

# **Road safety education in the UK at the end of the 20th century**

**Prepared for Road Safety Division, Department for Transport**

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## Executive Summary

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BITER and TRL have reviewed road safety education (RSE) across the United Kingdom and how it has changed as a result of the changes in the schools curriculum and local authority reorganisation. The research formed part of the DETR (now DfT) road safety research programme. Postal surveys of Road Safety Officers, Police Forces and Health Promotion Units, schools and colleges have been completed. In addition, a sample of local authorities, agencies, schools and colleges, where there was extensive or innovative RSE activity, were visited to identify examples of good practice.

The Government itself is a significant key player in the provision of RSE. In England, Scotland and Wales the national highways Departments steer RSE policy but seek support from the other policy areas. Executive responsibility for RSE and RS training rests with the local authorities. In Northern Ireland, the national Department has similar policy responsibilities but also directly employs the Road Safety Education Officers and funds the RSE service. At government level there is general recognition of the need for RSE across all the Departments with interests touching on accident prevention, education and road safety.

The survey showed that generally RSOs are following current advice on good practice. Most actively supported RSE in schools and pre-primary groups through the provision of resources and by helping teachers plan RSE. Three quarters reported working with other agencies to co-ordinate and support their RSE efforts. The local authority (LA) reorganisation has meant more but smaller RS units. The smaller units are tackling almost as many areas of RSE as the larger units but the coverage is thinner and there are fewer interactions with teachers. Many of the small units attempt to overcome the problem of small size by forming associations with neighbouring units but the amount of collaboration does vary within these associations.

After the RSOs, the principal agencies supporting RSE were the police and health promotion officers. 71% of police forces and 80% of health promotion officers undertook some RSE activities. Police officers bring a wealth of practical and local experience to RSE. Generally, this was recognised by RSOs, teachers and the other agencies contributing to RSE. The police RSE complemented the RSO activities and the relation was usually recognised in the LA road safety plan.

The Health Promotion Officers were supportive towards RSE and very aware of the need to network in the provision of health education. Generally the health promotion units were aware of the content of the LA road safety plan and in some areas a senior health official was one of the signatories to the plan. The Health Promotion programmes incorporated evaluation as a significant element. The healthy schools initiatives were good examples of school centred approaches to health education with a good in-built evaluation.

The RSOs, Police and Health Promotion Officers had three main concerns. RSOs and police saw curriculum

pressures that reduced the time and effort available from teachers as a problem. The police and health promotion officers saw lack of agency resources as a problem. The need to place road safety in a wider context that covered health and the quality of the environment was mentioned frequently by RSOs and health promotion officers.

All the primary schools in England, Northern Ireland and Wales were sent a questionnaire and 29 per cent were returned. The low response rate means that there is a need for caution in interpreting the data, which are not necessarily representative of all primary schools. 87 per cent of respondents had taught RSE in the academic year 1996 to 1997. The majority of schools who taught RSE had some contact with their RSO in the previous year and over half had some police assistance in RSE. Rather less than half the primary schools who taught RSE provided cyclist training. Most of these trained their eleven-year-old pupils and about two fifths trained their ten-year-olds. Nearly a third of schools teaching RSE provided pedestrian training for their pupils - most commonly to the youngest children in the age range 4 to 6.

A large proportion of primary schools taught RSE as part of a multi-subject topic but a significant proportion taught it as part of a curriculum subject. The most common subject for RSE was Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) used by a third of schools. The next most common subjects, used by about a seventh of schools, were English, Geography and Science.

Only 26% of secondary schools returned a questionnaire and again the same caution is needed as with the primary school data. Of the responding schools, almost three-quarters had taught some RSE in the previous year. The secondary schools that taught RSE were slightly more likely to have had contact with their RSO than the primary schools. They were much more likely to have had a police input to RSE. About two fifths of secondary schools who taught RSE provided some practical training. This was most likely to be driver or pre-driver training for the older pupils although 10% provided cyclist training for their first year.

Teaching in UK secondary schools is mostly subject based. The most common slot for RSE was personal, social and health education, used by three-quarters of schools teaching RSE. Only small proportions, 5% or less reported teaching RSE in other subjects. The commonest of these were English, Information Technology, Geography, Science and Maths and, in Wales, Welsh.

Best practice RSE in schools followed a sequence that anticipated child casualty problems:

- Pedestrian injury on quiet roads (early primary).
- Pedestrian injury on busy roads (late primary, early secondary).
- Cyclist injury on roads (late primary, early secondary).
- Driver or rider accidents (mid to late secondary).

The schools that were involved in pedestrian or cyclist training generally recognised the particular value of practical training in the real road environment.

Casualty problems that were infrequently addressed included:

- Off-road cycle accidents (primary children).
- Passenger injury (secondary children especially girls).

Respondents from non-supporting schools had views about RSE that were less positive than the views of respondents from schools that supported RSE. Staff at non-participating schools may believe that RSE is a series of limited and ad hoc experiences. Local authorities and Government must present RSE as an essential element in the continuous education and development of citizens, who can make safe decisions about transport use and development. *The existence of a Local Authority road safety plan should emphasise every child's entitlement to a developmental RSE programme.* It should protect basic road safety activities including collaboration. To be wholly effective the content of strategic road safety plans must be carried over to the operational plans of authorities and their units.

The research has shown that there is much good practice RSE across the United Kingdom. The recommendations listed below are intended to support existing good practice and encourage its transfer to areas where it is missing.

- At all levels RSE enthusiasts should be protected and supported.
- Road safety agencies dealing directly with schools should work with and support the school champion for road safety education.
- The agencies should work to establish a champion in schools where there is no champion.
- Agencies in areas where there is Initial Teacher Training should work to provide all student teachers with training about good practice road safety education in schools.
- Local authorities and other agencies should develop action plans committing stated resources (staff and funding) and with measurable outputs.
- Action plans should be monitored and reviewed regularly, i.e. at least once per year.
- The local plan should cover the road safety education activities of all the agencies in an area and the major agencies should be signatories to the plan.
- Road safety education should be accessible for all young people.
- Local authorities and other agencies should work to establish road safety education for all students in Further Education.
- Local authorities and other agencies should develop ways to reach young people, who are outside the Further Education system.

This report provided the basis for the three 'On the safe side' guidelines, which can be downloaded from the DfT web site, [www.dft.gov.uk/roadsafety/schools](http://www.dft.gov.uk/roadsafety/schools).



# 1 Introduction

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## 1.1 Background

### 1.1.1 Previous research

Research by Reading University (Spear, Singh and Downing, 1987; Singh and Spear, 1989) examined, inter alia, the current state of RSE in schools and colleges in the United Kingdom. The experimental design involved a postal questionnaire to a 10% stratified sample of primary schools and a 25% stratified sample of secondary schools. Both questionnaires were followed up with visits to a stratified sample of schools to validate the questionnaire returns.

As a sequel to the review, TRL and Reading University worked with the local authorities in Hertfordshire and Sheffield to develop and demonstrate good practice in RSE in a local authority (Sykes *et al.*, 1995; Noble *et al.*, 1995). The outcome of this research was the Good Practice Guidelines series of booklets published by the Department of Transport (subsequently the Department of Transport Local Government and the Regions and then Department for Transport - DfT) in 1994.

The British Institute for Traffic Education Research (BITER) took a slightly different approach in two surveys conducted for the Scottish Office from 1993 to 1996. Postal questionnaires were sent to all primary and secondary schools, rather than a stratified sample. The sample of schools selected for follow-up interviews was not stratified. Rather the schools were selected on the basis of evidence of comprehensive and or innovative approaches to RSE. These surveys resulted in two main outcomes: an overall view of where, how and to whom RSE is taught in primary and secondary schools in Scotland and details of good practice in the organisation and delivery of RSE in schools. The first outcome was of obvious value to The Scottish Office. The second outcome, produced in a teacher-friendly format, was of value both to teachers and RSOs in encouraging and enhancing RSE.

### 1.1.2 Changes in local government and the school curriculum

Since the survey by Singh and Spear, there have been significant changes to the curricula in all four countries as well as widespread reorganisation of local government.

The introduction of a national curriculum, in England, Wales and Northern Ireland has meant that schools have had to reappraise their priorities and the organisation of their teaching. In Scotland the introduction of the 5-14 Curriculum Guidelines has also encouraged teachers to reassess the organisation of the curriculum.

The recent reorganisation of local government may have influenced the approach taken to support RSE in schools by local authorities. The research by BITER and TRL has compared the present situation in RSE with the results of the earlier work by Reading University and TRL, and also illuminated the effect of the recent and major changes in both schools and local authorities.

## 1.2 Research objectives

The Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (DETR now DfT) framed the following objectives for this research:

- 1 assess the current provision of RSE in schools and FE colleges in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, and in FE colleges in Scotland;
- 2 compare the current provision with that identified in the previous study over ten years ago (Singh and Spear, 1989);
- 3 assess what use is being made of current materials (e.g. Good Practice Guidelines and other resources) and if they are not being used identify the reasons why;
- 4 identify and disseminate examples of good practice;
- 5 identify areas that require improvement; and, if appropriate;
- 6 recommend methods to improve the content and delivery of RSE in schools.

The researchers were also required to consider the most appropriate form of dissemination of the results.

# 2 Methodology

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BITER and TRL undertook the research under the guidance and direction of the DETR Project Officer and the Project Advisory Group. The requirement called for a three-phase investigation. BITER and TRL carried out national surveys of RSE activity and reported these surveys as part of Phase 1. In Phase 2, they identified, from the Phase 1 surveys, local authorities, agencies, schools and colleges where there was extensive or innovative RSE activity and visited these organisations to gain a full assessment of their efforts and to identify examples of good practice. Phase 3 involved preparation of this technical report and draft good practice advice to support and encourage RSE activities by teachers, RSOs and other providers of RSE.

## 2.1 Phase 1 - National surveys

Any review of RSE in schools and districts across the United Kingdom requires the co-operation of professionals drawn from a range of bodies, in particular the local Road Safety Officers. In the first weeks of the project, in the autumn of 1996, the research team notified the relevant national associations, in particular the Local Authority Road Safety Officers' Association (LARSOA) and the Association of London Borough Road Safety Officers (ALBRSO), and sought their endorsement of the research and the proposed methodology.

The 'RSE Good Practice Guidelines: Organisations' identified the local RSO as the central agent for RSE. RSO activities usually include promoting RSE to teachers and the other agencies who work with teachers, providing advice on teaching resources, supplying teaching resources, providing RSE in-service training for teachers and other agencies, and contributing to the local road safety plan. As a result of all these activities the RSOs are

particularly knowledgeable about the nature of current RSE, how it is being delivered and taught, what resources are being used, and which agencies are involved. Analysis of this knowledge would improve the scope and content of the proposed research surveys. Consequently in 1997 BITER and TRL surveyed the RSOs and analysed their responses before beginning to develop the questionnaires for the other agencies, schools and colleges.

BITER and TRL developed and piloted a postal questionnaire for local authority RSOs. The questionnaire investigated the role of the RSOs; the staff, financial and other resources available to them; how they evaluated and justified their use of these resources; their precise role in local RSE provision; their knowledge of other agency RSE activities in their area; the style of RSE provision; in-service training for RSOs; and the teaching resources that they know of, which they use, which they do not use, and their reasons for not using. After piloting and survey control clearance the questionnaire was sent to all chief road safety officers in the UK local authorities.

Analysis of the RSO survey returns provided a general overview of RSE activities in the UK in 1996, the teaching resources available and how they were used or why they are not used, all as seen by the local RSOs. This information was used to frame the hypotheses to be tested in the questionnaires for schools, FE colleges, Police Forces, Health Promotion Units, initial teacher training colleges (ITT colleges) and other agencies identified by the RSOs as contributing to RSE.

The questionnaires for the Police Forces and other agencies were adapted from the RSO questionnaire. The questionnaires for schools and FE colleges explored the extent of RSE in-service training, how RSE is covered within the timetable (as part of the cross curricular strands and themes or as part of some of the curriculum subjects), the style of RSE, how RSE is covered in the school policy documents, any consideration of RSE by the Governors, what age groups are taught and for how long, and what resources are used with each age group. The questionnaire for the ITT colleges covered the same sort of ground as the questionnaires for schools and FE colleges but also explored the recommendations about the classroom provision of RSE made by the ITT college staff to the student teachers.

All the questionnaires were piloted and submitted to survey control. The intention was to survey all the relevant professionals and teacher training institutes in the UK, all the schools and FE colleges in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, and FE colleges in Scotland. This amounted to a total of just over 30,200 educational institutions (Education Year Book, 1995), 55 Police Forces, and about 500 RSOs, Health Promotion Officers and others. Welsh language versions of the questionnaires were provided for Welsh speaking schools and FE colleges.

## **2.2 Phase 2 - Good practice surveys**

The Phase 1 data were analysed to identify local authority areas where the provision of RSE was both widespread and intensive, to discover the schools and FE colleges that

covered the subject in the greatest depth, and to identify productive innovative ideas. After discussion with the Project Officer, about 200 officials and organisations for in-depth study were identified. However, it was not possible to gain co-operation from as many agencies as required. In total 181 interviews were carried out with 14 RSOs, 76 primary schools, 64 secondary schools, 6 FE colleges, 10 Police Forces and 11 Health Promotion Units between January and April 1999.

An RSE expert from the combined research team visited each organisation or individual surveyed. The aim of the visit was to review the data provided in the postal questionnaire with the responsible members of staff and to obtain detailed evidence of RSE achievement and good practice. These interviews were qualitative and were guided by an aide-mémoire rather than a formal questionnaire. Past experience suggested that this flexible approach would be better able to identify innovation and test achievement than a more formal questionnaire approach.

All these interviews were transcribed and reviewed by the research team. This review identified examples of good practice and innovation that should be promoted widely.

## **2.3 Phase 3 - Reporting the results**

This report outlines the justification for the research, reviews the findings of the previous national surveys of RSE, describes the methodology and sampling of this research, discusses the survey data, reports the findings, and discusses any implications for RSE policy either at national, local or school level.

There are in addition guidelines describing good practice, which are based on the results of this research. (Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions, 1999a, b, c)

Additionally, the questionnaires, aides-mémoire and briefing notes described above have been produced as a separate TRL report and are available as a priced unpublished paper from the TRL Library (Please quote reference PR/SE/621/99).

# **3 The role of Government**

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In 1999 there were seven government departments that supported or affected the provision of road safety education in schools and colleges. In England, the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (now Department for Transport) was the lead Department. The Home Office had an interest through its policies for the deployment of policing and police activities to protect citizens from injury. The Department of Health was concerned to reduce injuries as part of its continuing programme to improve health and control the costs of the National Health Service. The Department of Trade and Industry had responsibilities to promote free markets for products but also to protect consumers from injuries arising from defective products. The Department for Education and Employment provided the lead in educational policies, particularly policy on the content of the national curriculum and hence on what should be taught in schools.

In Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales these responsibilities were devolved to the regional Government Departments. Up to 1999 these were the Department of the Environment (NI), the Scottish Office and the Welsh Office.

In Scotland and Wales, the Ministries of the new Scottish Parliament and Welsh Assembly have been responsible since their establishment in 1999. They have taken over the relevant staff from the Scottish and Welsh Offices to maintain continuity in policy development and administration.

The following sections detail the role of the pre-1999 Departments in road safety education.

### **3.1 The Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (now DfT)**

DETR policy on RSE in 1999 is traceable to the national policies for casualty reduction. In 1987 the then Department of Transport published an overall objective for the casualty reduction programme in Great Britain (*Road Safety: the Next Steps*) to:

- a reduce casualties through the sustained application of existing measures (including newly developed measures not yet fully applied);
- b seek further reductions beyond those in a., by the identification of new measures and by the creation of a climate of opinion and understanding which is more sympathetic to the promotion of road safety.

It was recognised that attaining this objective would require extensive support for and development of road safety education.

Child pedestrian and cyclist accidents are widely scattered across our urban areas often on fairly quiet roads. These accidents are not always amenable to site-specific engineering or enforcement measures but can be addressed by education. The Government has identified road safety education (RSE) as an essential component of national and local strategies to reduce the number of child casualties (Department of Transport, 1990).

Although RSE in schools and further education colleges (FE colleges) is not a statutory requirement in the United Kingdom, the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (DETR) has issued guidelines on good practice in RSE (Department of Transport, 1994)<sup>1</sup>. The guidelines cover separately RSE in primary schools, RSE in secondary schools, the provision of in service training for road safety education, and how local authorities and other agencies can organise to work together to deliver a high standard of road safety education to all children. The organisation guidelines identify the local Road Safety Officer (RSO) as the central figure in a network of agencies.

The DETR guidelines are purely advisory. Local authority plans for the implementation of RSE are usually described in the local authority road safety plan. Most authorities attach an up-dated road safety plan to their annual TPP submissions. The main road safety funding comes from capital scheme money and is almost invariably invested in engineering measures with anticipated high rates of return. DETR might review a road safety plan if an application for transport support grant (TSG) includes

significant proposals for road safety engineering. Additional small grants can be directed to one off pump-priming activities but not to continuous support for ongoing activities.

DETR does use research money to fund research developing and evaluating the impact of local RSE programmes. Recent research of this nature has included the evaluations of the Children's Traffic Club and of cyclist training as well as the research reported here. A large part of the DETR safety education research is concerned with establishing the underlying mechanisms of effective safety education (Chapman and O'Reilly, 1999) and exploiting this understanding to develop new learning experiences for use with children. The Department disseminates its findings by the publication of research reports, support for conferences, and the direct distribution of teaching resources to road safety units and other agencies. Some measure of the extent of the Department's coverage can be gained by reviewing the Department's safety research web site at <http://www.dft.gov.uk/roadsafety/schools>.

### **3.2 Other government departments**

#### **3.2.1 The Department for Education and Employment**

The Department for Education and Employment (DfEE) exists to promote economic growth and improve the nation's competitiveness and quality of life by raising standards of educational achievement and skill and by promoting an efficient and flexible labour market. The Department is responsible for policy on education in England and appoints the chief executives of the various agencies overseeing the quality of English education and schools. The Department's educational goals include '*to improve the nation's competitiveness and quality of life by securing high and rising standards of educational attainment for all children up to the age of 16*'.

The DfEE sees road safety education as one of the areas contributing to the safety part of health education. As such RSE is strengthened by the developments in PSHE and citizenship.

#### **3.2.2 The Home Office**

The Home Office is the government department responsible for internal affairs in England and Wales. The principal aims of the Home Office are to secure individuals' rights and freedoms under the law and to provide for the protection and security of the public. These aims impinge on national road safety through certain of the Home Office functions, to:

- promote effective and efficient policing;
- ensure that the courts have suitable sentencing powers and that they can be given effect;
- promote effective ways of preventing crime and supporting victims;
- promote equality of opportunity regardless of race.

The executive powers associated with these functions are devolved to the local police authorities, Chief Constables, and other local bodies. Thus the Home Office

has no executive responsibility for the provision of road safety education but its policies and guidance, particularly the targets that it sets for Police Forces, may influence local provision.

### **3.2.3 Department of Health**

In England, the Department of Health (DoH) support for road accident prevention is traceable to the Health of the Nation accident prevention target. 'The Health of the Nation' programme has been replaced by the new public health strategy called 'Our Healthier Nation'. 'Our Healthier Nation' identifies accident prevention as one of four key areas for government action. Complementary activities are pursued through Health Improvement Programmes and the Health Action Zone initiative.

The priorities for DoH for 5-19 year olds include smoking, alcohol abuse and accident prevention. With the focus on health inequalities, these issues will form a significant component of health improvement programmes aimed at this young target group.

DoH has generally adopted a flexible approach to the promotion of health related issues in schools. As health education is not a National Curriculum subject efforts to promote health usually targeted PSHE and integration within appropriate subjects. At national level the DoH has an advisory role and the Health Education Authority and the regionally based Health Promotion Officers are responsible for the local promotion of health issues.

DoH is working with DfEE on the Healthy Schools programme. This programme and accident prevention are an important part of discussions within the School Travel Advisory Group under DETR's lead.

### **3.2.4 Department of Trade and Industry**

Since 1976 the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) has had the lead responsibility in Government for home safety for all age groups. Within the Consumer Safety and Trading Standards Branch (CSTS) approximately two thirds of the work is concerned with home safety. The work ranges from managing a safety awareness programme to, at the other extreme, proposing legislation. Because the CSTS Branch is mainly concerned with product safety there is only the occasional overlap with road safety. Cycle safety and helmet wearing is an area of overlap: the DTI has responsibilities for promoting the safety of off-road use of bicycles while the DETR is responsible for their on-road use.

DTI policy is carried out in a number of ways:

- educating the public by giving them more information about products;
- working with the manufacturing and retail trade to persuade them to adopt policies e.g. particular wording on products;
- advising the Government when to legislate (as passing laws can be a slow option, and the laws themselves can sometimes be crude and inflexible).

### **3.2.5 The Territorial Departments (now Department of Environment (Northern Ireland), Scottish Executive and Welsh Assembly)**

The Territorial Departments in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales were responsible for road transport and education within their countries. The Welsh legal system and local government organisation closely match those in England and most Acts and Regulations had been promoted jointly by the Welsh Office and the appropriate English Department. Scotland and Northern Ireland both had their own legislation but the Territorial Departments for those countries conferred with the English and Welsh Departments to maintain common standards as far as possible.

There are major differences between the four UK countries in the management and promotion of RSE.

#### *Liaison between the Territorial Departments*

In 1999 DETR led liaison between the Territorial Departments on RSE matters. DETR maintains formal contact with road safety policy staff in DOE (NI), The Scottish Office and the Welsh Office through regular committee meetings plus additional ad hoc meetings as events require. The Departments shared outputs and materials where this seems effective but regional differences can require the preparation of regional variants e.g. Welsh language resources.

#### *England*

DETR used formal and informal consultation to develop road safety policy including RSE. Executive responsibility for RSE was devolved to the local authorities, which employed the Road Safety Officers. DETR may consult formally through the publication of a green paper or informally through ad hoc meetings and committees. These included regular meetings with RSO Associations and RSO representation on a range of advisory committees involved in the DETR publicity programmes and research projects.

#### *Wales*

In Wales, liaison with the Road Safety Officers was managed more formally than in England. In Wales, the Welsh Office provided support for RSE and related activities through the Road Safety Council of Wales (RoSCoW). The Welsh Office gave a grant to the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) to provide secretarial support for RoSCoW and also paid BITER for the services of a Traffic Education Adviser.

#### *Scotland*

In Scotland, national responsibility for RSE lay with the Scottish Road Safety Campaign (SRSC). This acted as the executive arm of the Scottish Office Development Department, Transport Division 3. As well as RSE, the SRSC was responsible for some road safety publicity and other initiatives. A series of committees, involving all the appropriate interest groups in Scotland including the local RSOs, directed the activities of the campaign. The SODD maintained arms-length control by providing the chairman of the main committee and most of the SRSC funding.

The SRSC worked closely with the local RSOs (who were managed by the police force in many areas of Scotland), the Association of Chief Police Officers Scotland (ACPOS) and the Health Education Board Scotland. The SRSC also had connections with the Scottish Office Education Department via Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Schools and the Scottish School Board Association. The SRSC considered that the multi-agency approach provided for effective and efficient working. Viewed from outside Scotland, the SRSC operation did seem to have led to a coherent programme of RSE development with a high degree of co-operation between the local authorities, the police forces and the Health Education Board Scotland.

#### *Northern Ireland*

In Northern Ireland the RSE service was provided directly by the Department of the Environment (NI). The Road Safety Officer Service was within the core of the Department of the Environment (NI) but had close links to the Royal Ulster Constabulary (now PSNI) and the Roads Service. The RSE staff were called Road Safety Education Officers (RSEOs). This title unambiguously defined their function. In 1997, there were five RSEB area offices based on the Education and Library Board (ELB) areas and the RSEOs largely worked from the ELB Area offices.

This organisation led to considerable consistency in the provision of RSE across Northern Ireland and slightly greater salience in the development of education policy than in England. Co-operation between the areas was close. In particular, each area RSEO had responsibilities for a specialism, which applied over the whole of Northern Ireland. Although the Government expenditure per head of population was higher than in any of the other three countries it did include the whole RSE service; there were no local authority funded RSOs. The analysis of Road Safety Unit expenditure (Harland *et al.*, 1998) showed that the expenditure per capita in Northern Ireland was below but not significantly different from the UK local authority average.

### **3.3 How government departments access the 5-19 age group**

Schools and children receive safety materials and safety promotions from a wide range of sources, some of which can be as effective or even more effective than a formal Government information pack. Most of the Departments involved in the promotion of road safety use these non-governmental paths to reach schools. Examples include:

- Television schools programmes (pre school – 18).
- School visitors.
- Internet.
- News media.
- Free commercials.
- Advertising in bus shelters.
- Car stickers.
- Leaflets.
- Magazines.
- Newsletter.
- Campaigns.

## **4 The Road Safety Officers**

The Road Safety Officer is usually the road safety champion within a local area. In England and Wales the Road Safety Officers are employed by the local authority, which may be either a county council or unitary authority. Almost all work within the Highways or Transportation Department of the authority. In much of Scotland the local authorities have delegated their road safety education duties to their Chief Constable and in those regions the Road Safety Officers are managed by the Police Force. In Northern Ireland, the Department of the Environment (NI) employs the Road Safety Education Officers.

