



Federal Road Safety Corps

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

“Creating a safe motoring environment in Nigeria”

OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE

Commitment to Excellence



“Excellence is never an accident. It is always the result of high intention, sincere effort, and intelligent execution; it represents the wise choice of many alternatives - choice, not chance, determines your destiny.” – Aristotle

From left to right: Dr. Goodluck Jonathan, President of Nigeria, Col. Lawan Gwadabe, former FRSC Chairman, and Osita Chidoka, FRSC COMACE reaffirming their commitment to the excellence required to drive road safety management in Nigeria.

In pursuit of its mandate to create a safe motoring environment in Nigeria, FRSC committed itself to a pursuit of operational excellence. The attainment of the ISO 9001:2001 (Quality management System) – a first for a public sector organisation in Nigeria – led to significant improvements in the Corps’ internal processes. These improvements have resulted in more effective patrol operations and enforcement of road safety laws: overloading, seat belt use, crash helmet use, driving habits, vehicle roadworthiness, safety engineering of roads, emergency response, post-crash care, etc. These initiatives resulted in a 26 percent drop in reported road traffic crashes from 2007 to 2012. Severity Index, which is a measure of deaths to total number of casualties, dropped from 20.8 percent in 2007 to 17 percent in 2012.

Preamble

Poring over graphs on his laptop, Osita Chidoka, OFR, Corps Marshall and Chief Executive Officer (COMACE) of Nigeria’s Federal Road Safety Corps noticed a 33.8 percent increase in

The Federal Road Safety Corps provided the data on traffic road safety in Nigeria. All other data are appropriately referenced. **Nextier Advisory** compiled and produced the report.

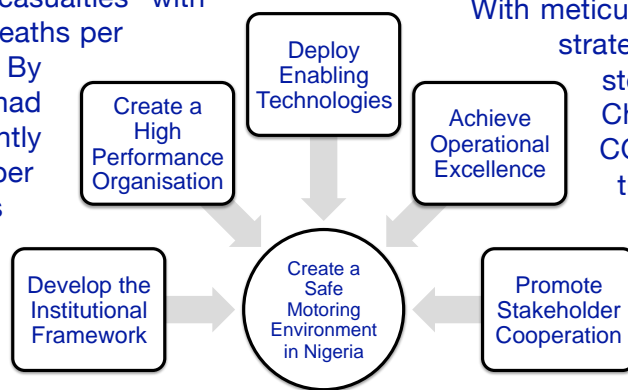
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the number of reported road traffic crashes from 2007 (the year he became COMACE) to 2008. Alarmed, he knew FRSC needed some radical rethinking of its approach to its mandate. The Corps was already implementing a number of programmes and initiatives to create a safe motoring environment in Nigeria; however, what was required was to build a culture that is committed to operational excellence.

The COMACE knew that concerted effort would be required to achieve sustained change in the culture of the organisation. However, this change was to be achieved within a broad strategic framework that took into account the various aspects of the organisation.

Setting the Strategic Context

The Federal Road Safety Commission (FRSC) was set up in 1988 to eradicate road traffic crashes and create a safe motoring environment in Nigeria by regulating, enforcing and coordinating all road traffic and safety management activities in the country. By 1988, road safety was a significant challenge in Nigeria. There were 444 road traffic crashes (RTC) per 10,000 vehicles resulting in 33,490 casualties with 9,077 deaths or 156 deaths per 10,000 vehicles. By 2012, the situation had improved significantly with only 61 RTCs per 10,000 vehicles resulting in 25,017 casualties with 6,269 deaths or 41 deaths per 10,000 vehicles.



2. Create a high performance organisation to drive the implementation of the FRSC mandate;
3. Deploy enabling technologies to improve the Corps' data-driven decision making;
4. Achieve operational excellence through a commitment to quality service and continuous improvement; and
5. Promote multi-sectoral stakeholder cooperation towards creating a safe motoring environment in Nigeria.

With meticulous implementation of its strategy, FRSC has delivered stellar results. By the end of Chidoka's first four years as COMACE (2007-2011), road traffic crashes in Nigeria had dropped from 9,114 incidents in 2006 to 4,765 incidents in 2011. Severity index, which measures the percentage of deaths to total number of casualties, had also dropped from 22.1 percent to 16.8 percent.

