

European Commission for Road Safety in Armed Forces



**STRATEGY AND ACTION
PLAN 2020 – 2024**

APPROVED BY ECRAF MEMBERS

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INTRODUCTION

The first edition of the ECRAF Strategy and Action plan was approved by the ECRAF Congress in 2009. The reasons to develop a Strategy and Action plan were to strengthen the organizational structure and to improve ECRAF influence within the Armed Forces in Europe by clarifying ECRAF area of interest. The Strategy and Action plan has given the necessary authority to ECRAF to be a relevant partner within the Road Safety environment in Europe.

Most national Armed Forces give priority to road safety as part of their daily safety work as a part of the work environment obligation stated by national law. Highly educated and skilled personnel are the most valuable recourses in the Armed Forces, and we have a duty to avoid unnecessary and tragic losses in road accidents. Such losses have a negative impact on operations, but also the morale in a unit and not to forget the person as life companion, her or his children, parents, relatives and friends.

The ECRAF Congress has decided that ECRAF aspires to be an independent institution recognised across Europe for the best practice within the military environment to prevent road traffic incidents and accidents. The mission for ECRAF is to collect and exchange knowledge. Exchange experience and develop recommendations to improve road safety in the Armed Forces across Europe. To achieve this ambitious vision, and to accomplish the mission, each ECRAF member nation has to work hard over a long period of time, and the work has to be coordinated and assiduous. This Strategy and Action plan will be a tool in this very important work.

Skövde, 28th of May 2020



Johan Pihlström
Sweden
ECRAF President

1. ROAD TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS OUR BIGGEST THREAT!

1.1. The disaster in a civilian perspective

Every year more than 1,35 million persons worldwide lose their lives in road traffic accidents. More than 50 million people are injured each year in road traffic accidents. This means that more people are killed globally in road traffic accidents than in all the ongoing wars in the world. The persons killed or injured in road traffic accidents are still rising globally.

Reducing road traffic deaths and injuries is one of the United Nations Development goals. If we use all our knowledge and the best practise we identified during our work the figures can be reduced. The World Health Organisation (WHO) has estimated that road traffic accidents are the eights leading course of death globally and is higher for all age groups surpassing HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and diarrhoeal diseases. Road traffic accidents were for thirty years ago the ninth largest cause of death.¹ For children and young grownups (5 – 29 years) are road traffic accidents the number one course of death globally. The conclusion is that the development is going in the wrong direction despite all initiatives taken for improved road safety in the global arena.

There are some positive figures in the global darkness. The European Union has more than halved the persons killed in road accidents from year 2000 (59 990 persons) until 2017 (25 257 persons). But sadly, we see that this diminish is going slower than planned to reach the goal of halving the road victims until year 2020 from the year 2010 reference level. And the long-term goal is to reach nearly zero killed in the year 2050. To achieve this all organizations has to make efforts to help reach this. ECRAF is one of these European organizations.

In the European Union are 135 000 persons seriously injured in road traffic accidents. The total costs for all traffic victims and injuries within the European Union estimates to €280 billion every year! This equals approximately 2% of the GDP in the EU.

As a consequence of the worldwide road accident development, we can state that the absence of road safety on the roads is a bigger death and injury threat than military operations. With reference to the WHO estimate, we also can assume that the road safety challenge will increase in the coming years.

1.2. The disaster in a military perspective

Statistics gathered by ECRAF in in previous years shows that about 600 persons are killed and about 9 000 persons injured in road traffic accidents in the national armed forces – on and off duty in a yearly basis with military or military leased vehicles. And not to forget, about 30 civilian persons are killed by military vehicles or military leased vehicles in road traffic accidents every year within the European Union. These numbers comes from ECRAF member nations armed forces statistics shared with ECRAF as organisation.

The repairing costs for the military and military leased vehicles involved in the above referred road traffic accidents, are counted in €10's of billions. These resources could be used in a far better way by the armed forces.

By using the European population as a reference, we can estimate that more than 1 500 persons have been killed and more than 21 000 persons have been injured in Europe in the same type of accidents.

¹ Global status report on road safety 2018, ISBN 978-92-4-156568-4

The figures and estimates in a military perspective show that prevention of road traffic accidents also is a huge challenge for all armed forces in Europe.

2.3 The challenge

The unique nature of military exercises, operations and transports – on and off road – and the fact that the armed forces in particular pose road safety issues to military employees and civilian populations, make this to be a big challenge. The Armed Forces as a large user of specialized vehicles and mobile weapon platforms must take an active part in efforts to prevent road traffic accidents. This will be achieved by thorough and relevant training.

Operations are more likely to be conducted in urban areas or amongst the civilian public with large both wheeled and tracked (armoured) vehicles in nations across the world. The military authorities have a duty of care to minimise loss to its own employees but also the civilian population of the nation in which operations are being conducted.

2. VISIONS

2.1. Vision Zero the basic concept

ECRAF has, like many public and civilian road safety institutions, adopted the concept of Vision Zero which declares that nobody shall be killed or seriously injured in the road traffic. The vision will be achieved not only by providing physical and urban planning and infrastructure, but also – and this is our main part - by vehicle equipment that encourages the kind of road traffic behaviour/education that is required to achieve improved road safety. This also includes individual responsibility for behaviour and action in road traffic.