Because of their importance in the provision of road safety education, the road safety officers were surveyed first in this research. A full report of the postal survey of RSOs has been published separately (see Harland *et al.*, 1998). This chapter summarises the data and conclusions from the previous report and gives some discussion of the data from the good practice interviews.

### **4.1 Samples**

The postal questionnaire was sent to all road safety units within the UK in December 1996<sup>2</sup>. By April 1997 132 questionnaires (78 per cent) had been returned and 15 authorities had said that they were unable to complete the questionnaire. Of the 15, seven authorities did not themselves provide the road safety education service in their area and eight were unable to complete the questionnaire because of staff shortages and other pressures.

Collectively the respondents to the questionnaire provided road safety services to a total population of about 47,000,000 people. This amounted to 80 per cent of the UK population.

Table 1 shows how the returned questionnaires were distributed between countries. Local government reorganisation in the 1990s has led to considerable change in the management of the road safety education function. With the exception of London and the Metropolitan Counties, at the start of the decade local government in England, Scotland and Wales had a two-tier structure with road safety education being managed as one of the duties of the large top-tier authorities. Within London and the Metropolitan Counties of England there was a single tier of local government and these unitary authorities managed the road safety provision. On 1 April 1996 the top-tier authorities in Scotland and Wales were dissolved and their duties, including responsibility for road safety education, passed to smaller unitary districts. In England some of the County Councils (the top tier authorities) have been dissolved or reduced in size to form unitary districts but some are being maintained as the top-tier in a continuing two-tier system. In summary, the place of road safety education in local government has not changed since 1994 in Northern Ireland, the Channel Islands, the surviving County Councils, the Metropolitan Districts, the London Boroughs and in at least four of the Scottish Police Force areas. It has changed in the new English unitary authorities, in much of Scotland and in all the Welsh authorities.

**Table 1 RSO respondents by country and district type**

<i>Country</i>	<i>Districts responding</i>	<i>District types</i>	
Channel Islands	2		
England	93	31	County councils
		25	Unitary (London boroughs)
		22	Unitary (Metropolitan)
		15	Other unitary authorities
Northern Ireland	5	5	Education board districts
Scotland	20	14	Unitary authorities
		6	Police forces
Wales	12	12	Unitary authorities
All countries	132		

Between November 1998 and April 1999 14 RSOs were interviewed about their responses to the postal questionnaire and developments in RSE and RS training since 1996. The interview sample was selected on the basis of the postal questionnaire data. The intention was to interview RSOs whose units were, for their size, heavily committed to RSE and who had indicated on the postal questionnaire that they were willing to be interviewed. In England it was possible to sample large, medium and small units in counties that were categorised by casualties per 100,000 population as high or low casualty counties. In Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales the aim was to get a representative sample of quality RSE and training in each country.

## 4.2 The postal questionnaire

The postal questionnaire covered:

- details of the authority;
- the provision of RSE and training;
- teaching resources;
- monitoring and evaluating RSE and training;
- other agencies with whom the RSOs co-operate;
- RSO priorities for the coming year.

## 4.3 Managing the road safety education service

### 4.3.1 Staff and resources

Across the whole sample there were about 1.4 RSOs per 100,000 population but the range was very wide, from 0.3 up to 5.0 RSOs per 100,000: and between district types the average varied from 0.8 per 100,000 in Northern Ireland to 2.0 per 100,000 in the Scottish unitaries.

The variations in the average size of schools between the different types of authority meant that there were considerable variations in the number of schools per RSO. The Northern Ireland Boards had almost twice as many primary schools per RSO and three times as many secondary schools per RSO as the average for the rest of the UK.

112 respondents provided information on the level of the annual budget for education, training and publicity (excluding staff costs) allocated to the RS unit. The range was very wide, from £1,400 per year to £326,000<sup>3</sup>. The level of these resources was high in Northern Ireland and low in Scotland. Taking this with the data on RSO numbers suggested the possibility that local authorities were striking some balance between RSO numbers and the non-staff budget.

An analysis of the level of expenditure on staff and resources indicated that local authority spending on the road safety officers and services was a logarithmic function of the authority's population and number of secondary schools. The form of the function pointed to possible economies of scale. For example, a district with a population of 750,000 and average secondary school numbers for its size would on average have unit staff and resources equivalent to eleven RSOs. Four smaller but equal sized districts serving the same total population would have about three RSOs each, giving a total of twelve, and 15 districts with populations of 50,000 would have one RSO each, i.e. a total of fifteen RSOs.

Thirty-nine units reported the level of funds received as sponsorship and grants. The range was from nothing to £177,000 with an average over the 39 units of £14,000 per year. If, as seems likely, most of the non-respondents received no such sponsorship or grants the average level of support across all units must have been less than £5,000.

The main beneficiaries were the English Counties and Metropolitan Districts. None of the English unitary authorities or the Northern Ireland Boards reported receiving this type of funding and the levels reported in Wales and Scotland were low. However, it was not known what extra value the Scottish units received as free resources and services from the Scottish Road Safety Campaign, which did itself receive some sponsorship.

The changes in the organisation of local authorities between 1985 and 1997 meant that it was not possible to make detailed comparisons between staff and funding data in this survey and the data reported by Singh (Singh *et al.*, 1987). Within Singh's sample 78 authorities reported employing a total of about 550 RSOs. In the 1997 survey 126 authorities reported employing about 580 RSOs. These data suggested that since 1985 there had been an increase in the number of RSOs employed in the UK of more than 5 per cent. Nevertheless, because of the increase in the number of authorities providing RSE services, the average number of RSOs per RS unit had fallen since 1985.

In 1985, 74 authorities reported annual expenditure on RSE (excluding staff costs) amounting to a total of about £2.8M: in 1997, 112 authorities reported budgets, which summed to £5.3M. The total funding £2.8M in 1985 was equivalent to £4.4M in 1995, after allowing for changes in the retail price index. This suggested that at constant prices funding for RSE resources and non-staff services had increased by at least 20 per cent between 1985 and 1996.

### 4.3.2 Involvement of other agencies

Seventy-seven units, who were not themselves police forces, reported that they worked with the police (Table 2).

Sixty-six units reported working with the health service primarily as part of local campaigns to reduce accidents. Forty-one units worked with their education departments mostly to establish RSE policy but sometimes to liaise on parking outside schools. Other agencies mentioned included driving schools (5 units), road safety councils (5 units), other departments in the local authority - social services, environmental health, community safety and fleet management - (6 units), probation service (3 units), charities such as the Child Accident Prevention Trust (2 units), and the prison service (1 unit).

**Table 2 RS units who work with other agencies**

Agency	Number of RS units who:		
	Do work with	Do not work with	Did not respond
Education Department	41	79	12
Police*	77	39	16
Health agencies	66	52	14
Others	19		113

\* Police forces were not asked this question.

Thirty-one units said that they did not liaise with any of the three agencies (LEA, police or health) and 6 units did not respond to this question. The data in Table 2 indicate that fewer RS units worked with their LEA in 1996 but that there was much more co-operation with the health agencies. The local management of schools and the associated financial delegations have led to reductions in the education advisory staff numbers within LEAs and a reduction in their involvement in teacher training. There were fewer opportunities for RSOs to introduce RSE through LEA provided INSET in 1996.

The Health of the Nation programme introduced accident reduction as a health target (Department of Health, 1992) and the movement towards health alliances, healthy cities and health promoting schools has created opportunities for RSOs and health education professionals to co-operate.

#### 4.3.3 RS unit priorities

The respondents were asked to list their top three priorities for action in the coming year. They gave a total of 288 priority items. Initially these were divided broadly by RSO functions such as training, working with schools, publicity and campaigns, management, liaison, resources, etc (cf. Table 12 in Harland, Davies, Clayton and Platt, 1998). For this report, the priorities have been divided more by application than RSO function.

The data show areas where the Road Safety Officers have concerns or are introducing changed practices. These data do not indicate the level of effort that the units are putting into the activities listed. For example, almost all road safety units support cyclist training but only 7.3 per cent of Road Safety Officers listed it as one of their top three priorities.

Table 3 shows the proportions of Road Safety Officers mentioning each priority. There are possible overlaps

between groups and the classification is somewhat subjective. Nevertheless, it does give an indication of how the programmes of the road safety units may develop and where the RSOs hope to direct their efforts. The categories are similar but wider than the categories of police priorities shown in Table 10 in Section 5.1.11. This reflects the broader responsibilities of RSOs in the management and promotion of local road safety but also the significant staff resources that Police Forces can supply to support in-school safety education and training.

**Table 3 Priorities of the RS units**

Priority type	Percentage of priorities in type
Road safety training	22.2
Cyclists	7.3
Child pedestrians	6.6
Pre-driver	3.8
Driver	2.8
Children's traffic club	1.0
Other/general	0.7
General road safety priorities	20.7
Driver improvement	6.4
Reduce accidents	3.8
Vulnerable or ethnic road users	2.4
In-car safety	1.7
Other	6.3
Schools – policy & programme development etc	17.7
Road safety unit management	11.8
Environmental programmes & sustainable school travel	9.2
Road safety education resources	5.6
Distribute resources	2.8
Develop resources	1.4
Provide theatre in education	1.0
Road safety publicity campaigns	4.9
Professional training	3.1
Teachers	2.1
Others	0.7
Multi-agency liaison	2.6
Accident data analysis	1.0
Other	1.2

The general road safety priorities listed safety goals but did not specify whether these were to be achieved by education, training, publicity or whatever.

Schools policy and programme development included improving ways to get RSE into the school timetable, developing school policies, working on the transfer from primary to secondary, and increasing the number of visits to and also work with secondary schools.

Many of the management priorities pointed to concerns over 'management' matters following local authority reorganisation. Several respondents gave maintaining the RS unit or maintaining traffic accident analysis as a priority. Other general management priorities included meeting financial targets and identifying opportunities and new

channels. Seeking sponsorship for the school crossing patrol service and for publicity campaigns were priorities that may have been motivated by financial constraints. Developing the authority road safety plan and a publicity strategy were other important priorities classed under this group.

Just under ten per cent of the priorities were concerned with education to reduce dependency on car travel. A number of priorities referred to 'Safer journey to school campaigns' and 'TravelWise'.

#### 4.3.4 Monitoring and evaluation

Ninety-five units reported how they monitored and evaluated their RSE programme, 10 units said that they did not monitor or evaluate, and 27 respondents missed the question (Table 4). The most frequently used measures were 'teacher questionnaires', 'feedback' and 'pupil questionnaires' followed by 'accident data'.

**Table 4 How the RS units monitor and evaluate their own activities**

<i>Monitoring/ evaluation method</i>	<i>Number of RS units who use method</i>
Teacher questionnaires and evaluation sheets	37
Feedback	32
Pupil questionnaires and evaluation sheets	30
Accident data	26
Visits	18
Stock tracking	15
Contact (specified)	14
Contact (unspecified)	3
Quality appraisal - quality management system	3
Other	14
No evaluation	10
Did not respond	27

'Feedback' involved noting or recollecting opportunistic responses from clients and was not too dissimilar from 'visits' which involved seeking client opinions and opportunistic observation of activities.

Three units had implemented formal quality management systems (QMS) presumably because their authority or parent department has implemented such a system. A small unit might have difficulty introducing and maintaining a formal QMS but it seemed surprising that more units did not use evaluation questionnaires and only 15 units used stock tracking as a measure of RSE activity.

### 4.4 RSO provision of RSE in schools and colleges

#### 4.4.1 Linking with schools and colleges

The principal methods used to maintain links with schools and colleges were visits and letters or other direct mail. These methods were most frequently used for maintaining links with primary and secondary schools, barely half the respondents used them for linking with FE colleges. In 1985 visits and letters were also the most frequently mentioned methods (Singh *et al.*, 1987). As in 1997, about half as many units reported methods for linking to FE colleges as reported methods for linking to schools.

The most frequently mentioned problem in linking with schools and colleges, in 1997, was seen as the low priority of RSE in the school or college curriculum and this perhaps reinforced the next most frequently mentioned problem, lack of interest by the target teaching staff. Shortage of RS staff time and a lack of resources were the next two most frequently mentioned problems - the staff time problem was the most frequently mentioned problem in maintaining links with pre-primary groups. The other problems were concerns about possible conflicts between DETR and the Department for Education and Employment (DfEE) policies, competition with other agencies and reaching the right person.

It should be noted that no problem apart from the curriculum problem was mentioned by more than a quarter of respondents.

The most frequently mentioned successful method for developing RSE was the loan of resources with visits being the second most frequently mentioned. Involving or targeting teachers in schools and FE colleges was mentioned as frequently as visits for those institutions.

Most of the respondents claimed that as a matter of general policy they actively supported primary schools, secondary schools and pre-primary groups but less than half claimed to support FE colleges actively. For most of the rest their policy was to provide support on request.

#### 4.4.2 Services provided to schools and colleges

The most common forms of assistance were the provision of free resources to schools and pre-primaries, lending resources to schools and pre-primaries, and assisting teaching staff in schools to plan RSE. About three quarters of RS units provided or lent RS resources to FE colleges and about half helped FE staff to plan RSE. A significant number of units gave general talks to assemblies and to classes in schools but not quite as many as the units who provided specific timetabled inputs to planned programmes. In general fewer RS units provided resources or services to pre-primaries and FE colleges than to primary and secondary schools.

The largest change since 1985 was the increase in the number of units who reported that they assisted teaching staff to plan RSE. In 1997 91 per cent of respondents reported helping primary teachers to plan and 86 per cent were helping secondary teachers: in 1985 the corresponding proportions had been 71 per cent and 73 per cent.

#### 4.4.3 RSE teaching resources

Table 5 lists seven resources funded by DETR. Most RS Units had copies of these resources although there was some indication of distribution problems, particularly with *Rosalind*. This was highlighted by comments from RSOs on why they did not promote a particular resource to schools. Seven indicated that they could not promote *Rosalind* because they had not been sent a copy, or did not know anything about it. Distribution may also have been a problem for *Drive*. More Units reported promoting *Drive* to schools than actually had a copy. One RSO said that he/she had never received a copy and a second commented



**Table 5 RS unit use of resources funded by DETR**

Resource	Number of RS units who:			
	Have a copy	Use the resource	Promote the resource to schools	Do not promote to schools
Rosalind	77	53	13	22
Good Practice Guidelines	92	80	43	6
Let's Decide Walkwise	81	35	39	22
Drive (with Alexei Sayle)	89	73	96	6
School Governor's Leaflet (England and Wales only)	74	54	58	5
School Board Pack (Scotland only)	16	11	5	2
Secondary Steps	85	48	60	13

that the number of copies they were sent was insufficient. However *Drive* was well used (73 of the RS Units use the resource).

A relatively small number (13) of the 77 Units that have a copy of *Rosalind* actively promote its use in Schools. The reasons given for not doing so were because it was used as a central resource and because the Unit did not have most of the resources listed on the database. In addition it was not felt to be user friendly, and schools, or the RSO might not have access to a computer.

Thirty-five of the 81 units who had a copy of *Let's Decide Walkwise* used the resource themselves, but a higher number, 39, promoted it to schools. The most frequently given reason for not promoting this resource to schools was that the scheme was too labour intensive or RS Units and schools did not have the resources to use it. There appeared to be a particular problem with insurance cover in Northern Ireland. More positively four areas did not promote *Let's Decide Walkwise* because they used other pedestrian training resources such as *START*, *Footsteps* or locally produced materials.

The *Good Practice Guidelines* were generally used by those who had a copy, although fewer RSOs promoted it to schools than used it themselves.

In England and Wales the *School Governors' Leaflet* was used and also promoted to schools by most of the 74 units, which had a copy. However, two RSOs felt that the leaflet was inappropriate and did not address the issues required.

Sixteen units had a copy of the Scottish *School Board Pack*, two of which were in England. Eleven of the 14 Scottish Units used the pack themselves and five of them promoted the pack to schools. One Scottish RS Unit did not have a copy of the pack.

#### 4.4.4 Transition - primary to secondary school

79 units provided RSE services to support children's transition from primary to secondary school. Most commonly this service involved working with children either in the final primary year (59 units) or in the first secondary year (58 units). 33 units reported working with primary staff and 40 units with secondary staff. Only 18 units worked with parents at the transition stage.

There were marked variations from country to country. In Northern Ireland all the boards supported the transition by working with primary pupils and staff and secondary staff - four out of the five also worked with secondary pupils - but none of them worked with parents. In England the majority of units worked with pupils at primary and secondary schools but only a minority worked with staff and parents. In Scotland and Wales a minority of units worked with either pupils or staff and no units worked with parents.

### 4.5 Practical RS training

The origins of the road safety service are to be found in practical safety training, particularly in cyclist training. In 1996, most road safety units supported cycle training, a large proportion were involved in pre-driver training and over half undertook pedestrian training.

The nature of the support offered depended on the type of training (Figure 1). For pedestrian and cyclist training, at least two thirds of the RS units involved were training pupils and also training teachers and others to be trainers. For training in driving or riding motor vehicles the RSOs were mainly promoting the activity and providing links to external agencies. In the case of pre-driver training more than half of the units who did provide the service trained teachers or trained pupils.

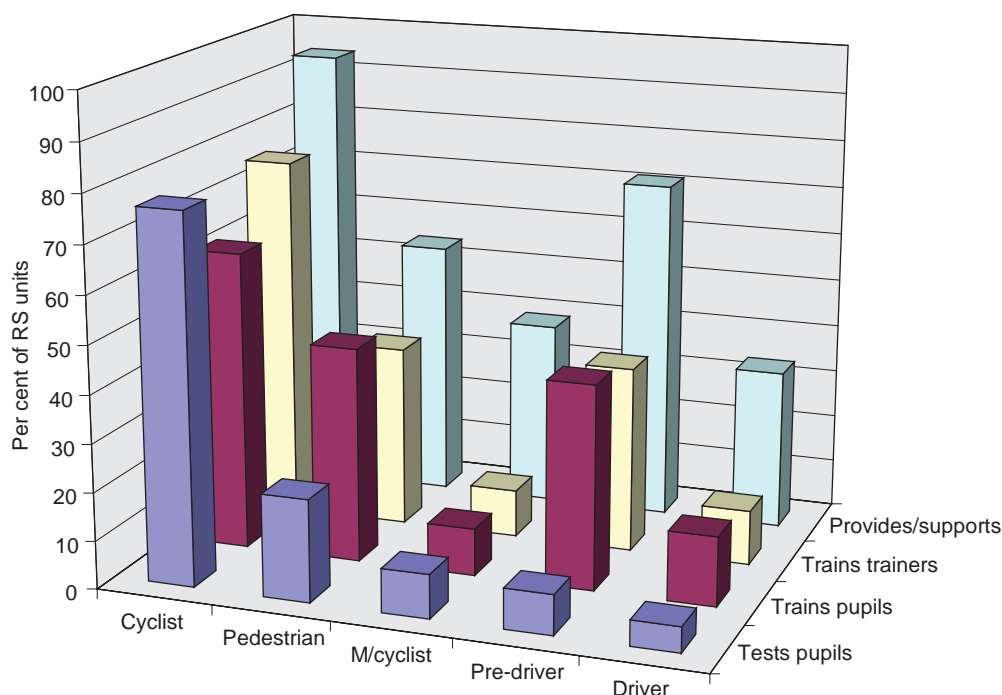
The ages at which children and students were offered training by the RS units followed the expected pattern. Pedestrian training was offered predominantly to children aged 5 to 7 years although five units offered it to children aged 8 to 11 years. Cycle training was most likely to be offered to children at some time between 8 and 11 years old, quite a few units trained older children and 15 trained younger children. Motor vehicle training and pre-driver training were most frequently offered to the 16 to 18 age group: the 12 - 15 age group was offered pre-driver training by 26 units and moped or motor cycle training by 11 units. One unit reported offering moped or motor cycle training to children aged 8 to 11.

### 4.6 Professional development for RSE

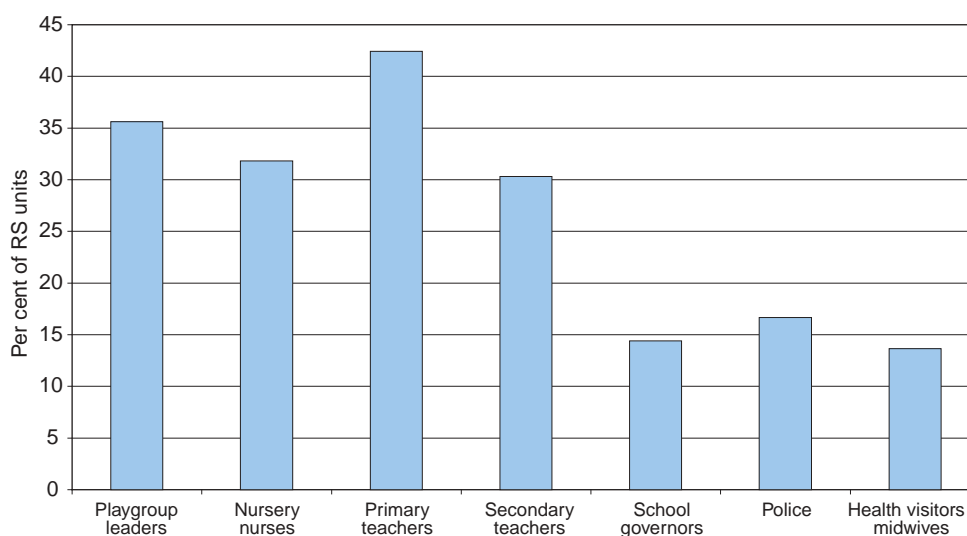
#### 4.6.1 Training teachers and other professionals

Rather less than half of the respondents reported details of training for teachers and other professionals (Figure 2). The groups most frequently mentioned were primary teachers (58 units reported length of training and 48 reported numbers trained), then playgroup personnel (43 reported duration, 38 numbers) and nursery nurses (38 duration, 36 numbers). Apart from these, the respondents were also asked if they offered training to secondary school teachers, members of school governing bodies and the police. Respondents were invited to add details of other groups trained and the most significant of these was a combination of health visitors and midwives (trained by 18 respondents).

The total number of teachers trained by the RSOs in 1996, about 8,900, represents 1.6 per cent of the total number of teachers in the UK but probably about 6 per cent of the total number of teachers in those authorities where the RSOs had trained teachers.



**Figure 1** Practical training services



**Figure 2** RS units training other professionals

#### 4.6.2 Training student teachers and others

The respondents were asked if they knew of any institutions in their area that provided professional training for student teachers, nursery nurses, health visitors and community nurses and if they provided any RS input to that training. A quarter of the units that knew of institutions training student teachers and nursery nurses provided road safety inputs to the training. The average length of training provided was just over 5½ hours for student teachers and over 3½ hours for nursery nurses. 13 per cent of respondents who knew of training for health visitors or community nurses had RS inputs to the training.

These inputs were of two hours or less. The reports of total numbers trained amounted to 1,120 student teachers, 1,080 nursery nurses, 690 health visitors and 440 community nurses.

#### 4.7 Effect of RS unit size

The trend to more but smaller RS units and the possibility that large units gain economies of scale (Section 4.3.1 above) may be leading to changes in the balance of RSE activities. The smaller units may have had to concentrate their resources on a smaller range of activities or may not have pursued the wide range as intensively as the largest

units. To test for the existence of such effects the data were split by unit size into three almost equal groups, units with 2 or fewer RSOs (small), units with more than 2 but less than 5 (mid-sized), and units with 5 or more RSOs (large). The analysis showed significant differences between the three groups in:

- Number of stages of education (pre-primary, primary, secondary, FE colleges) where the unit assisted teaching staff to plan RSE.
- Number of stages of education (pre-primary, primary, secondary, FE colleges) where the unit provided specific timetabled inputs to a planned programme.
- The number of types of practical training (pedestrian, cyclist, moped/motor cyclist, pre-driver, driver) that were undertaken in the authority.
- The proportion of units providing training in RSE for secondary teachers.
- The proportion of units that mentioned using teacher evaluation forms as part of their monitoring and evaluation.

The large RS units were about twice as likely to help teachers plan RSE at all four education stages (pre-primary, primary, secondary, FE college) as other units (Figure 3). Four or five practical training types were more likely to be offered in authorities with large units than in the others.