On assumption of office as COMACE in 2007, Osita

FRSC's Five Strategic Themes

Chidoka focused the organisation on careful strategic planning and meticulous implementation. The team developed an overarching strategic framework with five strategic themes. These themes formed the basis for the creation and implementation of over thirty initiatives to address specific objectives.

The five themes of the FRSC strategy include:

1. Develop an institutional framework that positions FRSC as the lead agency for road safety management in Nigeria;

This remarkable performance has been internationally recognized with the 2008 Prince Michael of Kent International Road Safety Award, 2009 National Productivity Award, 2012 World Bank recognition as the "Lead Agency in Africa". In addition, a number of African countries have selected FRSC to provide advise to them on how to setup and manage their road safety agencies.

At the end of Chidoka's first four-year tenure as COMACE, road traffic crashes in Nigeria had dropped from 9,114 in 2006 to 4,765 in 2011.

This paper, "Commitment to Excellence", chronicles FRSC's efforts to achieve operational excellence (Theme 4). FRSC focused its efforts on six

complimentary, yet exclusive, objectives to achieve this theme:

1. **Internal Processes:** Achieve effective internal processes through a priming of the organisation to obtain the ISO 9001:2008 (Quality Management System) certification;
2. **Roads:** Improve the quality of Nigerian roads through advocacy for incorporating safety engineering into road planning, design, construction, and maintenance;
3. **Vehicles:** Enforce vehicle roadworthiness through routine vehicle checks, vehicle administration, fleet management systems, school bus design, road transport safety standardisation, etc.;
4. **Drivers:** Improve driving habits by enforcing driver training, driving licenses, routine physical and psychological tests on long distance drivers, use of travellers' information guide, etc
5. **Patrol Operations:** Effective patrol operations through a focus on enforcement of various road safety rules on use of seat belts, safety helmets, child safety, overloading, etc.;
6. **Post-Crash Care:** Establish prompt post-crash response through emergency response systems (122 emergency phone number, ambulances, clinics, etc.),

roadside traffic clinics, use of passenger manifests for commercial vehicles, etc.

The following section will discuss the work done and results achieved on the six objectives.

Internal Processes

The Pursuit of Excellence: ISO 9001:2008

Osita Chidoka believed that the pursuit of the ISO 9001:2008 (Quality Management System) certification will help the Corps create efficient internal processes to deliver its mandate. This inspiration came from his study of Mahathir Mohammad, former Prime Minister of Malaysia, who attributed his success in transforming the country's public service to the rigorous process of obtaining the ISO certification for most of the agencies of the government. This testimonial strengthened Chidoka's resolve to take the Corps through this arduous but transformational journey.

The rigour of continuously improving the internal processes so as to qualify for the ISO 9001:2008 certification helped the Corps create a more efficient and effective operation.

To qualify for the ISO certificate, FRSC had to, over many audits, show consistency in maintaining the defined processes. The Corps' Quality Internal Systems Auditors routinely audited the various FRSC departments to ensure adherence to the defined processes. Exceptions were tabulated



FRSC achieved effective internal processes through a priming of the organisation to obtain the ISO 9001:2008 (Quality Management Systems) certification.

and review at management meetings were defaulters were properly cautioned. The Exceptions Report formed part of the annual performance review for the various departments. The entire organisation was focused on eliminating process exceptions so as to qualify for the ISO certificate. The rigour of continuously improving the internal processes helped the Corps create a more efficient and effective operation. For instance, emergency response time dropped from hours in 2007 to an average of 20 minutes in 2012.

On April 15 2012, after four (4) years of concerted efforts from everyone within the Corps, FRSC was presented with the ISO 9001:2008 Certificate. The Corps will be subjected to six-monthly surveillance audits to retain the certification. This process will ensure FRSC continues to maintain the efficient and effective internal processes.

Roads

Bad roads kill; especially poorly engineered roads. FRSC is focused on improving the quality of Nigerian roads by incorporating safety in road engineering, conducting road audits for “black” spots, and designating “safe corridors” to showcase how to reduce

traffic related deaths by 50 percent. These activities have helped reduce the number of reported road traffic crashes from 25,792 incidents in 1988 to 6,269 incidents in 2012.

