General of Traffic is responsible for policing traffic laws.
- Interviews were conducted with 19 police officers from various levels of the ROP.
- Individuals at the upper level of the traffic police had a clear knowledge of the role of the ROP, believed that traffic police know what is expected of them, are well trained in their role and can have a very positive influence on road safety.
- These beliefs were less certain lower within the organisation, with traffic officers having little knowledge of the role of the ROP or what was expected of them, felt undertrained, and believed their peers have little positive impact on road safety.
- There is a need to address barriers within the ROP in order to positively impact road safety.

Socio-Cultural Influences on Vehicle Defects in the Omani Heavy Vehicle Industry

- Vehicle defects cause a significant number of heavy vehicle crashes in Oman and increase the likelihood of fatalities.
- A series of qualitative participants observations were conducted in Oman with 49 drivers.
- Participants indicated that tyre and vehicle mechanical faults were a common issue in the heavy vehicle industry.
- Participants regularly reported that their companies use cheap, poor quality spare parts and conducted minimal maintenance.
- Drivers felt powerless to resist company pressure to drive vehicles with known faults. In addition, drivers reported that traffic police were generally ineffective and lacked the skills to appropriately conduct roadside inspection on trucks.