The small units were less likely than the mid-sized units to provide timetabled inputs at any of the education stages and mid-sized units were less likely to provide this than the large units. The small units were less likely than the others to provide training in RSE for secondary teachers or

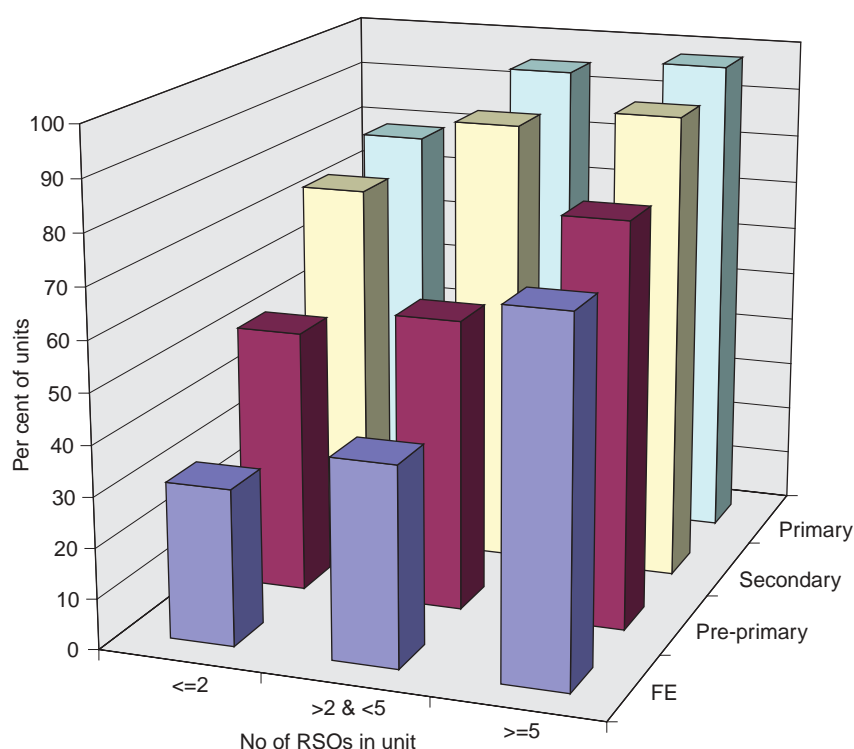
to have mentioned using teacher evaluation forms as one of their monitoring and evaluation methods.

The analysis gave support to the hypothesis that the large units were providing a wider range of RSE services. There were also indications that the smaller units were not interacting as intensively with teachers as the large units.

#### 4.8 Conclusions from the analysis of the RSO postal survey

The main conclusions from the survey were:

- 1 The total number of RSOs in the UK had risen by more than five per cent since 1985.
- 2 Total local authority funding for RSE/T resources (not staff) had increased, in real terms, by at least 20 per cent since 1985.
- 3 As a result of the reorganisation of local government there were more smaller authorities than in 1985 and, despite the increase in total RSO numbers, the average road safety unit (RSU) in 1997 was smaller than the average in 1985.
- 4 In more than half the respondent authorities the police also had RSE/T functions. Since 1985 fewer RSUs worked with their local education authority (LEA) but there was more co-operation with the health agencies.
- 5 The most frequently mentioned priorities for 1997 were to develop and extend road safety training and RSE in schools.
- 6 Most respondents described methods for monitoring and evaluating RSE/T in their authority: about a quarter mentioned quantitative methods.



**Figure 3** Assisting teachers to plan RSE

- 7 Most respondents claimed that, as a matter of general policy, they actively supported schools and pre-primary groups but less than half claimed the same for FE colleges. The principal methods used by RSOs to maintain links with schools and colleges were visits and letters.
- 8 The provision of free resources or the loan of resources were the most common forms of assistance to schools and colleges.
- 9 The proportion of units helping teachers to plan RSE had risen from just over 70 per cent in 1985 to about 90 per cent in 1996.
- 10 Rather less than half of the units were involved in training teachers and other professionals.
- 11 The proportion providing RSE INSET for teachers had fallen since 1985, when 49 per cent of units trained both primary and secondary teachers, to 44 per cent training primary teachers and 31 per cent training secondary teachers in 1996.
- 12 The total number of teachers trained by the units in 1996 was 8,900, under two per cent of the total number of teachers in the UK.
- 13 Sixty per cent of the RS units provided RSE specifically on the road safety problems facing children when they transfer from primary to secondary schools but only 18 units (14 per cent of the respondents) involved parents in this.
- 14 Almost all RS units provided cycle training, most provided pre-driver training and over half provided pedestrian training.
- 15 The survey respondents provided cycle training to about a quarter of UK children as they pass through the 8 - 11 years old age band.
- 16 The smaller RSUs did not provide as wide a range of RSE services as the larger units and may have had fewer interactions with teachers. Thus the reduction in the average size of RSUs since 1985 may have affected the variety and intensity of RSE in areas where the local authorities had been reorganised.

#### 4.9 The RSO interviews

The aim of the interview sampling was to identify Road Safety Units, which were offering a wide range of RSE and training services but also covering the full range of unit sizes. In addition the sample was intended to include RS units from all four countries of the UK. To construct this sample the postal questionnaires from RSOs who had agreed to a follow-up interview were divided into three groups by unit size. Within each group the questionnaires were placed in order by the diversity and quantity of RS and training services provided. Interviews were obtained with 14 RSOs.

The interviews supported and amplified the findings of the postal survey. To a very large extent the local authority RS and training programmes addressed problems identified from an examination of the local accident statistics. In general the interviewees were achieving good practice as recommended in the DETR Guidance

(Department of Transport, 1994). There was recognition of the need to:

- set challenging but achievable objectives;
- protect and build on existing success and established contacts;
- identify key people to target for new developments;
- involve elected members in programme support and promotion;
- encourage specialisation amongst RSOs;
- aim for a progressive programme of RSE and training.

The way that units worked varied between being resource led and event led. Good practice in the distribution of resources included:

- distributing catalogues in April or May just before teachers were expected to plan their next year's work;
- if the authority offered many resources, preparing a separate catalogue for each key stage;
- telling each school the total value of resources that could be supplied free of charge;
- if there were no limit on the supply of free resources, providing sufficient catalogues for each class teacher;
- delivering orders to the promised timetable;
- providing a fresh order form/catalogue with each delivered order;
- labelling resources so that teachers would know the supplier as well as the publisher;
- keeping records of who had ordered what and checking when schools did not order, reduced their level of ordering, or ordered materials not aimed at their pupil age group;
- holding a small stock of resources available for late orders and other emergencies;
- providing resource displays at local teacher conferences and training meetings

Good practice in event provision involved

- planning a progressive programme to cover all ages and also to fit with school event planning;
- matching the safety problems faced by local children to the safety problems addressed by the events;
- working with other agencies to plan and implement events;
- publicising the events programme;
- encouraging schools in preparation before the event and follow-up work afterwards;
- for each event evaluating the views of teachers and the impact on the safety/behaviour/attitudes of children .

The smaller RSUs tended to be either resource promoting or event promoting; the larger units were able to do both. Small size did not necessarily limit the variety of RS services and the range of available specialisations. In a number of cases small units have combined to share specialisms. An example was a group of RSOs who were each responsible for one of pedestrian training, cyclist training, pre-driver training, theatre in education, and events.

Almost all units faced some pressure in the form of staff cuts or reduced budgets. Some of the larger units could compensate for these problems by recruiting aid from other agencies or volunteers and by sponsorship. However, there were serious time costs associated with these activities which preclude their use by the smallest units who are unfortunately the most in need.

In some authorities RSE and training services competed for RSO time with other duties such as managing the school crossing patrol (SCP) service, work to support the DETR integrated transport policy and, in one case, the local authority accident investigation and prevention. Again the pressures seemed heaviest for the smallest units: one unit, formerly with two RSOs to manage RSE, training and SCP, had abandoned RSE in schools after one RSO took early retirement and management of the SCP took most of the other RSO's time during the school term. The local authority expected to replace the retired RSO with a part-time SCP manager but financial and administrative constraints were delaying the appointment.

A number of RSOs remarked that RSE was vulnerable to cuts because it was not seen as a revenue generating service. RSE programmes and initiatives could be postponed or cancelled because senior managers wanted to divert RS staff to integrated transport activities which can attract DETR funding.

## 5 Other agencies supporting RSE

### 5.1 Police Forces

#### 5.1.1 Background

Traffic policing, schools liaison and community policing are areas of police force activity that have a bearing on road safety and road safety education. The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) have suggested that the purpose of traffic policing is to secure an environment where the individual can use the roads with confidence, free from death, injury, damage or fear. Four key objectives are improved road user behaviour, reduced road user crime, safer roads and safer vehicles. Traffic policing performance indicators are the number of personal injury/fatal accidents, the level of public confidence, and the level of road user related crime.

Following the Scarman Report, *the Brixton Disorder 10-12 April 1981*, most police forces set up community relations departments and liaison with schools was often carried out by community officers who were members of these teams.

The Education (No 2) Act 1986 places a duty on school governing bodies and head teachers to *'have regard to any representations which are made to them by the Chief Officer of Police and which are connected with that officer's responsibilities'*; and to *'describe what steps have been taken by the governing body to develop and strengthen the school's links with the community (including links with the police)'*. This gives police forces formal access to schools.

*Liaison between Police and Schools*, a joint report of a working party whose members were drawn from the

Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) and the Society of Education Officers, in 1986 identified four aims for police officers undertaking schools liaison work:

- to inform schools and pupils about the role of the police;
- to inform about the law and the rights and duties of citizens;
- to make young people aware of dangers;
- to help foster crime prevention.

Some forces have Community Officers (COs) who have replaced Crime Prevention Officers. They are local beat officers who adopt a high profile in their area. Their duties include supporting neighbourhood watch schemes and various other aspects of crime prevention. This may give them an entry into schools, and, once there, opportunities to provide some road safety education.

#### 5.1.2 Survey methodology

A questionnaire on the provision of road safety education and training (RSE/T) was devised and piloted with six police forces. After minor changes, questionnaires were mailed to the remaining 49 police forces in the British Isles in July 1997. In total, 47 responses were received from 45 of the 55 police forces in the British Isles, a response rate of 82%. Two forces each returned two questionnaires as they felt that different branches within the force had separate contributions to make. Their responses were merged so that a single response was obtained from each force.

The postal questionnaire covered:

- Resources (people and money) available for RSE.
- Services provided to schools and colleges.
- Practical training programmes for schools and professionals.
- Other agencies with whom the police force co-operates.
- Police priorities for RSE in the coming year.

Of the 45 responding forces, 32 (71%) currently perform a road safety education or training function in schools or colleges within their Force area. A further eight forces had performed a RSE/T function within the last ten years; five of them within the last five years. Only five forces had not performed a RSE/T function for at least ten years.

The subsequent analysis is based upon information from the 32 forces that reported that they had undertaken a RSE/T function during 1996/7.

#### 5.1.3 Resources

The staff involved in providing an RSE/T function varied widely between forces. The 32 forces used a total of 733 staff for the function, of whom 690 were police officers and 43 were civilians. Excluding the Metropolitan Police (who used 151 police officers), the mean number of staff per force was 19 police officers and one civilian. Scottish forces had significantly higher staff levels (both police and civilian) (Table 6) because they were responsible for their area road safety officer services. A number of the 32 single-tier authorities created in Scotland in 1996 have continued the practice of delegating RSE responsibilities to the Chief Constable.

**Table 6 Staffing levels: Scottish and other forces**

Staffing level	Police forces	
	Scottish	Other
No of police officers (mean)	31	15
No of civilian staff (mean)	7	0
Total staff (mean)	38	15

Most of the staff (81%) were employed at divisional level.

Only nine forces (six of them in Scotland) had a specific budget for RSE/T activities. The amount varied from £1,000 to £144,000.

#### 5.1.4 RSE services

Predominantly, police forces provide two RSE/T services: the provision of resources and the delivery of RSE/T.

Within those two areas, primary and secondary schools appear to receive more support than either pre-primary schools or FE colleges. The planning of RSE/T is a less common function across all types of school (Figure 4).

The delivery of RSE/T consists primarily of general talks to either assemblies or individual classes. Around three-quarters of forces deliver classroom inputs in primary (75%) and secondary schools (78%). About two-thirds deliver inputs to assemblies in primary (69%) and secondary schools (66%). Specific timetabled inputs to a planned programme are slightly less frequent in primary and secondary schools (50-59%) and substantially less frequent in pre-primary (22%) or FE colleges (16%).

In terms of the provision of resources, the main activities are the free provision and /or loan of resources. Most forces provide selected resources free of charge to both primary (66%) and secondary schools (72%). Less

than half the forces provide the same service to either pre-primary schools or FE colleges. Nearly one third (31%) of forces loan resources to secondary schools but only 19% loan to FE colleges. Few forces (<7%) sell resources to any type of school.

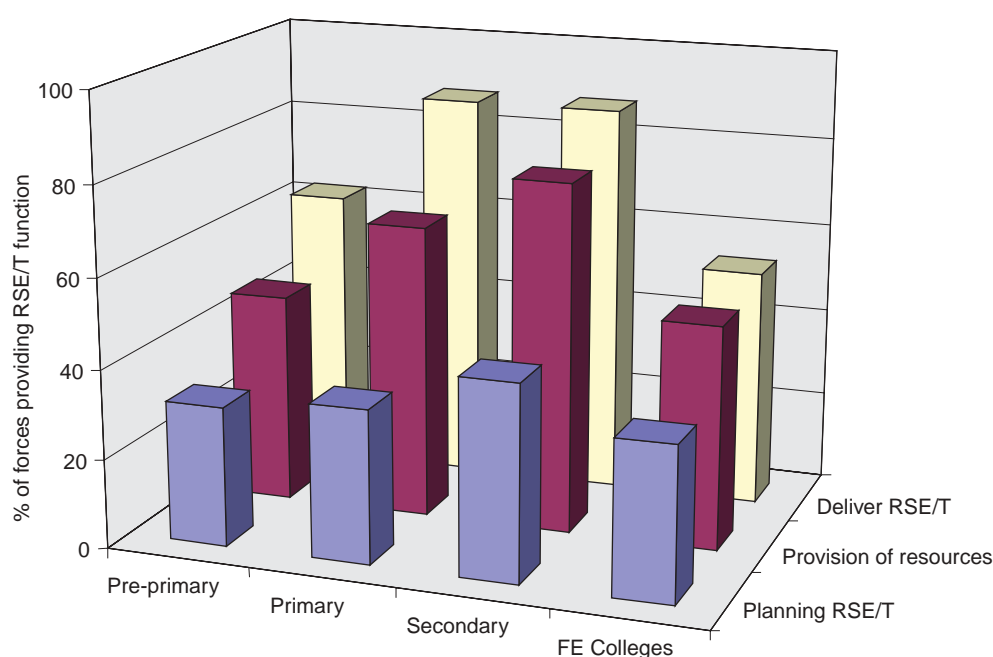
Assistance in planning RSE/T modules, courses or programmes is less common than providing resources. Around two in five forces assisted in planning in primary and secondary schools but only around a quarter performed that function in pre-primary schools or FE colleges.

Almost all forces (94%) providing an RSE/T function were involved in the provision of some element of practical training programmes. Over two-thirds (78%) of forces were involved in cycle training and more than half in both pre-driver (63%) and pedestrian training (56%). Relatively few forces, by comparison, were involved in either driver training (44%) or moped and motorcycle training (31%) (Figure 5).

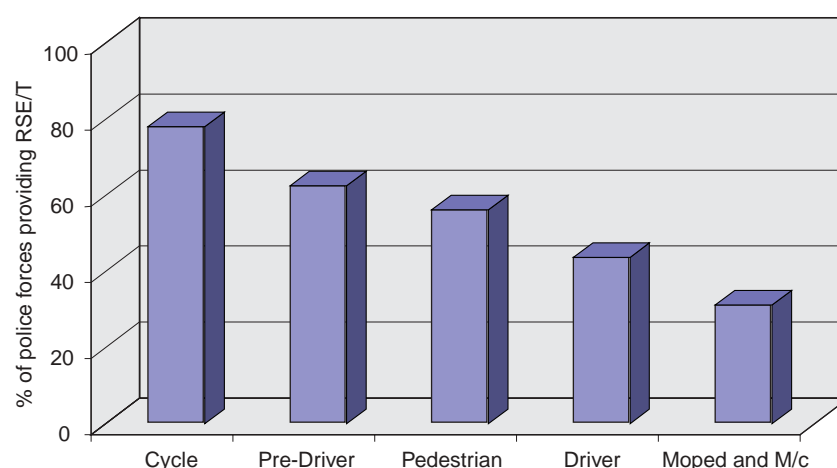
Within cycle training, the primary involvement was with the training and testing of pupils. For other types of training, the primary involvement was with the training of pupils, the promotion of training courses and linking with external agencies providing such training.

#### 5.1.5 Support of transition from primary to secondary school

Almost half the police forces (44%) stated that they undertook specific road safety work to support pupils transferring from primary to secondary schools. In Scotland, 50% of forces undertook such work; elsewhere, the incidence was 42%. Amongst forces undertaking such work, almost all (99%) involved pupils in their last year of primary school rather than pupils in their first year of secondary school (64%). Involvement with staff of such pupils was substantially lower and only a small proportion



**Figure 4** Type of RSE/T service provision by type of school



**Figure 5** Involvement in practical training programmes

(29%) of such forces worked with the parents of transition pupils (Table 7).

#### 5.1.6 Training of professional groups

In all, 12 police forces (38%) provided a total of 32 inputs to the training of the 11 professional groups listed in Table 8. The majority of these inputs (66%) were provided by three Scottish police forces. The most common groups trained were staff of 6<sup>th</sup> Form/FE Colleges and primary schools. All the remaining groups, apart from school governors, were mentioned at least once. The category of *Other Groups* included primary education advisers, doctors, and volunteers.

**Table 7** Supporting pupils transferring from primary to secondary schools

Working	%
With pupils in last year of primary school	41
With pupils in first year of secondary school	19
With staff of primary schools	16
With parents of transition children	13
With staff of secondary schools	6

**Table 8** Training of professional groups

Professional group	%
6 <sup>th</sup> Form / FE College staff	19
Primary teachers	16
Playgroups	13
Health visitors	9
Nursery nurses	9
Student teachers	9
Secondary teachers	6
Community nurses	3
LA road safety staff	3
School governors (school boards)	0
Other groups	13

#### 5.1.7 Working with local authority road safety staff

Most forces (72%) reported that they had been involved with local authority road safety staff in RSE/T initiatives during 1996/7. Half the Scottish forces reported such involvement; elsewhere, the incidence was 77%.

Named initiatives included *Crucial Crew*, *Junior Citizens* and *Safety Ranger Schemes*. Such schemes tend to cover many personal safety issues, not just road safety:

*'The police are the lead agency in 'Junior Citizens for the 90s' – an interactive safety education programme involving ten agencies. Local authority road safety departments are all partners in this initiative.'*

A partnership approach to specific road safety initiatives was also evident in several forces:

*'All road safety initiatives are channelled to the monthly meeting of the road safety group which involves the police and road safety officers from all the counties.'*

The commonest joint publicity initiative was the Christmas drink driving campaign. Cycle training was the most frequently cited joint practical programme.

#### 5.1.8 Information services

Most forces (84%) use specific methods to keep teaching staff in schools and colleges informed about the services they provide. Personal visits (78%) and telephone calls (53%) were the most popular methods. Relatively few schools used either *ad hoc* letters (28%) or newsletters (6%).

Examples of particular liaison policies included:

*'We are currently negotiating a new schools liaison policy with all three of our local education authorities. It is hoped that this will provide new platforms.'*

*'A multi-agency partnership between police/road safety and local authorities and voluntary sectors meet monthly.'*



### 5.1.9 Developing RSE/T in schools and colleges

About two-thirds of the forces (66%) provided information on the problems encountered in developing RSE/T within schools and colleges. The two main problems reported were a lack of curriculum time (34%) and a lack of staff resources/police time (31%). Two forces reported that there was a switch of emphasis towards delivering other core policing issues (such as crime reduction/prevention) within schools. For example:

*'Few resources and greater demands on our time mean that we were unable to continue to run courses. We still attend and give one-off or guest speaker talks to enhance a structured course the schools are presenting.'*

*'Fitting into school timetable. Increased focus of school liaison work on crime reduction/prevention. Road safety inputs only provided on request of school/playgroup. Allocation of time in schools for RSE.'*

By contrast, some forces reported that they encountered no problems. For example:

*'all very supportive.'*

*'The demand was in some cases greater than resources can manage.'*

Many forces provided examples of successful methods of developing RSE/T within schools and colleges. Several mentioned the need to key into planned units of work or existing educational packages. Others valued the importance of practical activities including walkabouts in the local area, off-road pre-driver training and the TACS (Trucks and Child Safety) programme.

Successful strategies for improving relationships with schools included '...the need for pre-input discussions with schools to avoid creating false expectations'; '...a consistent approach with regular contacts by known

individuals'; and '...being able to convince schools of your commitment and flexibility to fit in with each school's needs'.

### 5.1.10 Method of support and level of linkage with schools and colleges

For primary and secondary schools, forces tend to offer support actively rather than provide it on request. For other types of schools and colleges, support tended to be mainly provided on request (Figure 6). Amongst Scottish forces, the incidence of actively providing support was higher for all types of schools although the difference was only statistically significant for primary schools.

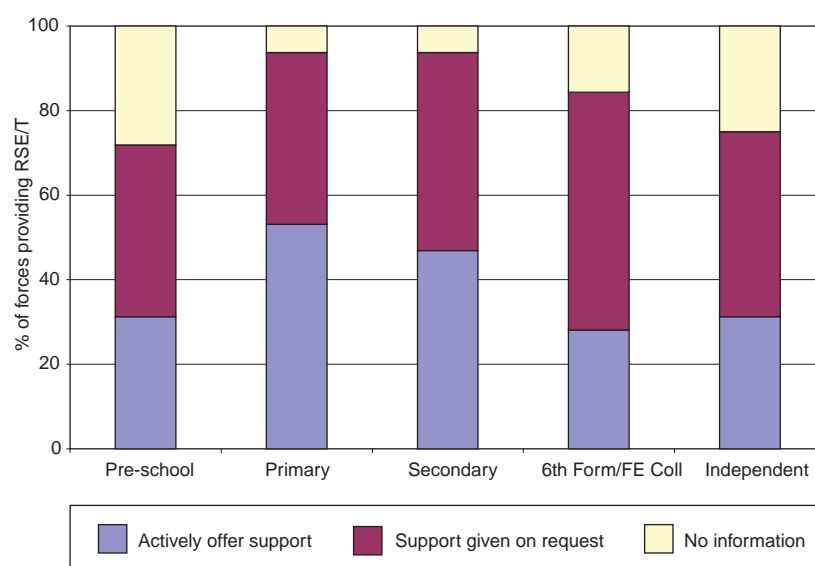
Linkage was highest with primary schools with nearly one third of forces (31%) reporting that they linked with all primary schools in their area. Nearly one in five forces (19%) reported that they linked with all pre-primary schools. Only around 13-14% of forces linked with all secondary schools, 6<sup>th</sup> Form/FE Colleges and independent schools in their area (Table 9).

**Table 9 Proportion of active linkage by type of school**

Type of school	Proportion of schools with active linkage				
	None	<1/3	1/3 - 2/3	> 2/3	All
Pre-primary	14	43	14	10	19
Primary	0	31	27	12	31
Secondary	0	54	21	11	14
6th Form / FE College	22	52	13	0	13
Independent	9	65	9	4	13

### 5.1.11 Priorities for action in 1997/8

Respondents were asked to list their top three priorities for action in the current year (1997/8). A wide variety of priorities were provided (Table 10). Pre-driver and driver improvement courses and cycle safety were each named by



**Figure 6 Method of support by type of school / college**



**Table 10 Priorities for action in current year**

<i>Priority</i>	<i>% of forces</i>
Pre-driver	25
Driver improvement	25
Cycle safety	25
Child pedestrian safety	16
Support RSOs	16
Support multi-agency operations	16
Seat belts / in-car safety	13
Pedestrian safety	13
Reduce accident casualties	13
Links with schools	9
Develop courses	9
Resources / packages	9
Input to primary schools	6
Drink/drive education	6
Vulnerable groups	6
Training RSE/T providers	3
General road safety	3
Other	25

*Each force was asked to list three priorities*

eight (25%) forces. Child pedestrian safety was named by five forces as were supporting RSOs and supporting multi-agency operations. Less commonly cited priorities included seat belts/in-car safety, general (and adult) pedestrian safety and reducing accident casualties.

### **5.1.12 Interviews with Police Forces**

During the period October 1998 – April 1999, interviews were held with ten police forces; seven in England, two in Wales and one in Scotland.

Evidence from the interviews suggested that several different Departments within individual Forces may have inputs to road safety education to a greater or lesser extent. Liaison and communication between Departments as regards RSE appears often to be limited. The details obtained about a particular force's work in RSE may therefore be biased by the status and location of the interviewee.

Examples were provided of RSE work being undertaken by Traffic Division Officers, Community Liaison Officers and beat officers.

The numbers of officers exclusively involved in RSE is low. Many more are involved partially or peripherally – their level of involvement being dependent on a variety of factors. One Force claimed that, because it was Force policy that motorists should be able to use the roads with confidence, all officers are involved in RSE.

A recent trend appears to be the appointment of liaison officers who deliver programmes to schools. Some officers are titled Schools Liaison Officers (implying a full-time role linking with schools); others have the title of Community Liaison Officers (implying a broader role).

The programmes delivered to schools have normally been devised in association with, and with the support of, the local education authorities. Typically, they are designed to be used within PSHE and include topics such as substance abuse, personal safety (including *Stranger Danger* and road safety), crime reduction, and the role of the police in the

community. Schools are invited to choose particular elements from the available package according to their specific needs and problems. Officers normally provide the relevant resources and deliver part of the programme.

The extent of promoting RSE may depend upon relations with the local authority road safety unit. In some areas, police and civilians liaise closely; in others the police leave RSE to the local authority RSU to avoid potential conflicts.