Incorporate Safety in Road Engineering

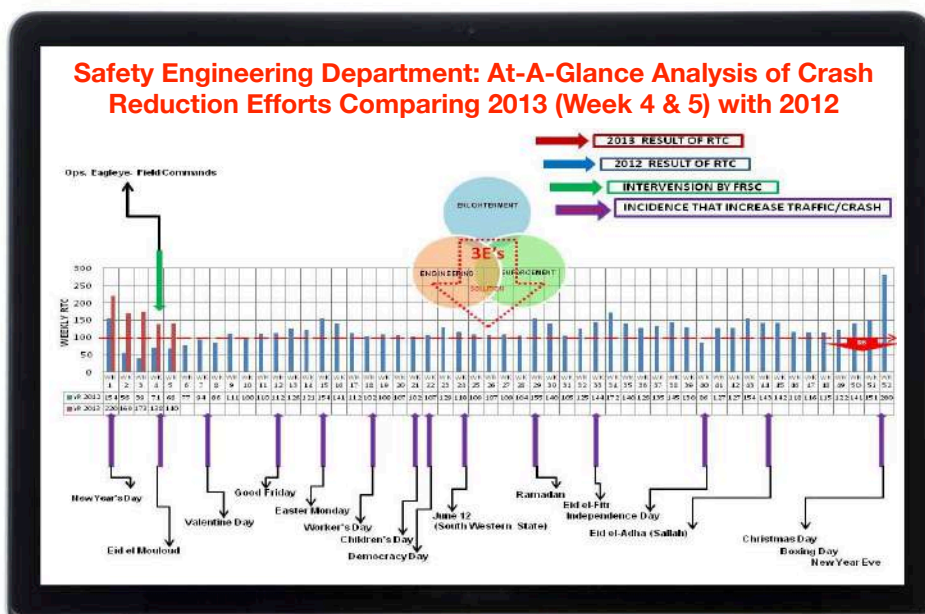
Road safety is about roads, people and vehicles. Historically, the focus has been on the attitude of motorists and the state of their vehicles. Despite efforts to change human attitude and ensure roadworthiness, traffic crashes continued to increase. By 2007, Nigeria was ranked 150 out of 175 countries for road traffic fatality per 100,000 population.

Advocating for incorporating safety in road engineering have helped reduce the number of reported RTC from 25,792 incidents in 1988 to 6,269 incidents in 2012.

Most efforts to fix roads in Nigeria focused mainly on patching up the potholes. Yet, roads in Nigeria lack adequate furniture to “forgive human error” while driving. For instance, there are no

rumble strips, signage, and road markings which mean that motorists are left to guess their action in certain situations and this, in turn, may result in road traffic crashes.

In 2009, Chidoka established the Safety Engineering Department (SED) with a mandate to conduct annual road safety audits, quarterly inspections to identify “black spots”, investigate crashes resulting in over



FRSC uses its Data Dashboard to track conditions on major road corridors to inform decisions on improved safety engineering of these roads.

six deaths, and create the protocol for motor vehicle administration in all states of the Federation. Without a mandate to construct roads, FRSC’s only option is to use the SED reports to convince the key road authorities to incorporate safety engineering in road planning, design, construction, operations and maintenance.

In the intervening years, FRSC has won a few converts. The two principal road authorities (Federal Ministry of Works, and the Federal Emergency Road Maintenance Agency) have adopted some specific recommendations in the SED’s audit reports including installation of speed bumps on Keffi road, traffic lights at Ovie River crossing, reconstruction of sections of Kaduna-Birinin Gwari road, dualisation of Kubwa road, construction of pedestrian bridges, etc.

The results have been stellar. The number of reported road traffic crashes dropped by 52 percent from 10,854 in 2009 to 5,217 in 2010. Road traffic crashes per 10,000 vehicles dropped by 53 percent in the same period.

Given budgetary constraints, FRSC is not able to provide, at this time, full and effective coverage of all the federal government roads in Nigeria. Therefore, it prioritized the cross-country roads that carry the most traffic. In 2011, FRSC secured US\$4 million grant from The World Bank to focus on six major roads that it designated as “safe corridors”. The goal was to significantly reduce by 50 percent road traffic fatalities on these roads.

