

# SPEED SURVEY, NAMIBIA



**Date started:** December 2006 **Date finished:** December 2006

**Partners:** GRSPN and NRSC Namibia

**Cost/time/resources:** 5,000 USD, 2 days of surveys



The speed survey conducted in Namibia shows that majority of drivers exceeds the speed limit and that the general speed limits and penalty system needs to be reviewed.

There is a well-established relationship between vehicle speeds and crashes. The higher the speed, the more serious the injuries when a crash occurs. Even if speed limits are chosen correctly, there are safety benefits to be achieved by encouraging drivers to travel at or below the speed limit. There are also situations and conditions that require drivers to travel below the speed limit. Encouraging drivers to drive at sensible speeds is particularly important since driver error is the major contributory factor in 95 per cent of crashes. In

Namibia, drivers also travel long distances thus the reasons for speeding are often said to be “the reduction in journey time” and the lack of any enforcement deterrent.

## Summary project sheet.

### **Objectives and scope**

In order to understand the degree of the speeding problem, it was decided to carry out a speed survey in and around Windhoek in December 2006. The survey would not only provide a deeper understanding of the level of speed on different urban and rural roads, but would also give insights if speed limits are correctly set.

### **Activities**

The speed survey was conducted using a calibrated Muni Quip K-GP Doppler Radar speed gun operating in the K-band frequency range (24.1GHz). 4 urban locations and 3 rural locations were chosen where vehicles were in free flow conditions, this being in off peak times after 10:00 am and before 16:30 pm. All urban speed limits were 60kph and rural speed limits 120kph. Enough observations were made to be able to do statistical analysis. When vehicles were travelling in convoy, the speed of the lead vehicle was recorded as the free-flow speed.

The police have a key role to play in the delivery of road safety. In Namibia, the police conduct roadside vehicle checks and speed enforcement, however the equipment, although serviceable, is quite old. While there are occasional police enforcement activities, it does not appear to be a regular and sustained activity.

### **Conclusion and main lessons learnt**

The study showed that a majority of drivers are exceeding the posted limits of 60kph (urban) and 120kph (rural). Coupled with the high number of pedestrian movements in the city of Windhoek, collisions with pedestrians at the speeds observed will result in serious and fatal injuries. The same applies to rural roads where loss of control and crossover collisions will result in serious and fatal injuries.

These urban and rural speed limits have been in place for many years in Namibia and it is probably time for a review, especially to set limits that are appropriate for the conditions. The urban limits, for example, are far higher than in Europe. Coupled with the difficulty associated with pedestrians crossing multiple lanes without any facilities (light controlled or Zebra crossings), Namibia’s speeding problem presents a high risk of collision and injury for vulnerable road users.

The results of the survey indicates that it is necessary to collect a comprehensive data set on urban speeds and develop speed management programmes that involve a review of the speed limits, as well as sustainable campaigns supported by police enforcement.