Liaison officers working in schools have generally received some training - be it NVQ training in presentation skills, three weeks full-time training, training at a local University and undertaking a City and Guilds teaching course.

Both the interviews with police officers and those with teachers have supported the view that police officers (in uniform and perceived as 'experts') are more effective in delivering some safety messages than are teachers.

Liaison programmes are often a fundamental part of Force strategy and managed by a senior officer. In one Force, the Chief Constable takes an active role in liaising with outside agencies. In Forces where an officer has been given responsibility for RSE, that officer is usually of junior rank and consequently with less influence on policy.

Input from Traffic Division officers in schools tends to be related to pre-driver training. Welsh police forces are involved in Mega Drive – a programme originally devised in Gwent. It is multi-agency-based driver training which begins in schools. The aim is to give straightforward messages in 15 minutes to stop boredom. In Gwent, twelve leisure centres are targeted and Mega Drive attends for two to three days in each centre – 28 days in all. The programme is sponsored.

Other topics on which the police may give presentations to schools include general law and order issues such as joyriding, Stranger Danger, drinking and driving and vandalism.

Aside from planned programmes, most Forces are involved in annual events in co-operation with a variety of other agencies. Examples include Crucial Crew, and Junior Citizen.

Probably in common with other Departments within the police force, concerns were expressed about future budget cutbacks and the effects of the retirement of key personnel. Maintaining continuity of expertise is seen as a key element of success. Many forces are also working hard to attract sponsorship to continue and enhance their RSE activities.

### **5.1.13 Summary**

Of the 45 responding forces, 32 (71%) currently perform a road safety education or training function in schools or colleges within their Force area. A further nine forces had performed a RSE/T function within the last ten years: six of them within the last five years. Only five forces had not performed a RSE/T function for at least ten years.

Within schools and colleges, police forces provide two main RSE/T services: the provision of resources and the delivery of RSE/T. Within those two areas, primary and secondary schools appear to receive more support than either pre-primary schools or FE colleges. The planning of RSE/T with teachers is a less common police function across all types of school.

Almost all forces (94%), providing an RSE/T function, were involved in the provision of some element of practical training programmes. Over two-thirds (78%) of forces were involved in cycle training and more than half in both pre-driver (63%) and pedestrian training (56%).

Under half of police forces (44%) undertook specific road safety work to support pupils transferring from primary to secondary schools, mainly by working with children in their last year at primary school.

Over a third of forces (38%) were involved in the training of professional groups such as 6<sup>th</sup> Form / FE College staff and primary teachers.

Most forces (72%) reported that they had been involved with local authority road safety staff in joint RSE/T initiatives during 1996/7.

Scottish forces, most of which were given a statutory sole or joint (with Regional Authorities) responsibility for road safety, tended to provide a higher level of RSE/T services.

The two main problems in developing RSE/T in schools and colleges were reported as a lack of curriculum time (34%) and a lack of staff resources/police time (31%). Many forces, however, did provide examples of successful initiatives with schools and colleges. About half of forces actively supported RSE/T in primary and secondary schools. Elsewhere, support tended to be provided on request.

The top priorities for the current year were pre-driver and driver improvement courses and cycle safety. Child pedestrian safety and support for Road Safety Officers and multi-agency operations also featured highly in current plans.

## **5.2 Health Promotion Units**

Questionnaires were sent to all 220 Health Promotion Agencies throughout the UK. 140 completed questionnaires were returned, a response rate of 63 per cent.

The postal questionnaire covered:

- Resources (people and money) available for health education in schools and colleges.
- Provision of health education to schools and colleges.
- Involvement of the agency in accident prevention generally and in road safety specifically.
- Joint alliances with road safety officers.

### **5.2.1 Health Promotion Units information**

Most of the respondents (71 per cent) described themselves as Health Promotion Officers and 17 per cent described themselves as managers. Just over half of the respondents described their employers as 'health trusts' while a 'health authority' employed a quarter. Just under two thirds of respondents saw their organisation as a service provider, a quarter said the organisation was a purchaser of health services, and ten per cent were both.

On average, the Health Promotion Units had 10 full time health promotion staff (range from 1 to 60), 4 part-time staff (range 0 to 20), and 4 administrative staff (range from 0 to 19). There was some variation between countries: units in Wales had an average of 6 full time staff, in Scotland the average unit was 16 full time staff, and in Northern Ireland the average was 4 full time staff.

### **5.2.2 Health education with schools**

The respondents were asked about the approaches that their organisation used in the provision of health education (HE) in schools and colleges. In total, 128 respondents (91 per cent) were involved in the provision of health education to schools and colleges. The most common types of support were the provision of resources, both free or on loan, and assisting teaching staff to plan health education. Support was high across all the four establishment types (pre-primary, primary, secondary and FE colleges), ranging from 76 per cent supporting health education at pre-primary level to 90 per cent supporting it at primary level. Only a small proportion of units were involved in direct tuition and this was most frequently timetabled inputs to planned programmes at primary schools (22 per cent) and secondary schools (26 per cent), or giving general talks to year groups, classes or assemblies.

Other types of activities listed included providing Theatre in Education; work to promote and support 'Healthy Schools' projects and also 'Health Promoting Schools Projects'; health policy development; working with parents and governors; the development of educational resources; and the provision of 'Health Drop-in Services', 'Health Weeks' and 'Health Fairs'. Health subject areas mentioned among the 'other' responses were peer education training and support, preparation for Advanced and General GNVQ in Health and Social Care, Alcohol/drugs training, advice on drugs/sex/bullying, child safety workshops, sun safety, and self esteem.

Over three-quarters of units had active links to primary and secondary schools and the proportion of schools covered was fairly high - median values of about two thirds. About a half of the respondents had active links with pre-primary groups and about two-fifths with independent schools. Even where authorities had established links with some of these the proportion of such establishments covered tended to be low - median values of a third or less.

### **5.2.3 Accident prevention**

The respondents were asked to indicate what proportion of their total effort was devoted to the prevention of accidents. The overall average was 21 per cent. Seven respondents said that they devoted no effort to accident prevention and a further 24 did not reply to this question. However, in a later questions, nineteen of these said that they were involved in the reduction of particular types of accident for specified age groups (two who had said they devoted zero effort to accident prevention and 17 who had missed the question). This was either by themselves or in alliance with others.

A number of the respondents, who had missed this question or had answered none, commented (at the end of the questionnaire) that it was difficult to estimate the effort given to accident prevention when it was integrated into all projects and programmes of work. Two respondents emphasised their role as facilitating and supporting others:

*'Working with 'the people who work with people.'*

Two units reported that they were not themselves directly involved in accident prevention but the function was delegated to the local authority, in one case with financial support from the health authority. One respondent was:

*'No longer purchased<sup>4</sup> to provide any work on accident prevention only smoking and sex education.'*

The respondents were asked about the types of accident prevention they were involved in and the age groups they targeted. 91 per cent of the respondents had some involvement; almost 80 per cent were involved in action to prevent accidents to school age children and 70 per cent to prevent accidents to babies and toddlers. The accident types addressed by the largest numbers were home accidents, 86 per cent, and road accidents, 81 per cent. The most prominent single type and age combinations were home accidents at the baby/toddler age and road accidents at school age, both addressed by 67 per cent of respondents. A few of the respondents, who reported involvement in other accident types, gave some details on the questionnaire below the question. The accident types noted included personal accidents, rail accidents, leisure accidents and drugs.

#### 5.2.4 Road accident prevention

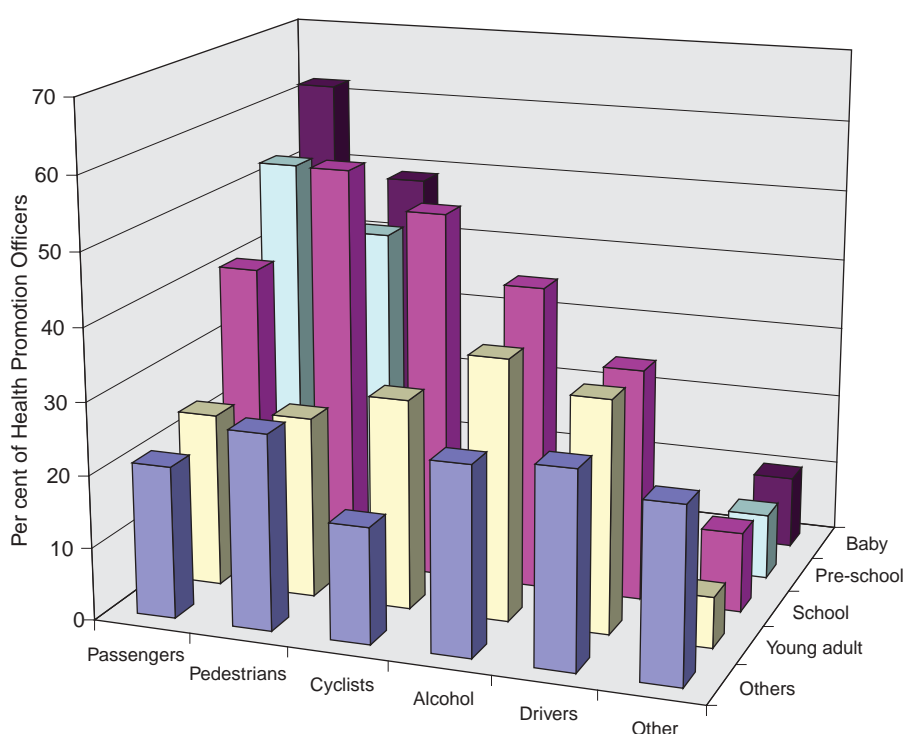
##### *Alliances and activities*

The Health Promotion Officers were asked to specify any organisations or professionals they worked with in road accident prevention, and the age group and the types of road accident tackled.

The most frequently targeted groups, for road safety, were school age children, tackled by 71 per cent of respondents, babies and toddlers, by 67 per cent of respondents and pre-school children, by 61 per cent of respondents. Alliances varied with the target group. Health Promotion Officers (HPOs) were most likely to be allied to Health Visitors when dealing with road accident prevention for babies and toddlers (56 per cent of HPOs) and pre-school children (51 per cent of HPOs). They were mostly allied with Road Safety Officers when the target was school age children (59 per cent HPOs), young adults (36 per cent) or older road users (28 per cent). Partnerships working with local community or parent groups were fairly common for the baby and toddler age group, (53 per cent of HPOs).

In addition, about 14 per cent of HPOs reported having alliances with GPs to prevent various types of road accident, about 5 per cent of HPOs worked alone to prevent road accidents and about 20 per cent worked with other partners. These included Health and Safety (Farm), Local Authorities - Environmental Services, Trading Standards, School Curriculum Advisors for Health, School Governors, Teachers, School Children, Play Leaders, School Nurses, Nursery Nurses, Midwives, Nursing Home Staff, Hospitals, voluntary organisations, RoSPA, Youth Workers and Driving Instructors.

HPOs were most frequently associated with passenger safety for babies and toddlers (62 per cent). Pedestrian safety for school age children (56 per cent), passenger safety for pre-school children (53 per cent) and cyclist safety for school age children (51 per cent) were the next most frequently cited road safety activities (Figure 7).



**Figure 7** Areas of road safety addressed by Health Promotion Officers

### *Working with Road Safety Officers*

88 respondents gave some information about joint alliances with Road Safety Officers although six of these explained that nothing was happening or that their alliance was winding down, for example:

*'In the last year Road Safety has become less and less involved and for the first time in three years they are not taking part in our annual Danger Rangers (Crucial Crew) scheme.'*

*'An accident prevention committee ran for a couple of years successfully but has now folded due to 'restructuring' and the lead person moving on.'*

These may reflect organisational pressures, perhaps on both the RSOs and the HPOs, rather than any conscious decision to reduce co-operation. Most of the positive responses referred to work with local safety groups or healthy alliances and a range of organisations were mentioned as well as the Road Safety Officer.

Project types mentioned by several respondents, where they had worked with the RSOs, included 'Child Safety Week' or 'Child Accident Prevention Week' (13 respondents). Fourteen respondents had worked with RSOs on the promotion of child safety seats. These projects included schemes to supply or lend seats and also the provision of subsidies for their purchase. Five of these respondents reported that their car seat projects involved training for other health professionals, such as Midwives and Health Visitors, in the promotion and selection of appropriate child restraints.

Specific activities aimed at school age children and undertaken in partnership with RSOs were 'Safe routes to school projects', 'Travelwise', or 'Walk to school project', mentioned by eight respondents, and 'Crucial Crew', mentioned by six respondents. Eight respondents had worked with the RSOs on cycle safety projects. One of these respondents mentioned 'Cycling Proficiency' and presumably was dealing with children aged about 10 or 11. Two respondents reported that they were promoting cycle safety to younger children, in one case 'due to the number of this age group having accidents due to lack of control.'

Eight respondents mentioned collaborative activities aimed at road users other than children. These addressed the problems of older road users (5 respondents), young drivers (1), the provision of late night public transport for young people (1) and alcohol (1).

In response to an open question about accident prevention and the role of Health Promotion Officers in road safety, 74 of the respondents provided comments. The general impression was of support for road safety work as an essential part of accident prevention and hence health. The respondents were mostly confident in their ability to contribute to partnerships and make a positive contribution:

*'There are loads of good initiatives and good work done by agencies outside of 'Health Promotion'. It is the role of HP to be aware of and support through mirroring the appropriate 'health message'.'*

*'As always, we tend to be the 'pushers' and 'prodders' because we have dedicated time and others on groups have more pressures. The liaison and overview of activity, to better utilise resources, is a prime role for Health Promotion Specialists.'*

The problem areas that the respondents identified related mainly to resources, either support from the Health Authority seemed inadequate or support to other bodies was declining and this was reducing their ability to undertake collaborative work. Some problems related to organisational complexity and differences in ways of working:

*'The difficulty can be that health is split into so many parts that there is no single point of contact by health to Road Safety Officers - plus HPOs will tend not to be able to speak for the rest of the Trust/ Authority.'*

*'There is enormous potential for health & RSOs to work together. Unfortunately our RS team has been cut drastically recently which leaves colleagues feeling threatened and insecure. This isn't always helpful for alliance working.'*

Many other respondents mentioned their appreciation and respect for the work of the local Road Safety Units:

*'We acknowledge the lead role of County Road Safety Officers and Police but seek to support them as actively as possible.'*

*'During recent years support and provision from Road Safety Officers and Police in conjunction with the Department of the Environment has been invaluable. In our area we have an excellent working relationship with colleagues on Road Safety and Home Safety. As my remit in Health Promotion is accident related I sit on both Home and Road Safety Groups. Information from Road Safety units to Health Promotion is valuable resource as is research information and participation.'*

Some respondents mentioned their concerns that accident prevention programmes, particularly road accident prevention programmes, should take a broad view of the problems and solutions and not just be victim related<sup>5</sup>:

*'I am concerned that road safety is viewed in a holistic manner taking into account the need for a safer environment rather than concentrating solely on initiatives aiming to change individuals behaviour.'*

### **5.2.5 Health Promotion Officer interviews**

Eleven Health Promotion Officers from England, Wales and Northern Ireland were interviewed between January and April 1999. Although each of these countries has its own independent way of organising health promotion there were strong similarities between the actual health promotion activities. Similarities between Health

Promotion Units may arise from the strength and style of central direction and training within the national health services. In England support for road accident prevention is traceable to the Health of the Nation accident prevention target. The Health of the Nation programme has been replaced by the new health improvement strategy (Our Healthier Nation). This has made health authorities responsible for the required health improvements, which cover mental health, substance misuse, tobacco, alcohol and health inequalities. Accidents are not mentioned specifically but clearly they are associated with health inequalities and alcohol consumption

All the officers interviewed placed great emphasis on three activities:

- Facilitating.
- Prioritising.
- Evaluating.

There seemed to be a clear intention to support other agencies in all fields of health education. In accident prevention this meant involving and supporting the RSOs and police through accident prevention forums and joint working on events such as Crucial Crew:

*'Communication avoids duplication as each agency tries to support the other.'*

In dealing with schools:

*'The Trust supports Governor training and aims to develop whole school health and safety.'*

Targets for health education were usually identified by some objective analysis of health data. However there were no overall clear accident statistics:

*'Getting data from hospitals etc is done but not in a routine uniform way.'*

There seemed to be a strong tradition of evaluation underlying the health promotion unit activities. Evaluation expectations were higher among the Health Promotion Officers than among the other agencies in road accident prevention:

*'Evaluation has not been thought about and the (Health) Trust is critical of the committee in this respect.'*

The direct approach to schools was usually through some national scheme promoting health education. Most of the English units interviewed were promoting the 'Healthy School Award' and there seemed to be similar programmes in Northern Ireland and Wales. The Award works as a partnership between the school and the health promotion unit:

*'Schools seeking an award must identify health education priorities and develop policies and programmes to tackle their priorities. The programmes may involve changes and development within the curriculum, actions to improve environmental health within and around the school, or whatever the school identifies. The Trust provides resources and training to support the achievement of the school priorities. If the school*

*identifies accident prevention as a priority then the Trust will support accident prevention activities.'*

*'It is a requirement of the Healthy School Award that each school should monitor and evaluate its own progress. School evaluations can consider portfolios of work, support through the year, and use of resources. An independent external inspector, appointed and paid by the Trust, validates the school evaluation.'*

Apart from the work in schools most respondents were also concerned to reduce road accidents among other vulnerable groups such as pre-school children and the elderly.

#### **5.2.6 Summary of provision by Health Promotion Units**

91 per cent of respondents were involved in the provision of health education services of some sort to pre-school groups, primary schools, secondary schools and colleges of further education. The most common types of support were the provision of resources and assisting teaching staff to plan health education. Only a small proportion of units was involved in direct tuition of children (22 per cent with primary schools and 26 per cent with secondary schools). Over three-quarters of units had active links with primary and secondary schools and the proportion of schools covered was high (median value about two thirds). About half of the respondents had active links to pre-primary schools and about two fifths with independent schools but in both cases the proportion of schools reached was in general low (median value less than a third).

On average, respondents devoted about 21 per cent of their total effort to accident prevention. The respondents were asked about their accident prevention work - types of accident and age groups targeted. The principal accident types addressed were home accidents (by 86 per cent of respondents) and road accidents (80 per cent). The age groups covered most frequently were school age children (80 per cent of respondents) and babies and toddlers (70 per cent). These age groups were also the most frequently targeted groups for road accident injury prevention.

The respondents were asked about the organisations with which they worked on road accident prevention. The type of partner varied with the age of the target group. For babies and toddlers the most frequently mentioned partner was 'Health Visitor' (56 per cent). For school children and older groups Road Safety Officer was mentioned more frequently (59 per cent of respondents when working to prevent school children's accidents). The main road accident types addressed were passenger safety for babies and toddlers (62 per cent of respondents); pedestrian safety for school children (53 per cent) and cyclist safety for school children (51 per cent).

The Health Promotion Officers worked with Road Safety Officers and other interested professional groups on a wide range of projects and from their comments they do seem to respect the professionalism and work of the Road Safety Officers. They are sensitive to resourcing constraints, not just within their own units but also with respect to their partners, particularly the constraints experienced by local authority Road Safety Units.

## 6 Primary schools

Questionnaires on the provision of road safety education in primary schools were sent out in autumn 1997, timed to arrive just before half term. 6,539 completed questionnaires were returned by the end of December. The overall response rate was 29 per cent (England: 30 per cent; Wales: 25 per cent; Northern Ireland: 21 per cent). (BITER undertook surveys of RSE in primary and secondary schools in Scotland under contract to the Scottish Office in 1993-96.)

There was a risk with such low response rates that the sample would be unrepresentative in some important aspects. In this case it might be that schools who were active in RSE would be more likely to return a questionnaire than schools who were not active. This suggested that, without some special analysis or additional survey work, it would be unwise to use these survey data to estimate how many schools nationally provide RSE. However the data should provide a good national representation of the activities undertaken by schools that do provide RSE and also a good representation of the reasons schools gave for not providing RSE.

The postal questionnaire covered:

- Information on the school.
- Planning RSE.
- How RSE was taught in the school: Topic/subject teaching.
- Talks in assembly or the classroom.
- Resources.
- Practical training.
- Transition to secondary school.

### 6.1 School information

Over half the 6,535 respondent schools were primary schools, about a sixth were infant and one-tenth junior schools. In addition there were a smaller number of first and middle schools that responded to the questionnaire.<sup>6</sup> Nearly 5 per cent were special schools. The percentages of pupils attending the different school types were very similar to the percentages of schools in the different groups. Most schools received funding from their local authorities (84 per cent). Four per cent of the respondent schools were from the independent sector. The percentage of children in each category is similar to the percentage of schools.

Just over 30 per cent of the schools were from a village or rural area. The smallest group of schools (but still with just over 1000 respondents) were situated in city centres. Because village schools tended to be smaller than other schools, when the percentages of pupils educated in different areas were examined, it was found that similar percentages (around 20 per cent) of pupils were from city schools and village schools.

The schools ranged in size from less than 20 pupils to over 1,000, with a mean of 221 pupils on the roll. Of the two schools with 1000 or more pupils on the roll, one was a primary school and the other a special school. The age range of pupils was wide, as would be expected since the

schools included special schools and independent schools. The lowest age given was under one year, and the highest age was 22 years.

The Head Teacher or Principal of the school (77 per cent) mostly completed the questionnaires, a further eight per cent of respondents were Deputy Head or Senior teachers.

### 6.2 Provision and planning of road safety education

#### 6.2.1 Provision of RSE

Respondents reported that Road Safety Education (RSE) had been taught in 5,675 schools during 1996/97. The following differences were highly significant ( $p < 0.001$ ).

Schools in Northern Ireland were more likely to teach road safety than schools in Wales, which in turn were more likely to teach road safety than schools in England. Independent schools were less likely to teach road safety than government funded schools.

Infant schools were the most likely to teach road safety, whilst middle schools were the least.

The proportions of schools teaching road safety in 1996/97 did not vary significantly by school setting (city centre, the suburbs, small towns or village/rural areas) or by school size.

RSE had not been taught in 768 schools in 1996/97. 76 per cent of these said RSE had not been taught because of *insufficient time or curriculum pressure on the timetable*. The next most common reasons for not teaching RSE were *lack of resources or finance* (given by 26 per cent) and *lack of staff with road safety knowledge* (19 per cent). Only one per cent of those who had not taught RSE in 1996/97 gave *lack of pupil interest* as a reason. Around half of schools not teaching RSE gave more than one reason for not doing so.

There were significant differences ( $p < 0.01$ ) between the reasons given by some types of schools for not teaching road safety:

Grant maintained schools were the most likely to mention *insufficient time or curriculum pressure* as a reason, and independent schools were the least likely.

Grant maintained schools were the most likely to claim that *others taught road safety* and local authority schools were the least likely.

Middle schools were the most likely to claim *lack of staff with road safety knowledge* as a reason for not teaching RSE and first schools were the least likely.

#### 6.2.2 Planning RSE

Schools that said that they had taught RSE in 1996/97 were used as the base in this section (5,675 schools).

Only about a third of schools teaching RSE in 1996/97 had some sort of RSE policy, either already in place (19 per cent) or under development (16 per cent). However two thirds planned their RSE, either formally, i.e. in the Curriculum Development Plan (24 per cent) or informally (42 per cent). A further 31 per cent said RSE was taught opportunistically. (2 per cent did not answer the question). For schools that

planned RSE (either formally or informally), 56 per cent planned the programme one year or more ahead.

Schools, which planned RSE either formally or informally, were asked which people were involved in planning their RSE programme (Figure 8). The most frequently mentioned were *all teachers as part of the whole school curriculum planning* (54 per cent). About a third of schools said the *Head Teacher* (34 per cent), *Class Teacher* (31 per cent) or *RSO* (Road Safety Officer) (29 per cent) were involved. A quarter of the schools who planned RSE included a *teacher with special responsibility for PSHE* in the planning process.

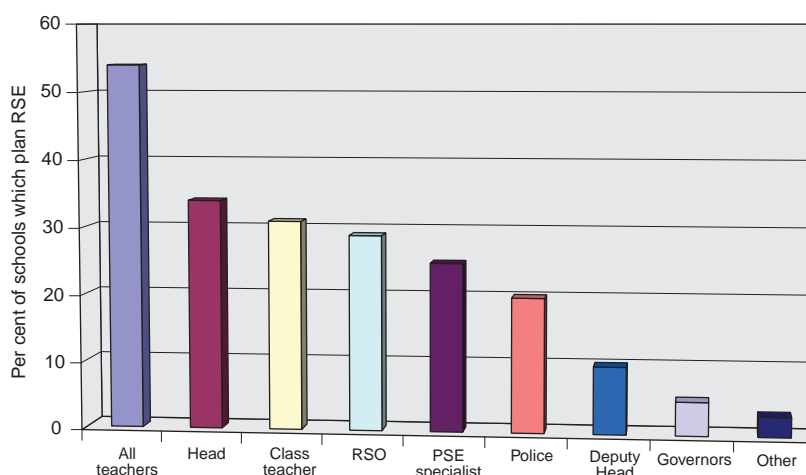
On average schools with an RSE policy were involved in more road safety activities<sup>7</sup> (15 activities) than schools whose policy was being developed (14). The latter, in turn, were involved in more activities than schools that had no policy (10). The difference between the ‘no policy’ group and the other two groups was statistically significant. It is not possible on the basis of this analysis to determine whether having a policy led to more activity or whether more activity required the development of a policy.