With support from The World Bank, FRSC has designated 18 Safe Road Corridors for special attention including incorporating safety engineering in the road design, and ensuring compliance to road safety rules.

Given The World Bank’s satisfaction with the initial programme, it has provided an additional US\$16 million that has enabled the Corps to expand its coverage to 18 “safe corridors”. Furthermore, The World Bank recommends designating 10 percent of all road construction contracts

to safety engineering. A portion of the fund will ensure compliance to road safety rules (speeding, seat belt usage, impaired driving, safety awareness, etc), and crash analytics. Partly as a result of this support, FRSC has been able to procure operational equipment, manpower development and strengthening the institution. More support is still required.

FRSC Major Road Corridors

- Route 1. 110km: Lagos – Ibadan
- Route 2. 418 km: Sagamu – Enugu
- Route 3. 366km: Gwagwalada – Zariagi
- Route 4. 491km: Nyanya – Hong
- Route 5. 240km: FCT – Kakau
- Route 6. 229km: Mokwa – Bode Sa’adu
- Route 7. 446km: Ibadan – Owo
- Route 8. 296km: Benin – Port Harcourt
- Route 9. 226km: Enugu – Port Harcourt
- Route 10. 423km: Lafia – Jos
- Route 11. 243km: Jos – Kaduna
- Route 12. 864km: Maiduguri – Ogoja
- Route 13. 437km: Bauchi – Maiduguri
- Route 14. 684km: Kishi – Otukpa
- Route 15. 507km: Katsina – Potiskum
- Route 16. 650km: Kontagora – Sokoto
- Route 17. 278km: Katsina – Zaria
- Route 18. 288km: Onitsha - Arochukwu

Designate Safe Corridors

Crash Causes: 6DT Investigations

The Six Death Threshold (6DT) investigation is designed to identify the direct and contributory causes of all road traffic crashes resulting in six or more fatalities. The data collated from the site are analyzed and the conclusions shared with counterpart organisations such as Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Works, Ministry of Transport, Federal Emergency Road Maintenance Agency, Nigeria Police Force, and State governments. The data has been used in various forms to create and implement interventions and initiatives to prevent further road traffic crashes.

Vehicles

The state and use of vehicles, more than the vehicles themselves, could be the cause of road traffic crashes. In furtherance of its mandate to create a safe motoring environment in Nigeria, FRSC has implemented interventions to ascertain

vehicle roadworthiness, improve safety records of commercial vehicles, ensure safe transportation of school kids to and from home, proper identification of errant vehicles, and coordinated motor vehicle administration.

Ascertain Roadworthiness

For a period of two weekend-days every quarter, Corps officers conduct free vehicle safety checks on interstate roads and highways nationwide. Vehicles are selected at random and assessed for the working condition of their brake lights, caution signs, directional lights, parking lights, headlights, seat belts, windscreen, tyres, wipers, spare tyre, jack and wheel spanner, and horn.

Drivers of vehicles that fail the test are not penalized; rather, a copy of the completed checklist is given to them and they are encouraged to immediately fix the problem. Corps officers use the opportunity to educate the drivers on the risk of driving their vehicles with any of the detected faults. The driver will receive a phone call from the Corps within the first 24 hours and another call within the second 24 hours to verify if the faults have been fixed.

A copy of the checklist is sent to FRSC HQ where the data is analyzed and used in

shaping various road safety interventions. From Q1 2011 to Q2 2012, 65,317 vehicles with 87,534 faults were recorded with the most prevalent faults being brake lights (11 percent), caution signs (11 percent), directional lights (10 percent), and parking lights (10 percent). Of the defaulting vehicles, 49 percent were privately owned, 45 percent were commercial vehicles, and the remaining 6 percent were official vehicles. The major defaulters were cars (46 percent), buses (20 percent) and wagons (13 percent). The rest were in the single digits: pickups (8 percent), trucks (8 percent), motorcycles (3 percent) and articulated vehicles (3 percent).

Interstate commercial mini-buses are the primary cause of the 11 percent increase in number of casualties even with the 26 percent drop in number of reported RTCs from 2007 to 2012.

