

Opening Statement by Mr Sam Waide, CEO of the Road Safety Authority to the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Transport Wednesday 8 October 2025

Good afternoon, everyone.

I would first like to express our thanks to the Committee for the opportunity to speak to you today.

We are deeply saddened to acknowledge the tragic loss of life on Ireland's roads in 2025 and I extend my heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families across the country, in addition to those with serious injuries.

It is fitting that, during Road Safety Week, we reflect on Ireland's recent road safety trends and developments, and the vital initiatives we, and other key agencies, must continue to implement to protect all who use our roads.

Trends

As of 7 October 2025, a total of 128 people have been killed and over 1,000 have been seriously injured on Irish roads. This is 5 fewer deaths than the same time period in 2024, but any one death on our roads is one too many.

52 of these fatalities were drivers and 10 were passengers. Half of those who died on our roads this year were vulnerable road users, including 26 pedestrians, 25 motorcyclists, 13 cyclists and 2 e-Scooter users.

Three quarters of all road deaths this year were male. One in four were aged 25 years or under, while one in three were aged 46-65 years.

Counties Dublin, Cork, Galway, Donegal, Mayo and Kerry have seen the highest number of fatalities this year to date.

I would now like to talk to some of the key road safety initiatives RSA progressed as part of our strategic approach.

Awareness and Education

I would like to highlight our major campaigns from this year.

To support the change in speed limits on local rural roads from 80km/h to 60km/h in March 2025, we aired a new TV-led awareness campaign that highlighted the change and the consequences of incremental speeding on rural roads.

Our new anti drug-driving campaign aired this year across TV and other media, designed to raise awareness of the consequences of a drug-driving conviction.

We released our new anti drink-driving campaign, designed to call out social acceptability of drink-driving and encouraging the public to act if they see a friend about to get behind the wheel after drinking alcohol.

Last month the RSA launched its largest-ever college road safety education programme, commencing at UCD Freshers Week. Over seven weeks, the RSA team will visit 23 third-level institutions.

Our new programme for Transition Year students and teachers 'Road Safety Matters' has also been successfully rolled out nationwide. To date, we have provided professional training for 448 teachers. We are also currently piloting new Junior Cycle resources.

We had a strong presence at a range of festivals & social events this year, including Electric Picnic and Galway Races, with our Flinebox interactive breathalysers. Approximately 20,000 people self-breathalysed to date, helping them make an informed decision whether they are safe to drive, and if not, how long they should wait before doing so.

Updates on Driver Testing and NCT Services

In relation to the **Driver Testing Service**, I can report that, since September, this is now meeting its agreed SLA with a 10-week national average estimate time to invite for new car-test applicants. Over 160,000 tests have been delivered from January to August 2025.

This achievement was made possible through an intensive RSA recruitment & training work programme, coupled with dedication and commitment of RSA staff extending the service to earlier and later weekdays, on Saturdays and bank holidays.

With regards to the **NCT**, beyond the current 50 test centres, four additional locations are planned for Clare, North Dublin, Cavan and Cork.

The average booking lead time is currently below the SLA of 12 days.

Phase 2 Action Plan

In relation to the Government Road Safety Strategy, responsibility for overall Strategy development and coordination has now formally transferred to the Department of Transport, aligning with the completion of Phase 1 in December 2024.

RSA played a central role in advancing a number of high-impact actions under the Phase 1, with a particular focus on speed reduction, camera-based enforcement and continued investment in research to inform communications, campaigns and educational programmes to tackle dangerous road user behaviours.

RSA also worked closely with the Department in a collaborative role to shape and finalise the Phase 2 Action Plan which runs from 2025 to 2027, and which was launched in July.

RSA will lead on two Primary Actions in Phase 2, supporting other lead agencies in 9 other primary actions. We remain committed and integral to successful delivery of Phase 2.

Data Sharing

I'd like to update you today on the progress that has been made in 2024 and 2025 to work towards resolving the challenges relating to the sharing of Road Traffic Collision data with local authorities.

In July 2024, the Minister for Transport issued a formal direction under Section 8 of the Road Safety Authority Act 2006, for the RSA to collect, compile and

process collision data received from An Garda Síochána, and disseminate this to the National Transport Authority and local authorities.

The RSA has commenced data sharing with the NTA, as NTA have the legal basis in place to receive this data. Local authorities do not have the statutory basis in place to lawfully receive and use the collision data. The Department of Transport is progressing the legislation to facilitate this. While awaiting this legislative change, the RSA has put in place ongoing measures to ensure the collision data continues to inform local authorities for road safety works.

We are fully committed to working with the Department of Transport and local authorities to ensure that the collision data is harnessed effectively to support evidence-based improvements to roads.

Conclusion

In summary, we are deeply concerned about the numbers of people who have died and been seriously injured on our roads to date in 2025.

With sustained political commitment, a whole-of-government response, adequate resourcing and funding, we believe the Phase 2 Plan provides a clear path to accelerating progress in reducing road deaths and serious injuries, and supports the achievement of Vision Zero by 2050.

This concludes my opening statement to the committee. I would like to take this opportunity to thank my dedicated RSA staff. My colleagues and I are happy to take any questions members may have. Thank you.