### 6.2.3 Contact with road safety officers and the police

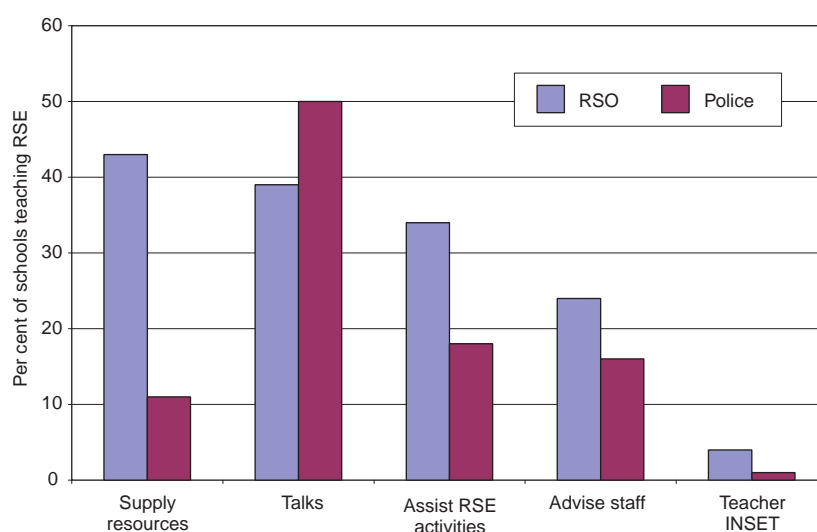
Nearly three quarters of schools (71 per cent) who taught RSE in 1996/97 had some contact with RSOs, and 58 per cent had contact with the police (Figure 9). For RSOs the most common forms of support were the supply of resources (43 per cent) and talks to pupils (39 per cent). Talks to pupils were the most common form of contact by the police (50 per cent).

### 6.2.4 Training teachers in RSE

Four per cent of schools that had taught RSE during 1996/97 had RSO involvement in INSET for teachers and one per cent of schools had police involvement. Respondents were also asked ‘how many teachers undertook in service training in RSE?’ Three per cent of schools said that one teacher had been trained during 1996/97, and four per cent indicated more than one. For schools where any teachers had been trained, 33 per cent reported RSO involvement in the INSET for teachers and four per cent had police involvement.



**Figure 8** Who is involved in planning RSE at primary schools



**Figure 9** RSO and police contacts reported by primary schools



### 6.2.5 Teaching RSE

This section reports on several questions referring to the different year groups from Reception to Year 6<sup>8</sup>. The data for each year group is based on the number of schools who teach the relevant age range for that year group and who said that they taught RSE in 1996/97.

#### 6.2.5.1 Topic work

Primary schools could teach road safety as part of a topic that covered a range of subjects, health concerns and other matters or they could teach it within a topic that was primarily concerned with road safety. From Reception to Year 3, a smaller proportion of schools taught RSE as a topic in its own right than as part of another topic. In Years 4, 5 and 6, however, RSE was more likely to be taught as a topic on its own than with other subjects. A larger proportion of schools reported teaching RSE in topic work (either separately, or in another topic) in Reception, Year 1 or Year 6.

#### 6.2.5.2 National curriculum subjects

Schools were asked to indicate, for each Year group, whether RSE was taught within any of the National Curriculum subjects (Figure 10). RSE was taught most frequently during PSHE, occurring in 34 per cent of the recorded inputs. Other subjects where the number of recorded inputs was greater than 5 per cent were:

English	14%
Geography	13%
Science	11%
Welsh	8% (of recorded inputs for schools in Wales only).
Technology	7%
Art	6%
Maths	6%

RSE was more likely to be taught in National Curriculum subjects in Reception and Year 1 and its incidence decreased for later Year groups. There was an increase in the percentage of schools teaching RSE within PSHE during Year 6.

When the data for RSE taught in both topic work and National Curriculum subjects were combined, it was found that at least 60 per cent of schools that said they taught RSE in 1996/97 taught it to every year group. For the rest, RS was taught more frequently in Reception classes and in Years 1 and 6.

#### 6.2.5.3 Talks on RSE in assembly or the classroom

For each Year Group, Head Teachers spoke on RSE in Assembly in around 50 per cent of schools. The next most frequent speakers were from the police, followed by another teacher or an RSO. In the classroom however the most frequent speaker was a policeman or woman (they gave talks in about 20 per cent of schools), with the next most frequent speaker being an RSO.

### 6.2.6 Use and knowledge of RSE resources

Respondents were asked about the following 11 RSE resources:

- Good Practice Guidelines (DETR).
- Accident in Park Road (DETR).
- School Governors' and Road Safety leaflet (RoSPA).
- Further Ahead modules (RoSPA).
- Go with Science/Go Again with Science (RoSPA).
- Let's Decide, Walkwise (RoSPA).
- Street Seen (RoSPA).
- On the Move/The Big Book (BITER/AA Foundation).
- Rosalind - a road safety linked computerised database (BITER).
- What is Traffic? (Road Safety Officers National Films Committee).
- Road Safety Calendar (Any source).

The most frequently used resource was 'Road Safety Calendar' (used by 27 per cent of the schools). 95 per cent of schools in Northern Ireland used a Road Safety Calendar, as did about a quarter of the responding schools in England and Wales. The next most commonly used resource was the School Governors' leaflet (used by 11 per cent of schools). Nearly a third of the schools were aware

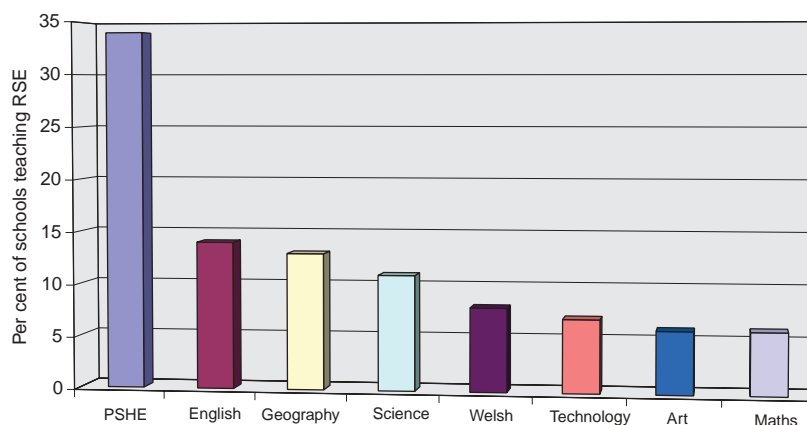


Figure 10 Subjects in which RSE was taught



of the School Governors' Guidelines, but had not used the leaflet and similarly 23 per cent were aware of the Good Practice Guidelines.

### 6.2.7 Practical road safety activities

The analysis in this section is based on the 3,666 schools (56 per cent of responses) which said that their pupils had taken part in practical road safety activities in 1996/97.

Pupils in over 65 per cent of these schools had taken part in cyclist training in Year 6, and 28 per cent in Year 5. Pedestrian training continued from Reception to Year 6, although it was more likely to occur in Reception classes or Year 1. Only a few schools mentioned using Trails (Figure 11).

Over all Years, for the schools which said they took part in practical road safety activities:

50 per cent were involved in pedestrian training.

77 per cent were involved in cyclist training.

8 per cent were involved in Traffic Trails.

Teachers were likely to be involved in practical pedestrian training (in 66 per cent of these schools), and were also likely to be involved in any testing. RSOs also assisted in training children in around 40 per cent of schools, which undertook pedestrian training.

RSOs were the most likely group to be involved in cycle training (59 per cent of these schools) and testing (60 per cent of schools) children. Teachers assisted in training cyclists in 44 per cent of schools, which undertake cyclist training.

### 6.2.8 Road safety events

Schools which said they had taught RSE during 1996/97 were asked if pupils took part in any road safety events during that year. Year 6 children in nearly 20 per cent of schools teaching RSE had attended a Crucial Crew event

(5 per cent in Year 5). During the same year, children in 11 per cent of schools had been involved in a RSE Quiz or Competition (8 per cent in Year 5). Other events mentioned were the BP Roadshow and theatre in education. Overall, children from 36 per cent of schools, which taught RSE during 1996/97, had taken part in some sort of road safety event during that year.

### 6.2.9 Preparation for pupils' transfer to secondary school

Respondents were asked to give some information on road safety work undertaken to prepare for pupils' transfer to secondary school. 20 per cent of schools, which had taught RSE in 1996/97, had carried out some form of preparation.

Over half of the schools, which carried out some form of preparation, had worked *with pupils in the classroom*. Around a third of these schools had organised a *practical activity outside the classroom* and just under a quarter had *provided road safety information for parents of pupils transferring to secondary school*. Fewer than five per cent had *worked with teachers at a secondary school*.

As would be expected more work was done on transfer to secondary school by primary, junior and special schools than infant, first or middle schools. Schools in Northern Ireland had also provided more road safety work on changing schools (15 per cent more than the overall percentage of the schools that had carried out some form of preparation for the transfer). 10 per cent more grant maintained and 7 per cent more independent schools had carried out work on transferring to secondary schools. (The differences between the groups above were significant at the 0.1 per cent level,  $p < 0.001$ .)

## 6.3 Opinions about RSE

Respondents were asked to say how they felt about Road Safety Education in their school. They recorded their agreement or disagreement (using a scale: Strongly agree;

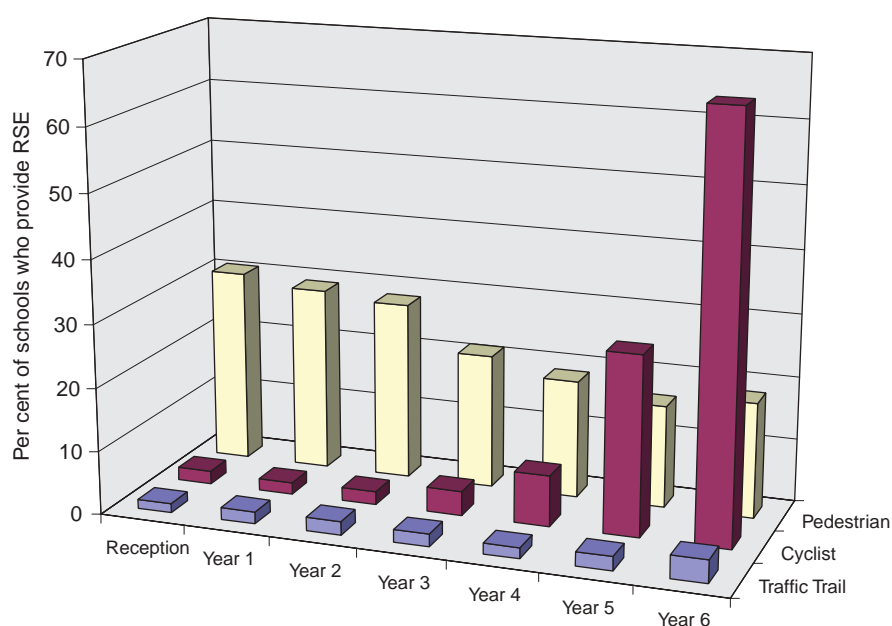


Figure 11 Road safety training offered by schools

Agree; Neither agree or disagree; Disagree; Strongly disagree) with seven statements:

In this school:

- 1 RSE is important.
- 2 RSE is interesting for the pupils.
- 3 RSE develops long term essential life skills.
- 4 RSE links well to environmental education.
- 5 Parents are aware of and support RSE.
- 6 RSE considers local road safety issues.
- 7 RSE is only about the teaching of specific road safety skills.

Responses to the statements were examined for those schools where RSE had been taught in 1996/97 and those where it had not. Apart from statement 7, a smaller percentage (at least 15 per cent fewer) of respondents from schools not teaching RSE were likely to 'agree or strongly agree' with the statements than those from schools that had taught RSE in 1996/97. The exception was statement 7: 'RSE is only about the teaching of specific road safety skills' where there was little difference between responses from schools teaching or not teaching RSE.

Respondents were asked to rate RSE in their school using the scale 'Non existent', 'Poor', 'Satisfactory', 'Good', 'Very Good'. Amongst the schools who had taught RSE just over three fifths (62 per cent) rated it as satisfactory and a quarter (25 per cent) as poor. Only 12 per cent rated it as good or very good.

## 6.4 The primary school interviews

The aim of the interviews in primary schools was to obtain a more in-depth understanding of the RSE work being undertaken in schools, which appeared, from their responses to the postal questionnaire, to be offering examples of good practice. The schools chosen were from all parts of England, Wales and Northern Ireland and covered the whole range of primary, infant and junior schools of varying size in rural, suburban and urban areas. In all a total of 76 interviews were undertaken by RSE experts from the TRL/BITER research team. The interviewers used an aide-memoir and the original reply to the postal questionnaire as a guide rather than a formal questionnaire as the intention was to identify innovation and achievement within the individual school.

The majority of the schools received local authority funding but grant maintained and independent schools were also represented. The age ranges within the schools varied but they were mainly either primary schools (ages 4 or 5 to 11), infant schools (ages 4 or 5 to 7), or junior schools (ages 7 to 11).

The interviews were usually conducted with the person who had completed the postal questionnaire, generally this was the head teacher, but in a few instances this was not possible because the original respondent was absent or had left the school. The interviewers referred to the information that had been given in the postal responses and asked for more in-depth information on these responses, examples of work, school policies and so on, assessments of how successful the RSE initiatives had

been and any other information that was available relating to RSE within their particular school.

It was found that generally the schools had a policy for RSE and that in some cases this was based on an outline or suggested policy, which had been provided by the RSO. The RSE work was usually planned either within the Curriculum Development Plan or informally. The staff most likely to be responsible for the planning were the head teacher, a teacher with responsibility for PSHE or all members of the teaching staff. The RSO was mentioned as being involved in planning by many of the schools and the majority recorded having very helpful and productive contact with the local RSO. The police were less likely to be concerned with planning but their contribution was regarded as important in several schools.

### 6.4.1 Teaching

The schools visited were usually found to be teaching RSE across all the age groups within the school but with more emphasis on the youngest (Reception and Year 1) and the oldest (Year 6). Within curriculum subjects the most frequently mentioned for the inclusion of RSE was PSHE although there were other examples:

- |            |  |
|------------|--|
| English    | – writing stories and poems about accidents, different forms of communication e.g. signs, advertisements, newspaper reports.                 |
| Geography  | – studies of the local area and contrasting with other areas, map drawing, routes to school, possible changes to the local road environment. |
| Science    | – light and colour, visibility, forces, speed, sound and hearing.  |
| Maths      | – traffic counts, graphs on accident statistics, measuring stopping distance.  |
| Art        | – design of safety posters, high-visibility clothing.  |
| Drama      | – acting out scenes and emotions related to accidents.   |
| History    | – development of transport, comparing the local area today and 50 years ago.   |
| Technology | – design of road signs, making working models of traffic lights.   |

Topic work was frequently cited as a very suitable and appropriate place for the inclusion of RSE. Topic titles included:

- Where we live, local studies, Our Village, City Life.
- People who help us.
- Transport, Travelling to school, Journeys.
- Myself, Keeping myself safe, Our Senses, The Body.
- The Weather, Sound, Life Cycles, Moving Things.
- History of transport, Life in Britain since 1930.

Many head teachers mentioned giving talks related to road safety in assembly and these were often related to a particular incident or something topical such as dark evenings in autumn and safety considerations just before the school holidays. In some schools there were examples

of an RSO or police officer speaking to large groups of children but more often they went into the classrooms and worked with class groups.

#### **6.4.2 Training**

Cycle training, usually with Year 6 pupils, took place in the majority of schools that included this age group. The schools saw it as an important activity especially as pupils were more likely to cycle when they moved on to secondary schools and had to undertake longer journeys. Even rural schools where most pupils arrived by car tried to arrange cycle training. RSOs, teachers and parents undertook the training but the RSOs did most of the testing.

Pedestrian training was most common among the younger children, aged 5 to 7 and was organised in a variety of ways. Some schools had parent volunteers who took out two or three children; others had RSO assistance in taking children out in small groups while some schools relied on the teacher taking a whole class with some other adult assistance. The pedestrian training generally took the form of studying the local road environment, making judgements on safe places to cross and practice in crossing roads safely.

Many schools, which did not have a formal pedestrian training programme, nevertheless saw road safety as part of the ethos of the school and took every opportunity to discuss and practice safety within the context of the road environment. Schools frequently take their pupils outside the school grounds and have to consider the safety issues:

Walking to playing fields or swimming pools.

Walking to the local church.

Visits to the library or local shops.

Environmental studies within the neighbourhood.

Visits to other areas, sometimes for the purpose of making comparisons with their home area.

Several schools which were located in small villages stated that it was impossible for them to take the children out locally because of the lack of pavements and fast traffic made it too dangerous.

#### **6.4.3 Transition to secondary school**

Some schools had specific programmes to prepare their pupils for the move to secondary school and alongside the more academically orientated programme considered the journey to the new school. This was most likely to happen where the majority of Year 6 pupils were moving together to a relatively local secondary school. Where the pupils scattered to many different schools or, as in rural areas, they all travelled by special bus to the secondary school, the primary school usually felt that they could not offer useful assistance with RSE for the transfer to the new school.

#### **6.4.4 Other road safety activities**

The schools visited were involved in a variety of events related to RSE, which were organised or provided by the RSO or other external agency. These were generally well received and the teachers felt that the children benefited

from the impact of well-produced and memorable events such as:

Crucial Crew / Junior Citizen.

BP Road Show.

Theatre in Education.

The schools also organised various events which were sometimes linked to national campaigns such as 'Walk to School Week', or they had their own Safety Day or Safety Week when the whole school focused on safety issues.

Other examples of good practice which were identified included:

A rural school which was paired with an urban school so they exchanged information and visits which gave the children an insight into different traffic environments.

The Healthy Schools Awards where road safety can be a chosen topic for special study.

Junior Road Safety Officers where pupils are chosen from Year 6 and liaise with local RSO to disseminate road safety information within the school.

A school with a committee of governors, teachers, Year 6 pupils, RSO and police, which is specifically concerned with road safety. The group has identified and publicised safe routes to the school, campaigned for safety measures along these routes and provided safety aids such as reflective armbands. The Year 6 pupils give talks about road safety matters to younger pupils.

Parents' Charter which the parents sign when their child joins the school, it outlines their involvement in RSE and raises awareness of their contribution to their child's safety.

Meetings for parents before their child starts school to provide information about road safety with particular reference to travelling to school.

Some of the teachers interviewed did voice concerns about the future of RSE and some of the problems that they encountered in trying to promote road safety:

In some schools it was felt that the changes due to the National Curriculum and more recently the literacy and numeracy initiatives was restricting the time and opportunities for RSE. However, other schools did not find this a problem and managed to include RSE within these new initiatives.

Rural schools in particular found that many published resources were not relevant to their locations where there were no pavements, protected crossing places and so on.

There were several adverse comments about parents who parked in dangerous places near the school entrance, disregarded safe crossing places and generally set a bad example to their children, thereby undermining the RSE work done by the school.

The majority of schools visited were committed to the teaching of RSE and saw it as an integral part of the total ethos and curriculum of the school in the education and preparation of children for their life within the local community.

## 6.5 Summary of provision by primary schools

RSE was more likely to be taught in Northern Ireland than England, in government funded schools than in Independent schools and in Infant schools ( $p < 0.001$ ). The most frequently mentioned reason for not teaching RSE was *insufficient time or curriculum pressure on the timetable* (76 per cent) followed by *lack of resources or finance* (26 per cent).

About a fifth of schools which taught RSE had an RSE policy, while around a quarter formally planned its teaching as part of the Curriculum Development Plan. Over half the schools said that the RSE programme was planned by *all teachers as part of the whole school curriculum planning*, and about a third of schools said the Head Teacher (34 per cent), Class Teacher (31 per cent) or RSO (Road Safety Officer) (29 per cent) were involved. For schools that planned RSE, 56 per cent planned the programme one year or more ahead.

Nearly three quarters of schools (71 per cent) which taught RSE had some contact with RSOs, and 58 per cent had contact with the police. The most common form of support from RSOs was supply of resources, and from the police was a talk to pupils.

For each Year group, at least 60 per cent of schools taught RSE, with an increase in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6. RSE was taught most frequently in PSHE (34 per cent of recorded inputs). In addition schools reported on talks about road safety in assembly, where the Head Teacher was the most common speaker, and in the classroom, where the police provided talks most frequently.

Children from 36 per cent of the schools that taught RSE had attended out of school events such as Crucial Crew.

Pupils in over half the schools had taken part in practical road safety activities. Most of these schools (71 per cent) organised cyclist training, which occurred mainly in Year 6. The pupils in 45 per cent of schools took part in pedestrian training, which was most likely to occur in Reception or Year 1. Teachers undertook most of the pedestrian training and testing, and RSOs most of the cyclist training and testing.

Schools teaching RSE were more likely to show positive attitudes towards road safety education. 12 per cent of schools teaching RSE rated the teaching in their school as good or very good.

## 7 Secondary schools

A questionnaire on the provision of road safety education was devised, piloted, revised and then mailed to all secondary schools in England, Wales and Northern Ireland in September 1997. Welsh schools received copies of the questionnaire in both Welsh and English. A total of 1198 completed questionnaire were returned an overall response rate of 26%. (BITER had surveyed RSE in primary and secondary schools in Scotland, under contract to the Scottish Office, in 1993-96.)

The postal questionnaire covered:

- Information on the school.
- Planning RSE.

- How RSE was taught in the school: integration into NC subjects.
- Talks in assembly or the classroom.
- Resources.
- Practical training.
- Transition from primary school.

### 7.1 School information

Nearly three quarters (73 per cent) of responding schools were comprehensive and just under a fifth (17 per cent) were selective. Almost two thirds (61 per cent) were local authority funded, a fifth (20 per cent) were grant maintained and about one seventh (14 per cent) were independent.

The schools were relatively evenly spread by setting. One third (34 per cent) were in small towns and slightly fewer (31 per cent) in suburbs. The remainder was split between city centres (22 per cent) and village/rural settings (13 per cent).

The size of the schools varied widely from less than 100 to over 1500. Nearly one third of schools (31 per cent) had a pupil roll of 1000-1499. A quarter (25 per cent) had a roll of 750-999 and a similar proportion (23 per cent) were slightly smaller (500-749 on roll).

The Deputy Headteacher/Member of Senior Management Team (43 per cent) mostly completed the questionnaires. Headteachers completed about a quarter (23 per cent) of the questionnaires.

863 of the responding schools had taught RSE to some students during the academic year 1996/97. RSE was more likely to have been taught in local authority funded schools than in independent schools ( $p < 0.001$ ); in schools with a roll of 1000-1499 than in schools with rolls of 100-249 or 250-499 ( $p < 0.01$ ); and in comprehensive rather than selective schools ( $p < 0.05$ ).

The two main reasons given for not teaching RSE were *insufficient time/curriculum pressure on timetable* (77%) and *others taught RSE e.g. parents or primary school* (40%)

### 7.2 School policies and planning

The data in this section are based on the responses of the 863 schools who had taught some RSE during the academic year 1996/97.

Only one school in seven (14%) said that they had an RSE policy in place and a similar proportion (13%) said that a policy was under development. Nearly three-quarters of schools had no RSE policy. As with the primary schools, schools with an RSE policy in place had a significantly higher incidence of teaching RSE within the curriculum. They were also more likely to have undertaken some practical road safety training activities. Again, however, it is not possible to determine whether the establishment of the activities was policy led or whether the policy developed as a result of the activities.

Typically, RSE was formally planned as part of the Curriculum Development Plan of the school (42%). Rather fewer schools (36%) planned RSE informally (outside any Curriculum Development Plan) and the remaining 22% taught RSE opportunistically.

Amongst those schools who planned RSE (either formally or informally), most (60%) planned the programme one year ahead. About one in three schools (28%) planned it less than a year ahead and the remaining 13% planned two or more years ahead.

In almost two-thirds of schools (64%), where the RSE programme was planned, a teacher with special responsibility for Personal and Social Education, Health Education or RSE was responsible (at least in part). In over a quarter of schools (28%), a member of the Senior Management Team (SMT) was involved. RSOs and police assisted in about ten per cent of schools. The Headteacher was rarely involved (4%) (see Figure 12). Where more than one member of staff was involved, the most common combination was a teacher with special responsibility and a member of the SMT.

### 7.3 Contacts with RSOs and the police

Slightly more schools teaching RSE reported contacts with the police (84%) than with RSOs (80%). For RSOs, the prime support was in the supply of resources whereas, for the police, it was talks to pupils (Figure 13). Apart from talks to pupils, RSOs had a higher incidence in all other types of contact with schools.

### 7.4 How RSE was taught

The teaching of RSE tended to decline with increasing Year Group. In 60% of schools teaching RSE, some RSE input was provided for Year 7 pupils. Apart from a slight blip at Year 11, the percentage steadily declined with increasing age (Figure 14).