Improve Safety Records of Transport Vehicle

From 2007 to 2012, Nigeria recorded a 26 percent drop in the reported road traffic crashes with an 11 percent increase in the number of casualties. The poor safety standard of interstate commercial mini-buses is the primary cause of the increase in casualty numbers.

Without a mandate to regulate the safety standards of imported or locally assembled vehicles, FRSC figured that the next best option was to exert financial pressure on the transport operators to improve on their safety records. As a result, FRSC created an online



For a period of two weekend-days every quarter, FRSC officers conduct free vehicle checks on interstate roads and highways nationwide to assess the roadworthiness of the vehicles.

Travellers' Information Guide (www.frsc-rtsss.org) that provides the safety records of all commercial transport operators in Nigeria. It is assumed that with more passengers opting for operators with better safety records, operators with poor safety records will feel the financial pressure and improve on their performance.

FRSC believes that the initiative has helped improved safety standards in Nigeria. Over 20,000 visitors have viewed the Guide since its creation in 2009. By late 2010, one year after introducing the Guide, FRSC noticed an improvement in the compliance of interstate mini-buses to maintaining the recommended 10-passenger capacity of their buses. In the past, these operators carried 4 passengers over the recommended passenger capacity.

Ensure Safe Transportation of School Kids

With improved data collation and analysis, FRSC management noticed an alarming rate of road traffic crashes involving buses conveying children to or from school. Most of these buses did not have any gadgets to improve the safety of the children. In 2006, FRSC records showed that one third of the road traffic crash deaths were children. Also, a recent report of the investigated crashes involving six deaths shows that 5 percent of the deaths from such crashes are children most of whom were in school buses.

In November 2009, FRSC set up a diverse

group of stakeholders to develop uniform safety features and operations standards for vehicles used in conveying school children, and to regulate the operations of school buses. The team submitted its recommendations to the Technical Committee of the Standards Organization of Nigeria. The document was approved in December 2010.

Some of the recommended safety features included mandatory seat belts for every seat, racks for bags and lunch boxes, air conditioning, designated chaperone, additional exit doors, and a stipulated maximum capacity for the bus.

Notwithstanding the financial challenge that has impacted rollout of the new bus design (especially to the semi-urban areas), the initiative has been a success in terms of increased awareness on the safety requirements for transporting children. Between March 2011 and August 2011, FRSC met with over 10 primary stakeholders to sensitize them on the new school bus design.

Identify errant vehicles and Drivers

Prior to the Corps' intervention, it was difficult to properly identify errant vehicles or their drivers. A license plate was tied to a vehicle (not a particular owner) and sometimes when the vehicle was sold or transferred, there was no proper reassignment of the license plate to the new owner.



Investigations into RTCs resulting in over six deaths indicate that 5% of the deaths are from children most of whom were in a school bus. Working with stakeholders, FRSC developed uniform safety features and operations standards for vehicles used in conveying school kids.

Furthermore, there was no central database for all license plates that the Corps could access for more effective patrol operations. Various state governments produced license plates for vehicles in their state and the information was not centrally collated.

With the introduction of the National Vehicle Identification Scheme (NVIS), FRSC created a process for tying license plates to the vehicle owner's international passport number, auto insurance policy number, and proof of vehicle ownership. This is to ensure that each vehicle is tied specifically to a particular owner. The owner's details are uploaded to a database that can be accessed remotely by FRSC patrol teams.

With this system, FRSC is able to more properly identify vehicles. The scheme is already recording successes as the State Security Service relies on the system to obtain information on owners of vehicles that have been used in various crimes, especially, terrorist (*Boko Haram*) activities.

Motor Vehicle Administration

Given that Nigeria is a federation, FRSC does not have jurisdiction over state-owned roads. However, most of the states do not have agency focused on road safety management. This has resulted in a lack a common framework for coordination and monitoring of roads in Nigeria.

In 2009, FRSC, through the National Council on Works, proposed the establishment of Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) in the states of the federation. Using a common set of standards, each state, through its road safety agency, will be responsible for the roads within their state, while FRSC continues to focus on federal roads.

