

IDENTIFYING ACCIDENT BLACK SPOTS IN CENTRAL PROVINCE ROAD NETWORK

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Road traffic accidents are a great burden on communities and economic systems worldwide. In the year 2000 more than 3000 people were killed and many more suffered injuries in Sri Lanka due to road traffic accidents. Always about 10% of the figure is from Central province.

Reasons for road traffic accidents are many. Driver behaviour and discipline plays a major role in the list. The other factors leading to road traffic accidents are condition of roads, vehicles, effect on traffic rules and regulations, behaviour of other road users, illegal constructions etc. etc.. The present project concentrates on identifying the effect of road condition on road traffic accidents.

In the present project, road traffic accident details were collected from police stations at Kandy, Matale and Nuwaraeliya and Road Development Authority chief engineers' and respective executive engineers' offices. The accident records at police stations are still in the original state and not in an easy form to extract relevant information for a project like this. The present accident recording system does not highlight the reason for the accident nor the accident location in a uniform manner. Hence the accident records were fed into a computer data base with the possible way of identifying the location. Most of the identified information is in a computer data base with a spatial information like roads.

Based on the collected information, locations where accidents occur frequently were short listed according to police region, chief engineer division and executive engineer division. Some of the locations specially in Kandy and Nuwaraeliya districts were visited for collection of further details like geometry of the road, geomorphology of the area, land use pattern and availability of road signs.

All the information were treated to identify the reasons for frequent occurrence of traffic accidents. In addition to driver discipline and behaviour, road geometry plays a major role in the places visited. Driver information like road signs are not adequate at sharp bends, narrow sections and steep slopes. Most of the bridges on Gampola – Nuwaraeliya road are located on bends. As the bridges are narrow and curves are not designed properly drivers should be facing difficulties to manoeuvre vehicles and end up with accidents.

Considering all these facts, a list of possible improvements was prepared. As this is still an ongoing project, towards the end of the period, common guide lines will be prepared along with a computerized data base to identify accident black spots on central province road network and other bottlenecks on the mentioned area