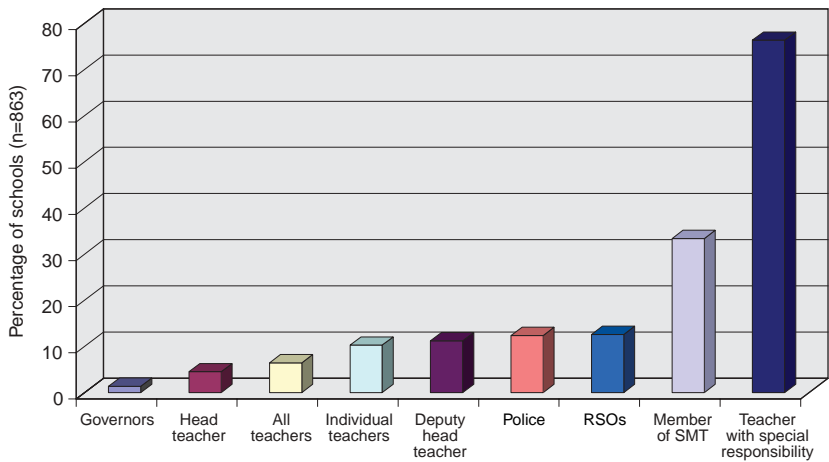


Figure 12 Who plans the RSE programme?

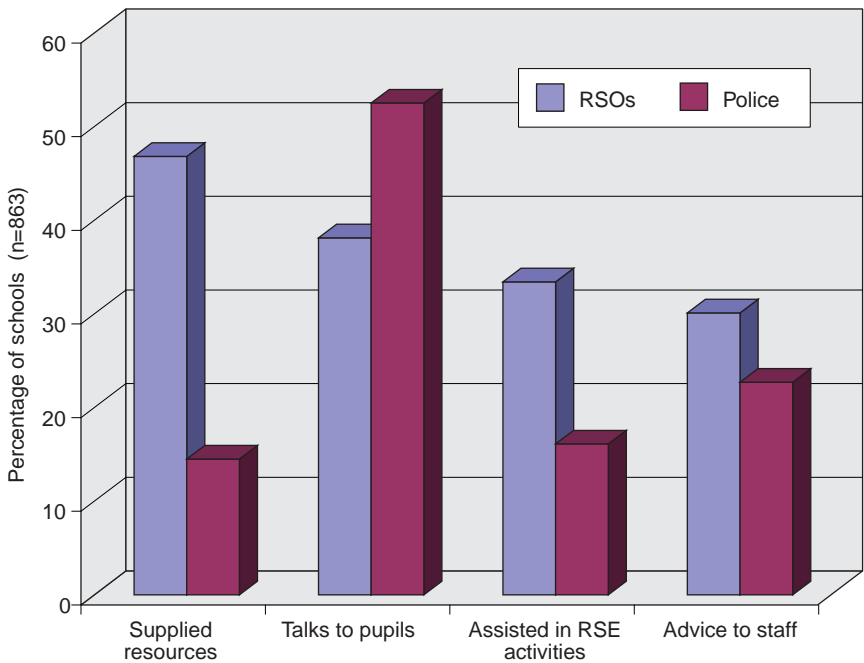
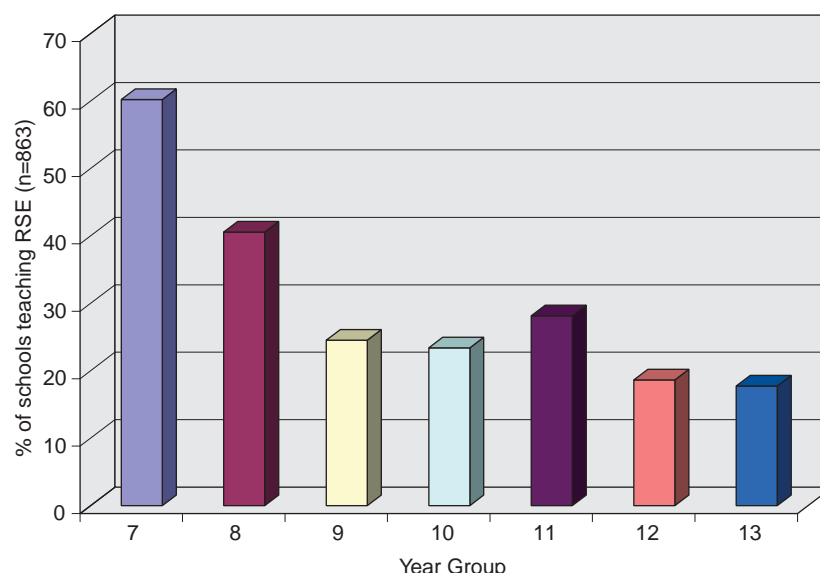


Figure 13 RSO and police contacts with schools



**Figure 14** Year groups taught RSE as % of all schools teaching RSE

PSHE contributed to three-quarters (74%) of the recorded RSE inputs. Other subjects that contributed more than one per cent of inputs were:

English	5%
Technology/IT	5%
Geography	4%
Science	4%
Mathematics	3%

Talks on road safety matters in both assembly and in the classroom were other teaching opportunities mentioned. The Headteacher (34%) or another teacher (33%) were most likely to give talks in assembly. The incidence of assembly talks by either RSOs or police was much lower. In the classroom the predominant outside speakers were the police (at 49% of schools) and RSOs (28% of schools). As with the subject teaching, the incidence of RSE talks declined steadily with increasing year group apart from a slight blip in Year Group 11.

The schools were asked for information about the use and awareness of seven RSE resources. Four of these were for use in the classroom (*Drive*, *Ignition*, *Secondary Steps*, and *The Collector*). The remaining three (*School Governors' Leaflet*, *RSE Good Practice Guidelines* and *Rosalind*) were largely reference documents.

Only just over a third (36%) of schools teaching RSE were aware of or using the most frequently mentioned of the seven, *Drive*. About one third (32%) were aware of or using the *School Governors' Leaflet*. Not surprisingly, use rates were higher for the classroom resources (range 10% to 17%) than for the reference documents (range 1% to 7%). Very few schools were aware of *Rosalind* (5%).

## 7.5 Other road safety activities

Two in five (41%) of the schools that taught RSE involved pupils in practical road safety activities. The most popular activities were pre-driver and driver training which were

undertaken predominantly in Years 11 to 13, peaking in year 12 (16% of schools). Moped and motorcycle training peaked in Year 11 where it was undertaken by five per cent of schools. Cyclist and pedestrian training were concentrated predominantly in Years 7 and 8; cyclist training having a slightly higher incidence. Other activities were less frequent but their incidence was relatively consistent throughout the Year Groups (Figure 15).

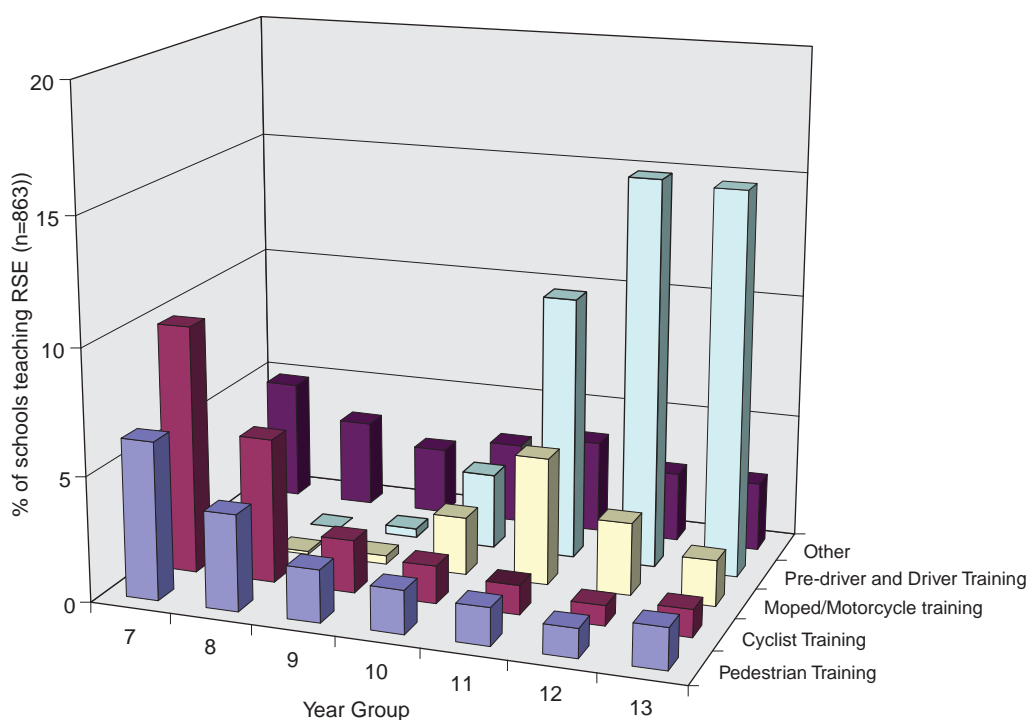
Overall, teachers undertook the bulk of the training being involved in a third (35%) of activities. RSOs and 'Others' were each involved in about a quarter and the police in about one sixth of all activities. Parents were rarely involved (4%).

The involvement varied widely according to the type of practical training. Teachers did most of the pedestrian (50%) and moped/motorcycle (61%) training. RSOs predominated in cyclist training (39%). Other trainers did a substantial part (36%) of the pre-driver and driver training. The involvement of the police (14-20%) and parents (1-6%) were relatively consistent across all types of training.

The pattern of involvement in the testing followed closely that for the training. Again, teachers predominated followed by RSOs. The role of the police in testing was slightly lower than their training role. Parental involvement remained at a similar low level to that for training.

Information on theatre in education, quizzes or competitions and other road safety events was also requested. Of these, theatre in education was the most frequent although its highest incidence in a Year Group was only seven per cent in Year 7. Quizzes and competitions were again highest in Year 7 and then declined with increasing Year Group. The frequency of 'Other' road safety events was also highest in Year 7; thereafter it tended to be consistently low.

Schools were also asked about any specific road safety work undertaken with students following their transfer from primary to secondary school. Most schools who taught RSE (57%) claimed to be undertaking such work.



**Figure 15** Types of practical RSE activities by year group

Of these, the prime methods of delivery were via classroom work (65%) and safe routes to school (43%).

## 7.6 Views about RSE

All respondents were asked to rate seven statements about RSE on a five-point scale. Ratings were converted to numeric scores (1 = Strongly agree and 5 = Strongly disagree). In all cases, schools teaching RSE showed a significantly more positive attitude towards the subject.

Respondents were also asked to rate RSE in their schools on a category scale – *non-existent, poor, satisfactory, good, and very good*. Amongst those who taught RSE, half (50%) rated it as *satisfactory* and a third (37%) as *poor*. Only 11% rated it as *good* or *very good*. Amongst schools who did not teach RSE, half (50%) rated it as *poor* and a further 40% as *non-existent*.

## 7.7 Interviews in secondary schools

Interviews were conducted with 65 secondary schools (including seven special schools, one of whom covered children aged 3 -19). The schools were largely in England and Wales. Telephone interviews were conducted with two schools in Northern Ireland.

### 7.7.1 Road safety policies

Written road safety policies are rare. The best recorded example stated that its aim is:

*'To make it safe for pupils to come to and from school and to give them wider knowledge of safety issues.'*

Another school's Code of Conduct dealt only with the behaviour and safety of those travelling to school by bus.

Another school dealt only with safety on the premises:

*'The school gives a high priority to general safety within the school (e.g. for pupils moving around the buildings) but has no road safety policy.'*

Often, the absence of a road safety policy was due to a lack of time to prepare one rather than a lack of commitment to RSE.

### 7.7.2 Personal social and health education (PSHE)

Reflecting the results of the postal questionnaires, most of the RSE undertaken in the interviewed schools was conducted within PSHE. The organisation, structure and extent of PSHE within schools varied widely. Given that teachers largely regarded RSE as a PSHE topic, it suffered from the same problems as other PSHE topics, including the need to maintain its slot(s) in the programme against other pressures.

#### 7.7.2.1 Planning PSHE

It may be that RSE has more chance of being taught within a planned PSHE programme than one that is more informally organised. Several examples of planned RSE programmes were found:

*'The PSHE Department works as a team. PSHE is taught as a specific subject (50 minutes per week), not just in group time. PSHE is 'issues focused' and so can cover anything. They plan separate modules, but are also happy to let things develop if one person has a particular interest. Their strengths are adaptability and responsiveness but they may be weak in coherence of delivery and consistency throughout the team.'*



*'Since the new head teacher has been in post, the pastoral curriculum has been rewritten and, for all five years, contains the same five elements – health, study skills, careers, safety, and sex education. Different years receive a different balance of the same elements each Tuesday morning in form work. In addition to a teacher with special responsibility for the pastoral curriculum, each of the five elements has its own teacher with a remit for it. Year Heads also have an input. There are monthly meetings of the pastoral team and a briefing before school each week for all staff who will teach it in form time.'*

*'The PSHE Co-ordinator is responsible for providing tutors with resources and disseminating information. The Co-ordinator has developed a folder for each tutor containing the tutorial programme, resources and a checklist of knowledge, skills and attitudes that should be covered.'*

In other schools, responsibility is devolved downwards, often to individual teachers:

*'The House Periods have a loosely planned structure, planned by the House Team. Each House has the same basic structure, but has leeway to add their own angle to subjects.'*

Many schools have a long tradition in PSHE teaching. In others, not all staff are supportive - for a variety of reasons including the pressures of other Departmental commitments.

#### 7.7.2.2 The future of PSHE

Some schools reported the potential abolition of PSHE:

*'The Head and Senior Management Team have chosen to keep PSHE, although some schools are integrating it within curriculum subjects.'*

*'The PSHE is planned to be covered within other curriculum subjects, especially science, technology, physical education and art.'*

At least one head teacher was planning to move in the opposite direction:

*'The Head Teacher is planning to reorganise the school day to create time for Lifeskills as the current timetable is too restrictive. He felt that the pressures of the National Curriculum and league tables had squeezed out much of the valuable work that used to be done in terms of social skills teaching.'*

Integration within curriculum subjects would not, at first sight, appear likely to enhance the teaching of PSHE.

Government plans<sup>9</sup> to make the teaching of Citizenship compulsory may affect the range of issues that can be covered within PSHE.

#### 7.7.2.3 RSE within PSHE

RSE may be taught within PSHE because the Head Teacher or Senior Management Team have agreed that it should be taught or because individual teachers gave a priority to it. (One subjective impression gained from the interviews was that RSE was more likely to be taught in schools situated close to 'dangerous roads' or where pupils had been killed in road crashes.)

The examples cited are organised by Year Group. It may give the impression of a planned, progressive programme of RSE throughout Years 7 – 12 in all schools. In reality, few schools had such a progression.

#### Transition

A few examples of RSE were found within the normal transition programme:

*'Year 6 pupils visit for an induction morning before joining the school and one activity they do is to plot a safe route from home to school.'*

*'A well established programme. The staff teach sessions in the primary schools and also run a Saturday School for pupils in Years 5 and 6. Issues covered include travelling to school, racism and bullying. A booklet entitled 'Move on Up', developed in school is now used by all schools in the local authority.'*

#### Year 7

In Year 7, some further development of transition work was observed. Much of the RSE involved safe routes between home and school:

*'Coming to School – a risky business' was a specific programme in the Autumn Term. It included items on road accident statistics, planning routes from home to school and spotting hazards.'*

*'When they start at the school, they do a PSHE course on routes to school (3-4 one hour sessions). Their Geography lessons link with this PSHE work.'*

*'A half term module on personal safety which includes a risk analysis of the outside of the school.'*

*'There is a competition to find the best poster. Older pupils are encouraged to design posters and leaflets for pupils in feeder primary schools.'*

The use of Theatre in Education in lower school was widespread amongst the schools interviewed. The productions, such as *Why did the chicken cross the road?*, were generally highly praised by staff.

#### Year 8

*'Based on the theme Looking after Others, it includes developing ideas about road safety for younger children. The PSHE Co-ordinator hopes to extend this by arranging for Year 8 students to visit primary schools and work with year 6 pupils.'*



*'There is some police input here with a talk on dangers and hazards in general – not just traffic related. They also talk a little about safety on the roads with cycles.'*

*'There are three lessons on: the dangers of joy riding, discussion of newspaper articles and spotting dangers in road scenes on OHPs (devised by the teachers).'*

*'A unit entitled 'Truth behind Statistics' using accident statistics. They use IT to draw graphs and see how statistics can be distorted. They also use accident reports to work back from the data to the actual accident.'*

*'Making roads around the school safer – a module that involves RSE and citizenship issues.'*

#### Year 9

In general, there is a dearth of RSE activity in Year 9:

*'Use 'Drive' material for three lessons.'*

*'Years 9, 10 and 11 would have a series of First Aid sessions and talks from the police.'*

#### Year 10

As well as the PSHE examples listed below, road traffic studies courses start in Year 10. More details are given in the section on Examination and Certificated Courses:

*'The police came in to do drink driving.'*

*'A whole module of work based on the BBC TV series 'Drive'.'*

*'"Young Drivers" – a seven two-hour session module focuses on young drivers and passengers, their relationships with cars and the images of cars.'*

*'A module entitled Crime and Punishment looks at joyriding.'*

#### Year 11

Much of the work in Years 11 and above relates to pre-driver education.

Examples include:

*'A five week Ignition programme without any practical input.'*

*'Planned as the last module within the Citizenship session. It is on passenger/driver education and includes six freestanding lessons based on: driver behaviour, passenger behaviour, travel choices, risk perception, vision perception, and traffic law.'*

*'They have been using the 'Ignition' course with adaptations. They have in-house certification (PEAKS: Performance Enhanced Accreditation of*

*Key Skills). They have also encouraged pupils to do a running commentary when their parents are driving – this can work well but needs careful preparation.'*

*'"Road Awareness" – a total of eight hours in the Spring Term with three main strands – the Highway Code, the Driving Theory test and car maintenance and practical driving.'*

Several drama productions including *Legal Weapon* and *Too Much Punch for Judy* are shown in Year 11. Generally, Theatre in Education is highly regarded although schools who have to pay find it expensive. It can also be disruptive to the normal school timetable.

#### Sixth form (Years 12 and 13)

In the sixth form, pre-driver education is continued and some driver training is introduced. More information is provided in the section on Practical Activities:

*'A pre-driver course has been organised as part of the Sixth Form complementary studies programme. Students are encouraged to take lessons with ADIs but the school no longer involves driving schools in the programme as they were seen to be mainly interested in promoting themselves. Outside inputs include the police and RSO.'*

*'VI Form PSHE sessions (called Forum) are based on driver training and the theory test.'*

*'The police come in to talk to small groups of pupils on road awareness and safe driving. They give the pupils a written test.'*

#### 7.7.3 RSE within curriculum subjects

Many of the interviews were conducted with the Head of PSHE. When questions were asked about RSE within other curriculum subjects, the interviewee could not always provide precise information. It is unlikely, however, that any major RSE initiatives were missed. As one interviewee stated:

*'There may be some imaginative work in English and road safety may impinge on environmental issues in Geography but these inputs were largely fortuitous and unplanned.'*

*'A little RSE is delivered, perhaps unwittingly, through National Curriculum subjects like Science (stopping distances and use of seat belts).'*

In some schools, informal links exist with other curriculum subjects, particularly Geography:

*'When they planned Year 7 PSHE looking at safe routes to school, the Geography co-ordinator was able to take up the work and include map making etc. Also, if the police are coming in to talk about alcohol and driving, then the Head of PSHE will mention this to the Science teacher who will also do relevant work.'*

*'Some RSE work is covered in Geography as well as Health and PSHE. Staff in the Geography Department use a road safety package before carrying out local traffic surveys.'*

*'Years 10 and 11 do road signs and signals in Geography.'*

Technology also provides opportunities for RSE:

*'Pupils have built battery operated model cars and laid out a 'road system' within the school grounds. Road safety was an element in this project.'*

*'Car design and safety equipment is covered in Design Technology.'*

In one school, English lessons are used to write about and record relevant experiences in roadside pedestrian training in Years 7 and 8.

#### **7.7.4 Examination and certificated courses**

Many of these courses had their origins in the Schools Traffic Education Programme (STEP) which provided resources (including a moped) as well as training for teachers. The funding was discontinued in the early 1980s. In Northern Ireland, the GCSE in Motor vehicle and road user Studies is well established in many schools. However, the following comments were all from teachers in English or Welsh schools:

*'A road traffic studies course is available within the options programme for Years 10 and 11. About 12-14 students choose the course each year – generally the less academic pupils. The course comes within the technology curriculum and leads to a special Certificate in Road Traffic Studies issued by the County.'*

*'In Years 10 and 11, Automotive Studies is offered as a GCSE option using the OCR (MEG) Design and Technology 1458 syllabus. Safety aspects are included along with other information.'*

*'In Years 10 and 11 a GCSE option following the Northern Ireland syllabus is available. About 25% of pupils take this option rather than Art, Catering, French, Music or Design.'*

*'RSE has been introduced into the GNVQ course on Health and Social Care.'*

#### **7.7.5 Practical activities**

Although the examples given below may imply a progression of practical activities from pedestrian training to car driving, the reality is that schools are often only able to offer limited practical RSE activities, typically, in upper school, to the less able pupils.

##### **Pedestrians**

*'Years 7 and 8 undertake practical pedestrian training. Pupils are taken outside by the teachers, sometime with parent helpers.'*

##### **Cycle training**

*'When pupils arrive in September, they hold an assembly on cycling. They talk about who wants to ride a bike to school. The RSO comes in and runs a course. Priority is given to pupils who have not passed cycling proficiency course at primary school.'*

*'Occasionally one teacher organises a 'Cycle to School' day where he joins pupils who live at a far point from school and, using a pre-planned route with timings, is joined by more and more cyclists as they near the school.'*

*'Advanced cycling courses has been run in the past with VI formers being trained as instructors. ... the pupils who had to take the course were caught cycling irresponsibly. The original trainers have left but the school is hoping to set this up again this term following a request from a Year 8 parent.'*

##### **Moped and motorcycle training**

*'The STEP programme in the school started 20 years ago. It has been modified, as less time is now available. Training is offered as an option for Year 10 and 11 PE. As other schools in the area have given up their STEP programmes, this teacher has inherited their mopeds and now has 15. He is a keen motorcyclist. Some on-road training is also provided for 6<sup>th</sup> Formers by the teacher.'*

##### **Pre-driver training**

*'A pre-driver course run by a local ADI takes place for Years 12 and 13. He has developed his own course and does not use either 'Drive' or 'Ignition'.'*

*'A pre-driver course is run by the RSO. It is only for one group of 30 pupils and it runs for 10 weeks, usually in the Spring/Summer terms. The course is intended to heighten awareness of the issues involved in driving and includes videos, talks, discussions and some in-car experience. This has been well received by the pupils who have been involved.'*

#### **7.7.6 Special schools**

Much of the RSE work in special schools relates to mobility training. For example:

*'RSE is taught within PSHE and geography and mainly focuses on the development of personal skills for mobility and independence.'*

*'All students have individual programmes to encourage their development and independence. Travel training forms a large part of this programme.'*

Much of the work must be done in the real traffic environment, although some schools need to provide initial practice in the playground.

*'RSE is included within geography in the Curriculum Development Plan. Much work is done outside school in the local area as the students need practical experience.'*

*'The teachers have felt the need to simulate activities before they take the children out. So a track and road system was installed in the playground. It is used for 45 minutes at lunchtime and for other sessions run by the police.'*

Some parents do not support such work. Similar reactions were noted from parents of disabled students at FE colleges:

*'Parents tend to be very protective and find it difficult to allow independent travel.'*

Some schools use resources from mainstream RSE. Others have devised their own programmes:

*'Pupils follow the 'Footsteps' programme in Year 8. In Years 10 and 11 they move on to the ASDAN programme. They have to carry out tasks using crossings. They also take part in traffic surveys and traffic trails.'*

*'As a special school, the teaching of Lifeskills is central to the work of the school. Pupils are issued with a series of red, amber and green books which are initialled by members of staff as pupils gain skills and knowledge. To gain the green book, students must have been out and about in the town to carry out certain tasks. Safe route planning and the strict adherence to road safety rules ensures that the student gains a 'stamp' in their book.'*

For the more disabled students, the objectives of RSE are different:

*'As most children will never be let on a road alone, the outcome of the safety programme is an awareness of danger and that they should never be out unaccompanied.'*

## 7.8 Summary of provision by secondary schools

RSE was more likely to be taught in local authority funded schools than in independent schools ( $p < 0.001$ ); in schools with a roll of 1000-1499 than in schools with rolls of 100-249 or 250-499 ( $p < 0.01$ ); and in comprehensive rather than selective schools ( $p < 0.05$ ). It appeared that the two main reasons given for not teaching RSE were 'insufficient time/curriculum pressure on timetable' (77%) and RSE 'being taught by others e.g. parents or primary school' (40%)

Amongst schools teaching RSE, few (14%) had an RSE policy in place although many (42%) formally planned it as part of the school's Curriculum Development Plan. Planning was normally undertaken by a teacher with special responsibility for Personal and Social Education, Health Education or RSE.

Slightly more schools teaching RSE reported contacts with the police (84%) than with RSOs (80%). For RSOs, the prime support was in the supply of resources whereas,

for the police, it was talks to pupils. Apart from talks to pupils, RSOs had a higher incidence in all other types of contact with schools.