The MVA, as conceived, will improve road traffic management in the states, create public awareness on driving habits, and increase security by forming synergies with Nigeria security agencies across state and federal roads. Although the initiative is yet to be approved, a number of state governments have already adopted the reports and have created different versions of the MVA, and are willing to make the necessary alignments once the MVA is approved for implementation across the nation. Lagos adopted aspects of the MVA initiative via the Lagos State Traffic Management Authority (LASTMA).

Drivers

The role of drivers in road traffic accidents cannot be over emphasized, as it is a factor related to both drivers themselves and other road users.

The tendency to drive faster or slower than the flow of traffic, or the speed limit has been strongly linked to the likelihood and severity of crashes, with drunken drivers making the



Deaths from reckless and dangerous driving are the third leading cause of death in Nigeria. FRSC will push for child-endangerment to be considered a felony punishable by prison time.

clearest example. The FRSC is determined to ensure that drivers adhere strictly to the posted speed limit for each road and comply strictly with road signs and traffic regulations.

Deaths from reckless and dangerous driving are the third leading cause of death in Nigeria. In 2012, reports showed that at least 473 persons died from a total of 1,115 vehicular road traffic crashes nationwide and these were attributed to reckless driving.

Standardise Driving Schools

FRSC created the Driving School Standardization Programme (DSSP) to ensure improved regulation of the quality of driving schools in Nigeria through standardization of the operations of driving schools in Nigeria. Driving Schools are required to have a licensed instructor, operational vehicle, copies of the *Traffic Laws and Regulations Guide*, First Aid facilities, driving range, driving simulator, road sign models and a visual acuity testing facility. The Corps, on the other hand, offers biannual *Instructor Training Programmes* as well as refresher courses for driving instructors on how to use various teaching aids to educate their students

The programme has recorded significant success. FRSC issued the first Driving School Certificate in 2010. By 2012, 514 driving schools have been registered of which 395 schools have been certified. Between 2009 and 2012, 677 driving school instructors

graduated from the Instructor Training Programme. FRSC has launched a website that provides education and information to driving school operators and future drivers.

Ensure integrity of the national drivers' license

Prior to 2008, Nigeria's drivers' license issuance system was greatly compromised. Many motorists obtained their drivers' license from touts, and mostly without taking a driving test.

In 2008, FRSC initiated a technology and process upgrade of the drivers' license to restore integrity of the scheme, achieve international standards for Nigeria-issued drivers' licenses, enhance security features of the license, and reduce counterfeit licenses.

On September 2, 2011 President Goodluck Jonathan commissioned the new system that offers a 'one-stop shop' drivers' license processing. All new license applicants must complete a 3-6 months driving school programme after which the applicant has to pass a driving test provided by the Vehicle Inspection Office. Successful candidates can obtain an application from the Drivers Licensing Centre or online. Each candidate is expected to provide mandatory biometric data, a passport photo, and pass a visual acuity test. Unlike the old system, all issued driver's licenses can be auto-verified because all applicants are registered on a shared database.



Dr. Goodluck Jonathan, President of Nigeria (left) unveiling the new Driver's License with the enhanced security features to reduce counterfeiting of the license. Osita Chidoka, COMACE (right) assists in unveiling the license.

The initiative has recorded some significant wins. Nigerian drivers licenses are now recognized and acceptable in Maryland, United States. Discussions are progressing with other states in the United States. In Nigeria, banks now accept the drivers' license as a credible form of identification. With centralization of the processing, duplicating the licenses is now more difficult.

Test Driver Acuity

As with the vehicle safety checks, FRSC conducts a check of driver acuity every quarter. For two weekend-days every quarter, FRSC Corps members conduct a special patrol of major corridors in Nigeria. Drivers are selected at random and checked for their physical and psychological state. These checks provide an opportunity to break the monotony of driving long distances and also provide safety instructions to the drivers. Visual acuity tests are also conducted during these checks.

Patrol Operations

The Osita-led management understood that the best way to prevent and reduce road traffic crashes to the barest minimum was through strategic planning and efficient patrol operations.

Prior to Osita Chidoka's appointment as the COMACE, FRSC's data dashboard suffered difficulties in collating, processing and

effective patrol operations and management decisions to be made in regards to RTCs.