2.2. ECRAF objective in Europe

ECRAF aspires to be an independent institution recognised across Europe for the best practice within the military environment to prevent road traffic incidents / accidents and injuries whether on operations, exercises or off duty.

3. VALUES

3.1. The intrinsic values

The intrinsic values will always be the basic for the planning and implementation and are the following:

- Respect for rules and laws
- Character and education
- Respect for self and other human beings
- Excellence in performance
- Dedication and commitment
- Teamwork
- Ethics, fair play and honesty
- Community and solidarity
- Courage

4. ASSUMPTIONS

4.1. Health, environment and safety

Prevention of road traffic accidents in the armed forces included as a part of the ongoing activities to promote health, environment and safety should be natural in every nation's road safety work. It is important to educate the military personnel in their own safety and in that way obtain successful activities, exercises and operations without accidents or injuries.

4.2. Integrated road safety

Road safety activities shall be performed as an integrated part of the ordinary work in the Armed Forces.

4.3. Young soldiers and employees most vulnerable target groups

The most vulnerable target groups for the road safety work in the Armed Forces, exactly as in the civilian society, are the young persons and the employees 18 – 25 years old. This is the age group that is most at risk for road traffic accidents. Many of the preventive activities are for this reason directed against this target group. This work also includes all other civilian or military employees – their officers in command (OC) and should also include their families as well.

4.4. Based on facts

ECRAF wants to build decisions and activities on undoubted facts. ECRAF will use relevant research or other studies to ensure the best possible quality of the work. ECRAF wants to spread the knowledge between ECRAF members and other organizations like EU, NATO or other relevant actors in the road safety area – military or civilian.

4.5. Professional competence

ECRAF has today, through its member countries, a lot of different kinds of knowledge and experience which can lead to common equipment, educational programs, web working etc. Participation in ECRAF is an easy way to get and hold contact to road safety specialists and experts from a majority of European armed forces.

4.6. Prevention before repair

The ECRAF members will be active in preventing road traffic accidents rather than concentrating on reacting to accidents/incidents. This role will lead to saving money and other resources for the armed forces and at the same time be good for the over-all economy of the civil society.

5. MISSION

European Commission for Road Safety in the Armed Forces (ECRAF) is an institution of professional military members working to promote road safety within the armed forces.

The ECRAF mission is to collect and exchange knowledge and experience and develop recommendations to improve road safety in armed forces active in Europe.

ECRAF is open to all European armed forces and also to civilian road safety partner organizations of the armed forces. ECRAF delegates should hold executive powers on behalf of their respective nation/organization.

6. STRATEGIES

The strategies are the result of earlier described values and premises.

6.1. Road safety competence centre

ECRAF has as its goal to be a road safety competence centre for all the European armed forces. The competence will include collection and exchange of experience in education, information, analyses and develop recommendations to improve road safety in armed forces.

6.2. Coherent communication strategy

ECRAF wants to develop an active and coherent communication strategy with and within nations. This will be performed by different information channels where the ECRAF website plays an important role.

6.3. Harmonize activities across armed forces

ECRAF wants to harmonize road safety activities across armed forces. This will in the first phase be to develop educational programs in road safety area harmonized between ECRAF member nations as a mean to simplify joint exercises. In the long run ECRAF also want member nations to exchange safety regulations as a way to identify and handle differences so exercises and operations can be worked out more smoothly.

6.4. Build alliances and network

ECRAF will develop and build alliances/coalitions and a strong network with important continental and intercontinental stakeholders in the field of road safety.

ECRAF will in this aspect continue the established contacts with EU and NATO to keep up the formalized cooperation.

7. ACTION PLAN

7.1. Road safety competence centre

- Develop ideas for administration / competence centre:
 - *Recruit new members*
 - *Other national contributions*
- Database activities:
 - *Best practice*
 - *Links to other relevant databases*
- SharePoint / information for different purposes:
 - *Establish network for defined purposes*
 - *SharePoint for requested/wanted information*

7.2. Coherent communication strategy

- Congress
 - *Main subjects discussed in advance*
 - *Documentations to all participants within two weeks after the congress*
 - *Agreements on following up*
- Road safety forum
 - *Road safety forum is the paramount of the congress and have at least one day of the congress program*
- Website
 - *The website shall always be improved and also marketed external*
- Exchange of information
 - *Procedures should be made for exchange of information between the members, for example a forum on website or use of electronic post*

7.3. Harmonize activities across armed forces

- Best practice
 - *Common procedures - sending drivers on mission abroad*
 - *Education of driver's special exercises and operations*
 - *General driver training including load safety (according to international approved standards)*
 - *Basic general contents in campaigns to be used continentally and adjusted for national conditions*

7.4. Build alliances and network

- Establish formalised collaboration with NATO
 - *Follow up established contact*
- Establish formalised collaboration with the European Union (EU)
 - *Follow up established contact*

8. EVALUATION

Periodical evaluation will be an important issue for ECRAF organisation. Every second year it will be sufficient with an evaluation. This issue should be a natural part of the annual report to the General Assembly from the Executive Committee and a part of the congress every year.

Adjusted 28th of May 2020 (President Johan Pihlström, Sweden)

Adjusted 6th of May 2012 (President Oddvar Haagensen, Norway)