In the schools that taught RSE threequarters taught it in PSHE. No more than 5 per cent of schools used any one of the other curriculum subjects to provide RSE.

The teaching of RSE tended to decline with increasing Year Group. In 60% of schools teaching RSE, some RSE input was provided for Year 7 pupils. Apart from a slight blip at Year 11, the percentage steadily declined with increasing age. PSHE contributed to three-quarters (74%) of the recorded RSE inputs. Schools also reported talks on road safety matters in both assembly and in the classroom. For both types, the incidence declined steadily with increasing Year Group, apart from, again, a slight blip at Year 11.

Two schools in five (41%) that taught RSE involved the pupils in practical road safety activities. The most popular activity was pre-driver and driver training which was predominantly undertaken in Years 11 – 13. Teachers undertook most of both the training and testing involved. Of other road safety activities, 'Theatre in Education' was the most common.

Schools teaching RSE showed more positive attitudes towards and rated the level of RSE in their school higher than schools not teaching RSE.

## 8 Colleges

### 8.1 Sixth form/FE colleges

#### 8.1.1 College information

A questionnaire on the provision of road safety education in Colleges of Further Education was devised, piloted and revised. A specialist educational mailing house then posted the questionnaire to 6<sup>th</sup> Form<sup>10</sup> and Further Education Colleges throughout the United Kingdom in September 1997.

A third (36%) of Colleges had rolls of between 5,001 and 10,000 full- and part-time students (Table 11). The median roll was 7,050 students.

**Table 11 Student roll**

Roll (grouped)	No	%
<1000	6	6.3
1001 – 5000	28	29.5
5001 – 10000	34	35.8
10001+	27	28.4
Total	95	100.0
Not stated	27	

Half the Colleges (50%) were in City Centre settings. Most of the remainder were in small towns (32%) or in suburbs (12%).

The majority of the respondents to the questionnaire (70%) were member of the senior management of the

college including Principals, Deans, Vice/Assistant Principals and Heads (Directors) of Departments or the Curriculum etc.

### 8.1.2 Provision of road safety education/training

One third (34%) stated that they had taught road safety education/training during the academic year 1996/97 to at least some students. The incidence of teaching RSE/T appeared to be independent of the student roll and the setting of the college.

The prime reasons given for not teaching RSE/T that year included 'insufficient time/curriculum pressure on timetable' and 'very low priority' (Table 12). Pressure on the curriculum in one college was such that offers of pre-driving courses from the local RSO and talks from the local police had been declined. However, at the same college, Theatre in Education is taken because '...it is offered and is subsidised and tutors don't have to do anything.'

**Table 12 Reasons given for not teaching RSE/T**

	No	%
Insufficient time/curriculum pressure on timetable	44	36
Very low priority	37	30
Lack of resources/finance	30	25
Taught by others	27	22
Lack of student interest	21	17
Other reason	19	16
Lack of staff with road safety knowledge	18	15
Available materials are not good enough	4	3

*More than one reason was given in many cases; hence the percentages do not add up to 100.*

In another college, a course assisting students to pass their driving theory test had been accredited but was not going to be run. As the Curriculum Manager explained, 'After the problems at X College [a reference to a FEFC<sup>11</sup> investigation], we have to be careful about Mickey Mouse courses. Anyway, our courses have to show progression which this one doesn't.'

Other comments included an assumption that students were too old to need to be taught RSE/T. One college also stated that there was no funding for the AEB Road Users Certificate from the FEFC.

### 8.1.3 Planning of RSE/T

The results presented in this section are based upon the 41 colleges who stated that they taught RSE/T during 1996/7.

Only two colleges (5%) stated that they had an RSE policy in place; a further two said that such a policy was under development.

RSE/T planning was typically either informal (44%) or opportunistic (44%). The lead-time was normally under one year (72%). One college that had strategically planned RSE into college tutorial sessions had done so as a result of a cross-departmental decision; the tutors believed that road safety was an essential element given the age of the students.

Planning was typically undertaken by individual members of staff for their own use; less frequently by a member of staff

with special responsibility for RSE/T or PSHE (Table 13).

One respondent noted that having a named person in charge of planning meant that '... there is a champion who doesn't just make sure that things are booked and distributed ... but someone who can stick up for the programme and make sure it really happens.' The disadvantage is that, if this person left the college, '...it would be very difficult to replace her experience and her contacts.'

**Table 13 Person responsible for planning of RSE/T**

	No	%
Individual staff for their own use	15	36.6
A member of staff with special responsibility for RSE/T or PSHE	8	19.5
Other member of senior management team	3	7.3
Police	2	4.9
Road safety officers	2	4.9
Director of Curriculum	1	2.4
Governors / Members of the Corporation	1	2.4
Principal	0	0.0
Vice-Principal (Academic)	0	0.0

An alternative picture was painted by another college who noted that, although all FT students had a tutorial period of 50 minutes per week, such periods were not monitored by the college so '... nobody knows what actually takes place.'

In only four colleges (10%) had members of staff undertaken in-service training in RSE/T. The numbers taking training per college were one, ten, fifteen and one hundred.

Less than half the colleges (46%) had had any contact with a road safety officer. Where contact had been made, the typical input by the RSO was in giving talks to students and providing advice to staff.

A slightly higher incidence of colleges (51%) had been in contact with the police. As with RSOs, the typical inputs were in giving talks to students and providing advice to staff. In some colleges, both the police and RSO are actively involved in the planning and delivery of the programme. As one tutor noted, 'the programme has changed over the years and in part it is because of the professional input these people are giving'.

### 8.1.4 How RSE/T was taught

A distinction needs to be made between the teaching of RSE/T to protect the wellbeing of the students and the teaching of RSE/T as part of the professional training of the students (for example as part of an NNEB course).

Four main areas were identified in which RSE/T was taught in colleges:

- Motor vehicle studies and similar courses.
- Driving courses (private car and commercial vehicle).
- Special programmes for students with mental physical or learning disabilities.
- Nursery Nurses and child care courses.

In addition, some colleges referred to other road safety events at Student Fairs and similar occasions.

Academic courses rarely involved RSE/T. Courses mentioned included 'A' Level (unspecified), Environmental Studies, Road User Studies (AEB and City and Guilds) and a BTEC First Diploma – Public Service: Road Traffic Education.

#### 8.1.4.1 Motor vehicle studies and similar courses

Several colleges stated that RSE/T formed part of their motor vehicle studies course although details of the level and content of RSE/T was not normally provided.

The tutor of one Motor Vehicle programme pointed out that many of the students who attend courses of this type have an antipathy to all things educational. If they have enrolled to a Motor Vehicle course, they will resist the addition of anything not essential to the course. As road safety is an 'add-on', the tutor tries to incorporate it through visits to motor manufacturing plants, motor shows and other linked operations.

#### 8.1.4.2 Driving courses (private and commercial vehicles)

Pre-driver training courses and courses to prepare students for their driving test (theory and practical) were mentioned. Often such courses were run in association with ADIs and or the local police/road safety unit. Not all were successful; one college dropped an elective course for the driving test theory examination because of lack of support.

A variety of other driving courses were mentioned including those for forklift trucks, mini-buses (courses for tutors and students), agricultural tractors, and approved driving instructors (ADIs).

#### 8.1.4.3 Special programmes for students with mental physical or learning disabilities

Many of the colleges mentioned special programmes for those students with mental, physical or learning disabilities.

Independent travel training for students with severe learning difficulties is a typical example. It covers both the pure road safety aspects of crossing the road with the travel issues of reading a timetable, recognising the bus route number, and knowing where to alight from the bus. One college followed the National Performance Training Council (NPTC) Scheme that awards a Level A or Level B pass. No evidence emerged as to specialist training of the tutors undertaking this training. As one tutor remarked, 'it's just what you would do with your own children'. The same tutor also stated that many parents of disabled students did not want their children to achieve independent travel. They preferred them to use the (free of charge) taxis provided by the local Council rather than worry about them on their own.

#### 8.1.4.4 Nursery Nurses and child care courses

A few colleges included RSE/T within their NNEB (Nursery Nurses) courses; NVQ Child Care courses; and Childhood studies courses. Teaching the Green Cross Code was identified as one element.

#### 8.1.4.5 Use of RSE/T resources

Respondents were asked about their awareness of three resources: *Drive with Alexei Sayle*, *Ignition* and *Rosalind*

(Table 14). *Drive* achieved the highest awareness rating (32%), probably because its association with the television series of the same name. The usage rates were low for all of the resources. No college had used *Rosalind*.

**Table 14 Awareness of selected RSE resources**

	Percentages		
	Used	Aware	Unaware
<i>Drive with Alexei Sayle</i> (The Stationery Office)	3	32	65
<i>Ignition</i> (BSM)	6	9	85
<i>Rosalind</i> (BITER)	0	7	93

#### 8.1.5 Views on road safety education and training

Respondents were asked to rate seven statements about RSE/T on a five-point scale. The highest level of disagreement was with the statement 'Parents are aware of and support the RSE/T'. Most agreement was expressed with the statements 'RSE/T is important and RSE/T develops long term essential life skills'. No significant difference appeared to exist between colleges teaching RSE/T and those that did not do so.

Few colleges (12%) rated their performance in the teaching of RSE/T as good or better. The majority rated their performance as poor.

Additional comments provided by colleges tended to reinforce the problem of curriculum pressure and reduced funding. One respondent raised the issue as to whether RSE/T '... is accommodated with Schedule 2 of the F and HE Act.' Others considered that RSE/T was the responsibility of 'Others', particularly primary and secondary schools.

Other respondents related the concept of road safety to the layout of campus roads and general compliance with relevant legislation.

#### 8.1.6 Conclusions

FE colleges are large institutions running a wide variety of part- and full-time courses. As with other educational institutions, they claim to suffer from pressures on curriculum time and funding.

With a few notable exceptions, most colleges do not consider RSE/T to be appropriate for their students. Where it is taught, it is normally in particular courses (e.g. motor vehicle studies) or to particular students (e.g. travel training to those with disabilities).

Where RSE/T is taught to a large proportion of the students, it is done so in tutorial sessions and because of the conscious decision of the staff to regard it as sufficiently important.

### 8.2 ITT Colleges

#### 8.2.1 Methodology

The questionnaire was developed and piloted with 12 establishments providing Initial Teacher Training (ITT). Eight questionnaires were returned. After refining the

questionnaire, the main survey was carried out in the summer of 1997. From the 104 colleges and university departments surveyed, 39 completed questionnaires were returned – a response rate of 36%. The response rates were highest in Scotland (33%) and Wales (32%) and lowest in Northern Ireland (15%).

One college returned three questionnaires, completed by three different staff members, and all giving slightly varying answers. Rather than trying to compute an ‘average’ response by a weighting system, and as the sample size was so small anyway, all three responses were included in the analysis. The following analysis therefore refers to numbers of respondents rather than numbers of colleges.

### 8.2.2 The sample

Of the 39 respondents:

- 4 were from the London area;
- 29 from elsewhere in England;
- 2 from Wales;
- 2 from Scotland; and
- 2 from Northern Ireland.

Sixteen of the questionnaires were completed by someone describing their position as ‘Head’ or ‘Director’ of ITT, teacher training or similar. Lecturers (any grade) completed eleven further questionnaires. Administrators, managers or co-ordinators (i.e. non-teaching staff) completed nine. One questionnaire was returned by a college dean and another by an assistant dean. One respondent did not supply this information.

The questionnaire asked which types of courses were offered and the annual intake of students. The most frequently offered course was the primary PGCE. On average, the annual intake of students of this course was only 75. By comparison, the average annual entry was 181 amongst the colleges that offered secondary PGCE.

The least frequently offered course was the First degree plus Qualified Teacher Status (QTS).

### 8.2.3 Provision of RSE

Twenty-three respondents rated the road safety education / training (RSE/T) in their college as ‘non-existent’. A further six rated it as ‘poor’ and four as ‘satisfactory’. Only two considered their RSE/T provision ‘very good’. (The remaining two did not respond.)

Respondents were asked whether RSE/T had been offered to any student on any course during the year ending August 1997. Eleven out of the 38 respondents who answered the question claimed that their college had. Three of these 11 reported that this level of RSE/T was greater than normal, whilst the other eight claimed it to be about the same as normal.

Of the 27 respondents who reported no RSE/T, one reported that this was lower than normal, which suggests that RSE/T had been provided at least once previously.

The respondents were asked to indicate from a pre-determined list what the major problems associated with providing RSE/T every year are. The most commonly cited problem was insufficient time (29 colleges), followed by

road safety being a very low priority (20), lack of resources/finances (11) and lack of staff with road safety knowledge (11). Six respondents cited lack of student interest in road safety. Only one respondent mentioned that available materials are not good enough. (This could reflect lack of awareness of available resources, rather than their quality.)

Four respondents replied that there were no problems involved with providing RSE/T every year as far as they were concerned.

#### 8.2.3.1 Most recent RSE/T input

In all, 12 respondents reported that their college had offered RSE/T to any students on any course during the two years ending August 1997. Eleven of these had involved primary teacher students in RSE/T. Only three had involved secondary teacher students.

These 12 respondents provided further information on their most recent RSE/T input.

#### 8.2.3.2 Primary student teachers

Seven respondents reported that their students doing PGCE courses had recently been involved in RSE/T. Seven had involved BEd students and two first degree with QTS students.

The respondents were asked in what context their most recent RSE/T input was delivered. (They were able to tick more than one category.) Four respondents reported that the most recent RSE/T input was delivered as part of a session on PSHE, three as a self-contained session on RSE. Two reported that the input was part of a National Curriculum / 5-14 Guidelines subject. One college reported that it was covered on a field trip and preparation for taking children out and, finally, another covered RSE/T as part of a general professional studies lecture. None had included RSE/T as part of child development.

Members of the lecturing staff delivered eight of the inputs: five from education departments, two from science departments and one from environmental studies. Road safety officers (RSOs) contributed to three of the inputs and a health professional to one.

The total length of time dedicated to the RSE/T input ranged from 20 minutes to 3 hours. The mean was 109 minutes.

The most common input format was lectures (6 respondents), followed by workshops (4) and discussion groups (3). Ten out of the 11 respondents reported that the input was part of the compulsory (core) curriculum or syllabus. The number of students involved ranged between 40 and 235 (mean 129).

#### 8.2.3.3 Secondary student teachers

Only three respondents reported that their students had been involved in recent RSE/T inputs. Two were with PGCE students and the other with BEd students. One reported that the RSE/T input was delivered as a self-contained session on RSE and two reported that it was part of a National Curriculum / 5-14 Guidelines Subject. Two respondents reported that a member of the lecturing staff

(one from the Geography department, the other a Health Education Co-ordinator) had delivered the session. Two mentioned RSOs and one a health professional.

All three respondents reported that only one RSE/T session had been held. The length of the lesson varied between 15 and 100 minutes. All three also reported that the input was part of the compulsory (core) curriculum or syllabus.

#### 8.2.4 Other RSE/T activities

Eleven respondents reported that they were aware of students delivering RSE/T during primary teaching practice and two during secondary teaching practice.

Six respondents reported contact about RSE/T with RSOs, one with the police and three with the Local Health Authority. None reported contact with driving schools.

Three respondents reported other road safety events within the last two years: a conference for PGCE secondary students, a small conference for 20 people and an exhibition by an RSO for 150 secondary PGCE students.

Twenty-two colleges claimed to have examples of RSE/T resources for schools available in their student library.

Respondents were asked to give their reactions to seven statements about RSE/T in primary and secondary schools. Figure 16 shows how many agreed and disagreed with each statement. (NB. Some of the bars do not total 39 due to missing data.)

On the whole, there was agreement with most of the statements. The only statement with which there was any disagreement was that RSE/T should be about the teaching of specific road safety skills. Fewer of the respondents seemed to think that RSE/T should link well to environmental education. (It is unknown what other subjects the respondents thought it could be linked with instead.) The statement most 'strongly agreed' with was that parents should be aware of and support RSE/T. It seems feasible that this could indicate that some of the respondents considered RSE/T to be the responsibility of parents rather than that of schools.

Four respondents provided information on other RSE/T initiatives in their college, which had been particularly successful and/or enjoyable. These were:

- A group of Arts students took RSE and Drama as a topic for an Arts Education Module.
- We invited the authors of a secondary safety pack into the college to speak to our students about permeating road safety lessons into their own specialist areas in the curriculum.
- I am carrying out a research project in this area (child pedestrians) for the Department of Transport.<sup>12</sup>
- Core curriculum science do 'incidental' work on visibility and forces/seat belts.

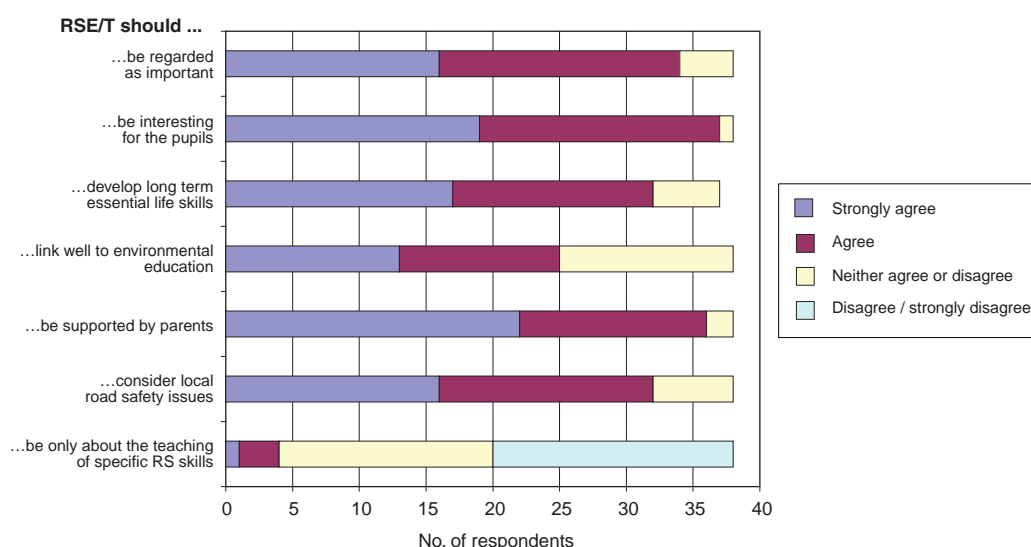
#### 8.2.5 The future of RSE/T

Respondents were asked whether they thought that the amount of RSE/T taught in their college would change over the next few years. Five reported that they thought it would increase and the remaining 28, who answered the question, said that they thought it would stay the same.

Of the 12 respondents whose colleges currently provide RSE/T, two thought that the level of RSE/T would increase over the next few years and the other ten thought it would stay at the same level. Three of the 21 colleges, which do not currently provide RSE/T, think that the level will increase over the next few years. This leaves 18 colleges out of 33 that do not anticipate RSE/T being introduced. (Six respondents did not provide this information.)

Seven respondents gave additional information supporting why they thought the amount of RSE/T would change:

- This questionnaire has highlighted a problem.
- All courses are currently being reviewed – trying to look at more desirable learning outcomes etc.
- Increased awareness brought about discussion and your survey.



**Figure 16** How RSE/T should be viewed in primary and secondary schools

- One group of students had not input last year from RSOs or lecturers. This will be addressed this year.
- With help and advice I would like to make it a priority for all ITT students.
- New degree courses allow for greater input.
- Statutory content overload do not allow for other inclusions, however desirable, particularly on a 1 year (i.e. 9 months) course, of which half is spent in schools.

Only four respondents who had offered RSE/T to some or all of their students offered to be interviewed face to face for the in-depth study.

### 8.2.6 Summary and conclusions

Of the 39 college representatives who responded to the survey:

- 23 rated the road safety education or training in their college as 'non-existent';
- 11 claimed to have offered RSE/T to some or all of their students in the academic year ending August 1997;
- the primary reasons stated for not providing RSE/T were lack of time and road safety being a low priority;
- RSE/T was much more likely to be offered to primary teacher students than to secondary teacher students;
- 22 colleges claimed to have examples of schools RSE/T resources in their student libraries.

All twelve colleges that currently provided RSE/T intended to continue it at least at current levels of input. Eighteen of the 21 that did not currently provide it did not intend to introduce it over the next few years.

## 9 Summary

### 9.1 Experimental methodology

The report presents the findings of a research study whose fieldwork began in October 1996 and was completed in April 1999. Although the intention was to present an instantaneous snapshot of the state of road safety education across the UK the resultant picture was actually scanned over a period of 2½ years. The processes of change have continued throughout the fieldwork so that there are some differences between the results recorded at different times. In particular the government officials were interviewed in 1997 and could not then foresee exactly how policy would be developing in 1999.

In addition to differences in the data arising from temporal change there are some apparent differences arising from methodological variations between the phases of the experiment. The research sought to deduce quantitative findings that were nationally representative by analysing the data from postal questionnaires dispatched to national populations. The response rates to the RSO, Police and Health Promotion Unit surveys (78%, 82% and 63% respectively) were sufficiently high to engender confidence in the use of the data as a national measure. The rates of response to the surveys of schools and colleges were too low (26% to 36%) to be interpreted confidently as representative

of national data. However, it was still possible to use the data to compare and contrast schools that provided road safety education with those that did not.

The research has attempted to identify good practice by interviewing a small sample, whose responses to the postal questionnaires indicated that they were heavily involved in the promotion and delivery of road safety education. The qualitative data from the interviews has allowed increased understanding of the mechanics and implementation of good practice. This understanding was essential for the development of the DETR Good Practice Guides. There were differences between some of the views expressed by the interviewees and the conclusions drawn from the postal survey. Such differences were to be expected because the selection of the good practice interview sample was deliberately biased towards people and organisations that supported a range of RSE activities wider than the average.

### 9.2 The role of government

In England, Scotland and Wales the national departments steer RSE policy. Executive responsibility for funding RSE and supporting schools and RS training rests with the local authorities. In Northern Ireland the national department has similar policy responsibilities but also directly employs the Road Safety Education Officers and funds the RSE service.

At government level there is general recognition of the need for RSE across the wide range of Departments with interests touching on accident prevention, education and road safety. In all the UK countries the Department responsible for road transport policy takes the lead on RSE policy but seeks support from the other policy areas.

In England DETR promotes RSE as part of national road safety policy. Related areas, managed by DETR, include the road safety research programme and the national road safety publicity programme. National strategy is outlined in a range of parliamentary and other documents. There is a variety of formal and informal mechanisms for consultation between Departments, between DETR and local authorities and between DETR and the Road Safety Officer associations.

In Scotland, the Scottish Road Safety Campaign manages the co-ordination of RSE, some research (mainly concerned with the evaluation and development of RSE), and much of the road safety publicity programme. The Scottish Government employs the permanent staff of the Campaign and provides most of its funds. However, the policy and programme are agreed by a set of committees representing the local authority RSOs, the Scottish police, the Health Education Board Scotland and other interested parties. The Scottish Government maintains arms-length control by appointing the chair of the SRSC main committee.

The Scottish RSE strategy is documented in the SRSC plan, which in turn is derived from the Scottish strategy as set out in the Scottish national road safety plan.

The Welsh Government has been developing a similar committee structure to the Scottish structure. Welsh strategy is summarised in the Welsh road safety plan.

In Northern Ireland the Government employs the RSEOs and so has executive responsibility for RSE. The



Road Safety Education Branch is within the core of the Department of the Environment (NI) but there are strong links to the police and to the Roads Service. Central funds are used to pay RSEO staff costs, the development of resources, the distribution of resources to schools and some evaluation research. The national road safety plan includes the NI strategy for RSE.

In England, Scotland and Wales, the local authority or police road safety officers have executive responsibility for road safety education. The level of provision varies between authorities depending on their own particular priorities and interpretations of government policy advice and instructions.

### 9.3 RSOs and other agencies supporting RSE

The survey of RSOs has shown that generally RSOs are following current advice on good practice. Most respondents actively supported RSE in schools and pre-primary groups through the provision of resources and by helping teachers plan RSE. Three quarters reported working with other agencies to co-ordinate and support their RSE efforts. Divergence from good practice may have arisen from the local authority (LA) reorganisation which has meant more but smaller RS units. The smaller units are tackling almost as many areas of RSE as the larger units but the coverage is thinner and in particular there seems to be less interaction with teachers. Many of the small units attempt to overcome the problem of small size by forming associations with neighbouring units but the amount of collaboration does vary within these associations.

Almost all RS units support cyclist training, most commonly for children in the age range 8 - 11. The survey respondents together provide cyclist training for about a quarter of children at some time in their childhood. The number trained in 1996 was very similar to the number being trained in 1985.

About half the respondent RSOs said that they were involved in practical pedestrian training. This was aimed mostly at children aged 5 to 7. For all but one or two RSOs this is a new activity introduced since 1985.

73% of the RSOs supported pre-driver training, mainly for students aged 16 to 18. The proportion of RSOs involved is a slight increase on the 1985 proportion, 66%. Support for motor cyclist training had fallen from 65% of RSOs in 1985 to 45% in 1996. This is understandable - a large fall in motor cycle use has meant reduced demand.