In 2009, the FRSC Data Centre was created and Dashboard Analytics was introduced to analyse the data and present the information for management decisions. Patrol operations had to be needs-specific and effective. This could only be achieved by thorough analysis of road traffic crash data. Analysis of national traffic data from the Dashboard has helped FRSC set realistic and long-term goals for its operations with conscious efforts being made to meet these goals.

Various initiatives such as Seatbelt Campaign, Safety Helmet Campaign and Total War on Overloading were put in place to improve patrol operations and ensure roadworthiness.

Enforce Use of Seatbelts

FRSC's attempt in 2004 to introduce compulsory use of seatbelts while in a moving vehicle met with severe opposition with many of the opponents expressing fears of being trapped if the vehicle were to be involved in a crash. With improved data collection, FRSC noticed in 2008 that a high number of road traffic crash victims were flung from their vehicles upon impact. As a result, it decided to increase enforcement of seatbelt use in vehicles.

FRSC commenced a series of public enlightenment campaigns to convince road



Every quarter, FRSC conducts nationwide driver-safety checks. Visual acuity tests are conducted on drivers who are selected at random.

surviving road traffic crashes. In tandem, FRSC stepped up enforcement of this law with an increase in arrests for seatbelt violation from January 2007 to December 2012. A 2012 FRSC Traffic Survey conducted in Abuja indicated 79 percent compliance to seatbelt use. This is a significant achievement for a country where 5 years earlier there was little or no awareness around the use of seatbelts.

Enforce Crash Helmets

A review of crash data from 2006 to 2008 showed a 61 percent increase in the number of persons injured in road traffic crashes. Further disaggregation of the data revealed a number of causative factors including an increase in the number of road traffic crashes involving motorcycles taxis (“Okadas”). Decline in urban mass transit system led to the emergence and preference of motorcycles as taxis in urban and semi-urban areas in Nigeria.

A 2012 report indicated 79 percent compliance to seatbelt use in Abuja, Nigeria. This is a significant achievement for a country where 5 years earlier there was little or no awareness around the use of seatbelts.

Okada crashes are typically quite severe and frequently result in loss of limb or life. In fact, the National Orthopaedic Hospital in Lagos had become so inundated by victims of Okada crashes that it created a special ward, “Okada Ward”, for such cases. Most of the fatalities were related to head injuries indicating that the victims probably did not have their safety helmets on at the time of the

crash. In fact, at the time, most of the Okadas operated without helmets.

By January 01, 2009, it became an offence punishable by law to ride on a motorcycle in Nigeria without a safety helmet. The law stipulated an arrest and payment of ₦2,000 (US\$13) in fines. At the time, the fine was equivalent to twice the cost of a helmet.

By December 2012, four years after introducing the safety helmet law, Nigeria had achieved remarkable improvements in crash statistics. Except for three states, all the states in Nigeria had implemented the safety helmet law albeit at various levels of compliance. Akwa Ibom State had the highest level of compliance (70 percent) followed by Rivers State (69 percent) and Lagos State (62 percent). The states in the southern parts of Nigeria have made more significant progress than their northern counterparts with 46 percent average compliance with 5 percent average compliance across the northern states.

Declare Total War on Overloading

In the past, although there are laws and fines for overloading, enforcement was at best haphazard. As a result, overloading of vehicles constituted a significant risk on Nigerian roads.

Total War on Overloading (TOWOL) was



From January 2009, it became an offence punishable by law to ride on a motorcycle without a crash helmet. Four years later, only three states in Nigeria are yet to implement the law. Compliance averages 46% in the southern states and 5% across the northern states.

created by FRSC in 2009 to drastically reduce the incidents of vehicle overloading on Nigeria roads. The initiative employed a two-step strategy: public education to demonstrate the negative business implications to overloading, and zero-tolerance enforcement.

Since its introduction, FRSC has conducted monthly, quarterly and annual analysis of the impact of the TOWOL programme. In 2011, there were 6,186 arrests for violation of the overloading regulations. This is a 38 percent improvement over the 2009 numbers (9,989 arrests).

One of the critical challenges with TOWOL programme is that there are different overloading regulations and penalties across the different states in Nigeria. FRSC is working to synchronise the regulations across all the states in Nigeria to close out some of the loopholes that still exist with the laws.

