

Annex 7 - Flow chart enforcement

The functioning of enforcement can be described as follows. Checks increase perception of the probability of detection, which can be called enforcement pressure. Based on this enforcement pressure and on what people see or read in the media or hear from friends or acquaintances, road users estimate the probability of detection for violating traffic rules¹.

Most studies show that road users commit fewer offences when confronted with a greater likelihood of being apprehended and punished. This applies to various violations such as speeding, drink-driving, driving without using a seat belt, and red light running².

The literature (e.g. Zaal, 1994; Goldenbeld, 2005; ETSC, 1999b; Mäkinen et al., 2002) concludes that traffic enforcement should aim more at general prevention (preventing violations by the threat of penalties) than at specific prevention (catching and punishing the actual violators). For road safety, it is more important that traffic enforcement succeeds in exerting a normative influence on millions of road users by threatening with punishment, rather than changing the behavior of violators by punishing them. The actual safety gain that can be achieved by traffic enforcement strongly depends on the extent to which traffic violations can be prevented. Detecting and punishing severe violators is of great importance for credibility and, consequently, for the acceptance of police enforcement.

The flow chart below illustrates the impact of enforcement on road safety. This chart was prepared based on an adaptation of the Chart included in the Advancing Sustainable Safety, National Road Safety Outlook for 2005-2020³.

1 Advancing Sustainable Safety National Road Safety Outlook for 2005-2020, Fred Wegman, Letty Aarts, Institute for road safety research.

2 See the SWOV Fact sheets Police enforcement and driving speed and Effects of police enforcement of protection devices and moped helmet use and red light running

3 http://www.swov.nl/rapport/dmdv/Advancing_sustainable_safety.pdf

Flow chart 1 Enforcement-road safety

