

# **ZERO TOLERANCE TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT**

## **‘OPERATION SAFEWAY’**

The Guyana Police Force’s Zero Tolerance Traffic Enforcement “Operation Safeway” was officially launched by Acting Commissioner of Police, Henry Greene, on October 23, 2007. However, the actual enforcement operations commenced on October 25, 2007.

The available statistics at that time showed that road fatalities for 2007 had increased by 54% when compared to the corresponding period for 2006.

In addition, on October 10, 2007, ten persons had lost their lives in a road accident involving a minibus along the Lingen/Soesdyke Highway at Amelia’s Ward, Linden, and later on October 21, 2007, five persons lost their lives in an accident at Liliendaal on the East Coast of Demerara.

The two accidents concerned were attributed to speeding and the public outcry was loud and long. More persons were being killed on the roads than by murders and manslaughters. Something had to be done and this led to the zero tolerance “Operation Safeway” which targets all categories of road users and is aimed at reducing road carnage.

Concomitant with this thrust by the Guyana Police Force to curb errant road use, a number of measures/initiatives have been put into place which include:

- Additional coastal vehicular traffic patrols
- More radar guns were acquired and put in use to reduce speeding
- Targeting the overloading of public transportation vehicles
- The use of unmarked vehicular patrols spotting for speeding, overloaded vehicles and other offences
- Spotters for motorists breaching traffic signals
- The identification and prosecution of persons with false drivers licences, fitness certificates and revenue licences
- Increased Traffic Ticket fines
- Enforcement of the legal requirement that the revenue licences and certificates of fitness for motor vehicles be displayed on the vehicle
- Traffic Education – lectures to schools, seminars for drivers, road safety talks via the electronic media and radio.

- A person must successfully complete the Learner-Driver Theoretical Examination before being eligible to acquire a Provisional Driver's Licence
- A person must attend four compulsory classes conducted by the Police Traffic Department before he/she can write the Learner-Driver Theoretical Examination
- Publication in the media of drivers whose licences have been suspended.
- The escorting of motor vehicles from various public events that are held periodically at venues along the Linden/Soesdyke Highway, motor racing at the Timehri Circuit and vehicles from Rosignol to Georgetown having crossed with the Berbice River Ferry
- Improved traffic management in the city with the introduction of several new bus routes and the relocation of the minibus parks.
- The formation of a Traffic Advisory Board comprising representatives from the Private Sector, Police, Ministry of Works, City Engineers, and the Mini Bus Association.
- The passing of legislation to allow for the use of breathalyzers by members of the Guyana Police Force to detect the amount of alcohol in the system of a driver who is suspected to be under the influence of alcohol.
- The passing of legislation restricting drivers from using hand-held mobile phones or similar devices while driving.
- The enacting of laws prohibiting the playing of music in public transportation vehicles.

In addition, plans are in place for the reintroduction of bus stops.

These measures have begun to work and the Force has received fair reviews from the public on this matter, and we have seen results.

The statistics are as published below:-

**FATAL ACCIDENTS BETWEEN**  
**25<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER AND 31<sup>st</sup> DECEMBER, 2007 COMPARED TO THE SAME PERIOD IN**  
**2006**

	<b><u>2006</u></b>	<b><u>2007</u></b>	
Fatal Accidents	43	24	Decreased by 44%
Deaths	48	27	Decreased by 44%

**Some prevalent traffic cases made during ‘Operation Safeway’ from**  
**25<sup>th</sup> October to 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2007**

Speeding	2,361
Overloaded mini buses	1,838
Unlicenced Driver	806
Breach of Insurance	347
Fail to exhibit Fitness	648
Fail to exhibit Revenue Licence	521
Obstruction	463
Fail to conform to sign	381
Stopping within 30 ft of a corner	265
Unlighted Bicycle	281
Unlicenced Conductor	249
Fail to carry conductor	364
Breach of Road Service Licence	376
Breach of rules of the road	211

**FATAL ACCIDENTS BETWEEN 1<sup>st</sup> JANUARY AND  
30<sup>th</sup> JUNE, 2008 COMPARED TO THE SAME PERIOD IN 2007**

	<b><u>2007</u></b>		<b><u>2008</u></b>	
Fatal Accidents	86		49	Decreased by 43%
Deaths	100		60	Decreased by 40%

**Some prevalent traffic cases made during ‘Operation Safeway’  
between 1<sup>st</sup> January and 31<sup>st</sup> July, 2008**

Speeding	11,415
Overloaded mini bus	4,821
Unlicenced Driver	3,129
Breach of Insurance	443
Obstruction	4,835
Stopping within 30 ft of a corner	3,488
Failed to wear seatbelt	2,336
Failed to wear safety helmet	1,898
Dangerous Driving	148
Tinted Motor Vehicle	167
Breach of traffic Light Signal	678
Unlighted Bicycle	322
Unlicensed conductor	827
Uncertified Motor Vehicle	983