Post-Crash Care

The Severity Index, which is the percent of deaths to total number of casualties, was 22.1 percent in 2006 although it had declined from 27.1 percent in 1988. One of the reasons for the high fatality rate was the absence of proper first-aid to road traffic crash victims. FRSC created the Emergency Ambulance Service Scheme (“Zebra”) to provide emergency medical response to road crash victims and stabilize their condition as they are transported to a hospital for more extensive treatment.

The Zebra initiative aims to reduce road traffic crash fatality by 50 percent by 2015 (2007 Accra Declaration) and to achieve a 20-minute response time to any road traffic crash (World Health Organisation recommendation).

Cognisant that it lacked the financial resources to deploy Zebra units on all roads in Nigeria, FRSC decided to conduct an audit of the various road corridors to ascertain crash patterns and determined where the Zebra units will be located. By 2012, FRSC had deployed 13 Zebra units with the ability to respond within a 20-minute window to any crash on the 50 kilometres of road within the catchment area. This means that 30 percent of the major road corridors in Nigeria is currently covered by the Corps. The goal is for 100 percent coverage.

Medical Centres: FRSC’s goal is to have a medical centre with the ability to manage road traffic crash victims within every 50 kilometres on the major road corridors. The strategy is to partner with hospitals and medical facilities along the main arterial road network in Nigeria and, in addition, to set up a number of proprietary roadside traffic clinics owned and managed by the FRSC medical corps.

As at December 2012, there are 25 FRSC roadside traffic clinics and 62 partner medical institutions along the major arterial road networks the country. The 2015 goal is 100 partner medical institutions.

Communication: FRSC provides each hospital



Vehicle overloading is one of the top causes of road traffic crashes in Nigeria. In 2009, FRSC introduced Total War on Over-Loading, an initiative that ensures zero tolerance to over-loading of motor vehicles. There has been year-on-year improvement in enforcement.

with a dedicated phone that is linked to the FRSC telecommunications network. All senior officers of the FRSC and all officers on patrol carry phones that are part of a Closed User Group to ensure seamless communication.

As soon as a call is received at the FRSC 122 emergency number, the information is pushed out into the CUG and patrol and emergency teams are deployed to the crash site. Medical facilities within the vicinity of the crash are notified to prepare for the possible arrival of injured victims.

FRSC Response Team maintains contact with the medical facility as the victim is in transit. This protocol helps the medical personnel pre-determine the level of injury sustained by the incoming victims and to prepare to stabilise the patient(s) upon arrival.

Vehicles: By December 2012, FRSC has acquired and deployed 13 Zebra units nationwide. In addition, it has affiliation to 52 ambulance services across the country. However, for effective coverage of all the major roads in Nigeria, FRSC projects that it needs 1,222 Zebra units by 2020.

The Zebra scheme is funded in part by the 2008 World Bank stipulation that 10 percent of any World Bank-funded road project in any country must be allocated to road safety. However, achievement of the 2015 targets will depend on the continued support and goodwill of individuals and corporate citizens.

Conclusion

FRSC has been on a journey of transformation and the results are impressive. The FRSC emergency response system has helped reduce the number of deaths resulting from road traffic crashes by 53 percent from 1988 (when the FRSC was formed) to 2012. In 2012, Nigeria had 4 deaths per 1,000 vehicles, a marked improvement over the 16 deaths per 1,000 vehicles in 1988.

In the same vein, FRSC increased the number of roadside traffic clinics to 25; a 108 percent increase from 2007. This has helped reduce the deaths to casualties' ratio from 21 percent in 2007 to 17 percent in 2012.

All of these, enabled FRSC to increase the number of victims rescued alive from 15,875 in 2011 to 43,849 in 2012.

But this is not the main story. The main story that is worth recounting is how a public sector organisation has been able to forget its government roots and operate like a private sector company with an across-the-board commitment to excellence. This commitment has resulted in impressive road safety numbers and a staff that is motivated to achieve much more. With this commitment, FRSC is sure to achieve its mandate of creating a safe motoring environment in Nigeria.



In line with the 2007 Accra Declaration, FRSC aims to reduce road traffic crash fatality by 50% by 2015. From 1988 to 2012, number of deaths from RTCs dropped by 53 percent, and deaths per 1,000 vehicles dropped from 16 to 4 in the same period.



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