After the RSOs, the principal agencies supporting RSE were the police and health promotion officers. 71% of police forces and 80% of health promotion officers undertook some RSE activities. Both groups reported co-operating with their RSO for these activities. Police activities included talks and the organisation of projects such as 'Crucial Crew'. The Health Promotion Officers were mostly concerned with the provision of resources and helping teachers to plan RSE. Both agencies were likely to be involved in local authority road safety committees.

The RSOs, Police and Health Promotion Officers had three main concerns. RSOs and police saw curriculum pressures that reduced the time and effort available from teachers as a problem. The police and health promotion

officers saw lack of agency resources as a problem. The need to place road safety in a wider context that covered health and the quality of the environment was mentioned frequently by RSOs and health promotion officers.

### 9.4 Primary schools

All the primary schools in England, Northern Ireland and Wales were sent a questionnaire and 29 per cent were returned. The low response rate means that there is a need for caution in interpreting the data, which are not necessarily representative of all primary schools.

87 per cent of respondents had taught RSE in the academic year 1996 to 1997. There were small but significant differences in the proportions saying that they taught RSE:

- more schools in Northern Ireland
- more publicly funded schools than independent schools
- more infant schools

The majority of schools who taught RSE had some contact with their RSO in the previous year and over half had some police assistance in RSE.

Rather less than half the schools who taught RSE provided cyclist training. Most of these trained their eleven-year-old pupils and about two fifths trained their ten-year-olds. Nearly a third of schools teaching RSE provided pedestrian training for their pupils - most commonly to the youngest children in the age range 4 to 6.

A large proportion of primary schools taught RSE as part of a multi-subject topic but a significant proportion taught it as part of a curriculum subject. The most common subject for RSE was Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) used by a third of schools. The next most common subjects, used by about a seventh of schools, were English, Geography and Science.

### 9.5 Secondary schools

Only 26% of secondary schools returned a questionnaire and again the same caution is needed as with the primary school data.

Of the responding schools, almost three-quarters had taught some RSE in the previous year. The proportions teaching RSE were higher:

- in publicly funded schools than in independent schools;
- in large schools than in small schools;
- in comprehensive schools than in selective schools.

But it should be noted that there are very few independent comprehensive schools and the majority of the selective schools are independent - this effect is confounded with the funding effect.

The secondary schools that taught RSE were slightly more likely to have had contact with their RSO than the primary schools. They were much more likely to have had a police input to RSE.

About two fifths of secondary schools who taught RSE provided some practical training. This was most likely to be driver or pre-driver training for the older pupils although 10% provided cyclist training for their first year.

Teaching in UK secondary schools is mostly subject based. Far and away the most common slot for RSE was Personal, Social and Health Education, used by three-quarters of schools teaching RSE. Only small proportions, 5% or less reported teaching RSE in other subjects. The commonest of these were English, Information Technology, Geography, Science and Maths and, in Wales, Welsh.

### 9.6 FE colleges

Only 26% of 6<sup>th</sup> Form and FE Colleges returned a questionnaire. Almost all were FE Colleges. As a result, caution is needed in interpreting the results. One third (34%) stated that they had taught road safety education/training during the academic year 1996/97 to at least some students. The prime reasons given for not teaching RSE/T that year included ‘insufficient time/curriculum pressure on timetable’ and ‘very low priority’ including an assumption that students were too old to need to be taught RSE/T. The incidence of teaching RSE/T appeared to be independent of the student roll and the setting of the college. Around half the colleges had had contact with a road safety officer (46%) or the police (51%). Where contact had been made, the typical input was in giving talks to students and providing advice to staff. Four main areas were identified in which RSE/T was taught in colleges:

Motor vehicle studies and similar courses.

Driving courses (private car and commercial vehicle).

Special programmes for students with mental physical or learning disabilities.

Nursery Nurses and child care courses.

Many of the colleges provided independent travel programmes designed to support students with special needs. These were particularly impressive.

### 9.7 ITT colleges

Two thirds of the ITT colleges responding to the postal survey did not give their students any training in the delivery of RSE. The two main reasons were that there was a lack of time and that RSE was low priority. Where training in the delivery of RSE was provided it was more likely to be provided to primary student teachers than to secondary student teachers.

## 10 Good practice RSE

The research has shown a range of agencies, officials and others, who are all concerned with the effective delivery of road safety education to children. This chapter starts by identifying the RSE that children should experience and then summarises examples of good practice, as reported in the surveys and interviews – the list includes items that were frequently mentioned and supported by a range of respondents. The final section of the chapter discusses some of the barriers to good practice raised by respondents.

### 10.1 For school children

Road safety education for children at school should be seen as an essential part of a child’s education. It should contribute to the general educational goals of the whole curriculum, i.e. promoting spiritual, moral, cultural, mental, and physical development; and preparing for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. Road safety education should address three specific needs of children (Noble *et al.*, 1995):

- They need to know how to keep themselves and others safe, now and in the future.
- They need knowledge of the road environment and how it functions.
- They need to know how to influence changes in that environment.

### 10.2 Characteristics of good practice

#### 10.2.1 Primary schools

The school has a champion for RSE.

The champion can be:

- Head teacher.
- Governor.
- Teacher with special responsibilities for PSHE.
- Other designated teacher.

Primary schools can teach RSE within:

- A topic:
  - that covers a range of subjects, health concerns and other matters;
  - or that was primarily concerned with road safety.
- A personal, social and health education period.
- Another curriculum subject, particularly:
  - English.
  - Geography.
  - Science.

The school staff considers road safety issues when pupils are taken outside the school grounds:

- On walks to playing fields, swimming pools, church, etc.
- On environmental study outings:
  - within the school neighbourhood;
  - to comparison areas.

RSE is planned:

- A year or more in advance.
- For every year group.
- As part of the school curriculum development plan.

Road and other accident problems considered in the RSE programme depend upon local circumstances and the specific needs of pupils.

In most areas problems addressed will include:

- Pedestrian injury on quiet roads (early primary).
- Off-road cycle accidents (primary children).
- Pedestrian injury on busy roads (late primary).
- Cyclist injury on roads (late primary).

Pedestrian and cyclist training should include supervised training on real roads.

Opportunities should also be taken to remind children of good in-vehicle safety practice.

Good practice ideas suggested by the teachers who were interviewed are:

RSE matters can be included within the literacy and numeracy hours.

A rural school can pair with an urban school to exchange information and visits giving the children an insight into different traffic environments.

Junior Road Safety Officers can be chosen from pupils in Year 6 to liaise with the local RSO and to disseminate road safety information within the school.

A school can set up a committee of governors, teachers, Year 6 pupils, RSO and police, which is specifically concerned with road safety. The group can identify and publicise safe routes to the school, campaign for safety measures along these routes and provide safety aids such as reflective armbands. The Year 6 pupils can give talks about road safety matters to younger pupils.

Parents' Charter, which the parents sign when their child joins the school, can outline their involvement in RSE and raise awareness of their contribution to their child's safety.

Meetings for parents before their child starts school can provide information about road safety with particular reference to travelling to school.

### **10.2.2 Secondary schools**

The school has a champion for RSE.

The champion can be:

- Member of the Senior Management Team.
- Teacher with special responsibilities for PSHE.
- Other designated teacher.

RSE is usually taught within

- Personal, social and health education.

The aim of RSE should be to make pupils safe travellers, to widen their knowledge of safety issues and to develop their understanding of risk taking and risk management.

RSE is planned:

- A year or more in advance.
- For every year group.
- As part of the school curriculum development plan.

Road and other accident problems considered in the RSE programme depend upon local circumstances and the specific needs of students.

In most areas the problems addressed will include:

- Pedestrian injury on busy roads (early secondary).
- Cyclist injury on roads (early secondary).
- Passenger injury (secondary children especially girls).
- Driver or rider accidents (mid to late secondary).

The programme includes practical training:

- Pedestrian.
- Cyclist.
- Pre-driver.

Pedestrian and cyclist training should include supervised training on real roads.

Opportunities should also be taken to remind children of good in-vehicle safety practice.

Practical training is teacher-led but can involve outside assistance from the RSO, police officers, parents and others.

### **10.2.3 Road Safety Officers**

Road safety education is supported at all levels of formal education. The aim is to establish a progressive programme of RSE and training.

All road safety education and training programmes should address safety problems identified from an examination of local accident statistics.

RSE is placed within a wide context that covers health and the quality of the environment.

RSO activities include:

- Planning and managing the local programme:
  - setting challenging but achievable objectives;
  - protecting and building on existing success and established contacts;
  - identifying key people to target for new developments;
  - involving elected members in programme support and promotion.
- Provision of resources.
- Helping teachers to plan.
- Co-operating with other agencies within the local area.
- Working with other RSOs:
  - to share experience of good practice;
  - to develop RSO specialisms;
  - to support each other.
- Promoting RSE to teacher training establishments within the local area.

Progress towards the plan objectives is monitored continuously and reviewed annually.

Small Road Safety Units combine to develop and share specialisms.

Schools activity is monitored by:

- Recording contacts with schools and colleges.
- RSE resource stock-tracking.
- Teacher questionnaires.
- Student questionnaires.

RS programmes and activities may be characterised as resource led or event led.

Good practice in the distribution of resources includes:

- Distributing catalogues just before teachers begin to plan their next year's work.

- If the authority offers many resources, preparing a separate catalogue for each key stage.
- Telling each school the total value of resources that could be supplied free of charge.
- If there is no limit on the supply of free resources, providing sufficient catalogues for each class teacher.
- Delivering orders to the promised timetable.
- Providing a fresh order form/catalogue with each delivered order.
- Labelling resources so that teachers know the supplier as well as the publisher.
- Keeping records of who has ordered what and checking when schools do not order, reduce their level of ordering, or order materials not aimed at their pupil age group.
- Holding a small stock of resources available for late orders and other emergencies.
- Providing resource displays at local teacher conferences and training meetings.

Resources frequently mentioned by schools include:

- Road safety calendar (primary schools).
- Pre-driver education resources (secondary schools).

Good practice in event provision involves:

- Planning a progressive programme to cover all ages and also to fit with school event planning.
- Matching the safety problems faced by local children to the safety problems addressed by the events.
- Working with other agencies to plan and implement events.
- Publicising the events programme.
- Encouraging schools in preparation before the event and follow-up work afterwards.
- For each event evaluating the views of teachers and the impact on the safety/behaviour/attitudes of children.

Events frequently mentioned by schools include

- Theatre in education (all types of school).
- Crucial Crew/Junior Citizen exhibitions (primary schools).

#### **10.2.4 Police Forces**

Road safety education is one of several opportunities for police officers:

- To inform schools and pupils about the role of the police.
- To inform about the law and the rights and duties of citizens.
- To make young people aware of dangers.
- To help foster crime prevention.

Depending on the Force, RSE services may be provided by Traffic Police, Schools Liaison Police or Community Police. Liaison is established between Departments where more than one provides educational services to schools.

Uniformed Officers with practical experience of attending road accidents are very effective in delivering RSE. This experience is frequently exploited through the

provision of exhibitions and demonstrations, such as Crucial Crew or Junior Citizen events.

The police providers of RSE programmes work in association with:

- The local RSO.
- The local education authority.

Good practice includes:

- Providing training for officers who are to work with schools.
- Pre-input discussions with schools.
- Allowing schools to select RSE experiences from a range of options.
- Regular contacts by officers who are known to the school.
- Convincing schools of the police commitment and flexibility to fit with a school's needs.
- Keying into planned units of work.
- Recognising the importance of practical activities.

#### **10.2.5 Health Promotion Units**

Support for road safety is an essential part of accident-prevention.

Health Promotion Officers consider RSE as part of any accident reduction strategies and programmes such as the 'Healthy Schools' and 'Health Promoting Schools' projects.

In road accident prevention, Health Promotion Units aim:

- To facilitate action by schools and other agencies, particularly the RSO.
- To prioritise programme proposals.
- To evaluate programme outcomes.

Schools programmes include:

- Health policy development.
- Working with parents and governors.
- Development of educational resources.
- Provision of 'health drop-in services', 'health weeks', and 'health fairs'.

Alliances to reduce road casualty numbers include working with:

- Health Visitors to promote baby and toddler safety
- Road Safety Officers to support the local RS Plan and promote road safety to school children, young adults and older road users.

Road casualty types addressed in health promotion programmes include:

- Passenger safety for babies and toddlers.
- Passenger safety for pre-school children.
- Pedestrian and cyclist safety for school-age children.

Opportunities for Health Promotion Units to advance RSE arise:

- In Child Safety Week.
- As part of walk-to-school projects.
- As part of a Crucial Crew exhibition.

## **10.3 Current difficulties in achieving good practice**

### **10.3.1 Schools**

The small minority of the schools responding to the survey, which did not provide any RSE, mostly gave insufficient time or curriculum pressure on the timetable as their reason. Secondary schools are quite likely to claim that others taught RSE, e.g. parents or primary schools. About a quarter of the primary schools that do not teach RSE claim that they lack the resources to teach RSE and a fifth say that they have no teacher with road safety knowledge.

The introduction of literacy and numeracy hours in the primary schools and formal citizenship education within the secondary PSHE curriculum may lead to more schools claiming insufficient time for RSE. However, some schools have been able to adapt and use RSE to support these changes, thereby strengthening RSE in their schools.

Personnel from non-supporting schools have views about RSE that are less positive than the views of respondents from schools that support RSE.

### **10.3.2 Local authorities**

A number of RSOs claimed that support for RSE was weakening at senior management levels. Staff and financial resources were being transferred from RSE activities to support the introduction of new sustainable transport programmes. There were concerns that the RSE aims of the authority road safety plan were being overlooked.

Collaboration between local agencies can be formalised within the local road safety plan but is usually informal. Where the collaboration is wholly informal success does seem to depend very much upon the willingness of the various officers and others involved. Changes in the aims of any of the participating organisations, staff changes and budget cuts can all limit collaboration.

The reorganisation of many of the Counties into unitary authorities has resulted in more but smaller authorities and smaller Road Safety Units. The smaller units:

- Are less likely than the larger units to help teachers plan RSE at all stages of education (pre-school to college).
- Offer a smaller range of road safety training services.
- Are less likely to provide timetabled inputs to RSE at any stage.
- Are less likely to train secondary teachers.
- Are unlikely to use teacher questionnaires to evaluate RSE activities.

### **10.3.3 Police provision**

The police force contribution to RSE is very much biased towards the provision of personnel and a number of Schools Liaison Officers mentioned their concerns about a shortage of other resources. Police Force RSE is very much focussed on safety events and in many areas the police force is the lead agency for safety exhibitions such as Crucial Crew/Junior Citizen. There is little evidence of evaluation of police RSE beyond basic time recording and the logging of ad hoc comments from teachers and parents.

The main threat to police RSE seems to come from within the Police Forces. Current emphasis on crime

prevention and increased crime clear-up rates has led to reductions in traffic regulation activities and hence in traffic-police manpower. In some Forces these changes have led to reductions in traffic enforcement and road safety activities. These in turn have led to pressures to reduce RSE services.

### **10.3.4 Health promotion provision**

The commitment to road safety arises from a commitment to accident prevention as part of a general health education programme. Major initiatives to promote other areas of health education could divert health promotion resources away from RSE but this seems unlikely given the present support from the Department of Health and the Health Trusts for accident prevention.

## **11 Recommendations**

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The research has found examples of good practice in road safety education across the United Kingdom. The previous chapter summarises models of good practice for schools and road safety agencies. More detailed guidance is given in the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions publications referenced in Chapter 13 below. At all the levels reviewed success in delivering and supporting an effective programme depends upon willing people supplied with adequate time and resources:

- At all levels road safety education enthusiasts should be protected and supported.

### **11.1 Areas to reinforce**

Problems arise where there is a failure to recognise every child's entitlement to road safety education. This failure can and does occur at all levels, in schools and in the agencies outside schools that should support road safety education.

#### **11.1.1 At local authority level**

- Local authorities should present RSE as an essential element in the continuous education and development of citizens, who can make safe decisions about transport use and development.
- The local authority road safety plan should emphasise every child's entitlement to a developmental road safety education programme. To be wholly effective the content of strategic road safety plans must be carried over to the operational plans of authorities and their units.
- To ensure that the road safety education strategies are translated into effective action, local authorities should:
  - set challenging but achievable targets;
  - adopt targets that take account of local accident statistics;
  - ensure that elected members are involved in programme support and promotion;
  - maintain co-operation and co-ordination between local authorities / agencies;
  - protect and extend existing success and established contacts;

- target key people for new developments;
  - develop road safety officer specialisms (For the smaller road safety units this may be a part of the co-operation between units);
  - develop and support a progressive programme of road safety education and training.
  - monitor progress of the plan continuously and report performance at least annually.
- The local plan should cover the road safety education activities of all the agencies in an area and the major agencies should be signatories to the plan.
  - Road Safety Officers, Police and Health Promotion Officers should all continue to play an important role in delivering road safety education.
  - Local authorities and other agencies should develop action plans committing stated resources (staff and funding) and with measurable outputs.
  - Road safety should be placed in a wide context that covers health and the quality of the environment.
  - Where local authority reorganisation has resulted in small road safety units these should be encouraged to form associations with neighbouring units.
  - Local Authorities and other agencies should monitor school activities by:
    - recording contacts;
    - RSE resource stock-tracking;
    - teacher questionnaires;
    - student questionnaires.

#### **11.1.2 Other agencies**

- Resources for road safety education work by agencies such as police and health promotion should be maintained and safeguarded from alternative priorities.
- Police providers of RSE programmes should work in association with:
  - the local RSO;
  - the local Education Authority.
- Police Forces should provide training for Officers who are to work with schools.
- Police should ensure that their provision of RSE includes:
  - pre-input discussions with schools;
  - allowing schools to select RSE experiences from a range of options;
  - regular contacts by Officers who are known to the school;
  - convincing schools of the police commitment and flexibility to fit with a school's needs;
  - keying into planned units of work;
  - recognising the importance of practical activities.
- Health promotion agencies should ensure that road accident prevention is considered when establishing

accident prevention programmes or healthy schools schemes.

- Senior health officials should be encouraged to be signatories to the local authority road safety plan.
- Road safety promotion should be recognised as an essential part of accident-prevention.
- RSE should be part of any accident reduction programmes undertaken with schools.

#### **11.1.3 School champions**

A minority of schools do not provide road safety education and there are gaps in the provision at many of the others:

- Road safety agencies dealing directly with schools should work with and support the school champion for road safety education.
- The agencies should work to establish a champion in schools where there is no champion. Ideally the champion will be a senior teacher or an active Governor.
- Agencies in areas where there is Initial Teacher Training should work to provide all student teachers with training about good practice road safety education in schools.
- The time and effort available for road safety education from teachers should be safeguarded against curriculum pressures. This should be done through the influence of an RSE champion in a senior management position or as a Governor.

#### **11.1.4 Schools**

RSE in schools should be planned:

- A year or more in advance.
- For every year group.
- As part of the school curriculum development plan.

The road and other accident problems considered in the RSE programme should depend upon local circumstances and the specific needs of the pupils.

RSE and training must be implemented effectively:

- Any pedestrian and cyclist training will include supervised exercises on real roads.
- Practical training should be teacher-led but can involve RSOs, police officers, parents and others.

#### **11.1.5 Post-16**

For most young people road safety education ends when they leave secondary school, aged 16, just when the risk of road accident injury is approaching its peak:

- Road safety education should be accessible for all young people.
- Local authorities and other agencies should work to establish road safety education for all students in Further Education.
- Local authorities and other agencies should develop ways to reach young people, who are outside the Further Education system.

## 11.2 Research suggestions

Various teacher and Road Safety Officer respondents mentioned that there was a shortage of road safety resources for use in very rural primary schools:

- Review the road safety problems that are faced by children living in very rural areas and devise an educational course that will help them both to cope with their existing environment and also to prepare them for future exposure to a busy urban environment.

Very few children, aged seven or eight, are offered cyclist skills training although significant numbers are injured playing off-road on bicycles:

- Review leisure cyclist injury among six to nine year old children and develop a skills training course to reduce the incidence of these accidents.

There was little evidence of training in how to be a safe assertive passenger for students in their early teens despite the fact that the incidence of passenger injury peaks during the teenage years:

- Review existing road safety education offered to the middle years at Secondary Schools and devise a course to train teenagers to be safe assertive passengers.

## 12 Acknowledgements

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This research would not have been possible without the help, freely given, of the thousands of teachers, RSOs, Police, Health Promotion Officers, Government Officials and others who completed questionnaires and especially the 200 respondents who took part in the interviews. We are grateful for the advice and friendly criticisms of the DETR Advisory Group (Appendix 1) and the DETR Project Officers, Deirdre O'Reilly and Frank Nunneley.

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## Notes

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- <sup>1</sup> The lack of a requirement on schools contrasts with the requirement on Highway Authorities. 'All Highway Authorities: (a) must carry out studies into accidents arising out of the use of vehicles on their roads; (b) must, in the light of those studies, take *such measures as appear to the authority to be appropriate to prevent such accidents, including the dissemination of information and advice relating to the use of roads, the giving of practical training to road users, the construction, improvement, maintenance or repair of roads and other measures taken in the exercise of their*

powers for controlling, protecting or assisting the movement of traffic on roads, and; (c) in constructing new roads, must take such measures as appear to the authority to be appropriate to reduce the possibilities of such accidents when the roads come into use.' (The Road Traffic Act 1988 (Section 38) – authors' italics).

- <sup>2</sup> At the time of the survey there were 170 road safety units. The number of units changed in April 1997 as a result of the continuing reorganisation of local authorities.
  - <sup>3</sup> On a per capita basis the range was from £1,300 per year per 100,000 population to £68,000 per year per 100,000 population. For authorities who reported a budget, the mean was £12,500 per year per 100,000 population.
  - <sup>4</sup> This quotation reflects the workings of 'health services market', where the local health trust purchases services from the health education unit rather than manage it directly.
  - <sup>5</sup> Other professionals, including RSOs, have expressed similar concerns.
  - <sup>6</sup> Education in the United Kingdom is compulsory for children between 5 and 16 years old. Most education authorities divide education between primary schools catering for children between 5 and 11 years old and secondary schools for children aged 12-16. Some authorities provide separate infant schools, for children 5-6 years old, and junior schools, for children 7-11 years old. A few authorities provide first schools for children 5-7/8 years old and middle schools for children aged 8/9-12 years old. In these authorities secondary schooling starts at age 13.
  - <sup>7</sup> An activity was defined as a class involved in a road safety topic, a class taught road safety through a curriculum subject, a class given pedestrian, cyclist or other road safety training, or a class taken to a road safety event.
  - <sup>8</sup> Age ranges at primary schools:
- |      |           |   |   |   |   |    |    |
|------|-----------|---|---|---|---|----|----|
| Year | Reception | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  | 6  |
| Age  | 5         | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
- <sup>9</sup> The Guardian 10 May 1999.
  - <sup>10</sup> There were no 6<sup>th</sup> Form Colleges in Scotland.
  - <sup>11</sup> Further Education Funding Council.
  - <sup>12</sup> Part of the DETR project investigating the relation between child development and road safety.



## Appendix A: The DETR Advisory Group

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Ms Deirdre O'Reilly	–	Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions.
Mr Geoff Dessent	–	Department of Trade and Industry.
Mr Gordon Hewlett	–	National Governors' Council.
Mr Nigel Horsley	–	Leicestershire County Council.
Mr Chris King	–	ALBRSO.
Ms Liz Knight	–	ALBRSO.
Mr Rod McArthur	–	The Welsh Office.
Fiona McGregor	–	Scottish Road Safety Campaign.
Mr Philip D Moore	–	Lambeth Borough of Newham, Institute of Road Safety Officers.
Mr Chris Purser	–	National Association of Head Teachers.
Mrs Janet Ruiz	–	The Scottish Office.
Mr M de Silva	–	Department of Health.
Mrs R Sturmer	–	AIRSO.
Mrs Carol-Anne Sweeney	–	The Home Office.
Mr Steve Williams	–	Department for Education & Employment.
Mr David Young	–	Department of the Environment (NI).

## Abstract

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This comprehensive review, carried out between 1996 and 1999, included surveys of road safety education (RSE) programmes in schools, and the associated activities of Road Safety Officers, Police Forces, and Health Promotion Units. There is much good practice in RSE across the UK, and examples are documented. Recommendations are made on how to support this, and encourage its transfer to areas where it is missing. A need is seen to emphasise, within local authority plans, any child's entitlement to a developmental RSE programme. Other concerns raised by interviewees included pressures on teacher's time from other curriculum requirements, lack of resources in some agencies, and the need to place road safety within the wider context of health and environmental quality.

## Related publications

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- TRL149 *Road safety education. Good practice in Sheffield* by M Noble, S Kenny, K O'Leary, G Harland. 1995 (price £50, code P)
- TRL148 *Road safety education. Good practice in Hertfordshire* by J Sykes, W Broome, K O'Leary and G Harland. 1995 (price £35, code J)
- CR118 *The involvement of Local Education Authorities in road safety education* by A Singh and M Spear. 1988 (price £20)
- RR101 *The current state of road safety education in primary and middle schools* by M G Spear, A Singh and C Downing. 1987 (price £20)
- CT78.2 Road safety education update (1999-2002) *Current Topics in Transport: selected abstracts from TRL Library's database* (price £20)

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