

Media information

Road Traffic Injuries in Bermuda 2003 – 2004



BermudaSMARTRISK

1-The Study

BermudaSMARTRISK, a registered charity founded in 2001, is releasing the results of its study titled **Road Traffic Crashes in Bermuda 2003 – 2004**. Carried out by the founder of **BermudaSMARTRISK**, Dr. Joseph Froncioni along with co-authors, Jennifer Attride-Stirling and Marcelo Ramella, this study is the largest of its kind in Bermuda.

Using 2003 and 2004 data on road traffic injury cases presenting at the KEMH Emergency Room, the study looks at the demographics and severity of road injuries for residents and tourists, and formulates recommendations that, it is hoped, will spur public policy changes.

Some of the key findings of the study:

- An average of 5 people per day sustain injuries on our roads.
- Overall, the greatest risk of road injury occurs at age 16.
- From age 16, it takes approximately 5 years for the injury risk to decrease to the population average.
- Peak injury times for residents are during commutes to and from work and on weekends.
- Peak injury time for tourists is mid-afternoon.
- The majority of injured residents are male, while the majority of tourists are women.
- Overall, tourists are 3.2 times more likely to sustain injuries on our roads than residents.
- Female tourists are 6.3 times more likely to sustain injuries on our roads than resident females.
- Between 1993 and 2004, the incidence of road injuries sustained by residents increased by 67%.
- The average age of resident fatalities was 24 compared to 48 for tourists.
- Nearly $\frac{3}{4}$ of the fatalities had sustained major head injuries.

Recommendations:

Young riders:

- Introduction of mandatory high quality motorbike instruction that meets international standards and that is part of the high school curriculum
- Graduated licensing
- Encourage the establishment of a high quality motorcycle riding school in the private sector

Speed and DUI:

- Increased police presence
- Well publicized sobriety checks at peak injury times
- Mandatory breathalyzer and/or blood/urine testing for all persons involved in a road crash
- Increased accessibility to public transport and taxi service during peak injury times
- Speed cameras

Tourists:

- Introduction of an alternative to motorbikes for tourists
- Reduced or free public transportation for tourists

- Increased and standardized point-of-sale rider instruction (although there exists little evidence that this would diminish injury risk)
- Mandatory risk awareness and client selection instruction for cycle livery employees

Car occupants:

- Strict enforcement of seatbelts and child restraints to maintain high compliance

Head injuries:

- Government should strive to fully implement the Helmet Standards Amendment
- Enforce proper helmet fastening

Upward trend in resident injuries:

- Increased spending on public service announcements
- Increased policing that is mindful of the Tumin recommendations
- “Broken windows” approach (“Start by fixing the small things and the big things will follow.”)
- Mandate adherence to traffic laws by government vehicles especially PTB
- Increased penalties for DUI
- Full and proper implementation of the demerit point system
- Encourage the importation of smaller and more environmentally-friendly vehicles

2-The Authors

Joseph Froncioni, MDCM, FRCS(C)

B.Sc – McGill University, Montreal.

MDCM – McGill University, Montreal.

Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons (Canada)

Consultant orthopedic surgeon, KEMH

Former Chairman, Bermuda Road Safety Council

Founder and Chairman of **BermudaSMARTRISK** (a registered charity)

Email: josephfroncioni@logic.bm

Jennifer Attride-Stirling, Ph.D.

BA (Hons) in Psychology & Sociology combined
MSc & PhD in Social Psychology
Health Promotion Coordinator, Bermuda Department of Health

Email: attridestirling@gov.bm

Marcelo Ramella, Ph.D., MBA

CPA - Chartered Public Accountant
MBA - Master in business administration
MSc in Social and Organizational Psychology
PhD in Social Psychology
Assistant Director, Research, Bermuda Monetary Authority (BMA)
Visiting Fellow at the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE)

Email: m.ramella@lse.ac.uk

3-The Charity

BermudaSMARTRISK is a registered charity and is the 1st international chapter of the acclaimed Canadian non-profit organization, **SMARTRISK**. **BermudaSMARTRISK** was founded by Dr. Joseph Froncioni in 2001 in order to address Bermuda's growing road injury problem.

Like its parent organization, **BermudaSMARTRISK** promotes a positive approach towards injury prevention. Targeting young people in particular, we feel that this positive approach is met with much more acceptance than the traditional injunctions and admonitions. The

BermudaSMARTRISK philosophy accepts that risk is part of normal life and in a sense is the “spice of life”. Life devoid of risk would indeed be bland.

The philosophy encourages people to distinguish *smart risk* from *stupid risk* and helps them establish a line of risk they will not cross. To convey the smart risk theme, clear, simple, positive messages have been developed that not only acknowledge risk but also offer tools to navigate that risk. The five key messages are:

Buckle Up.
Look First.
Wear the Gear.
Get Trained.
Drive Sober.

More about **SMARTRISK** Canada at:

www.smartrisk.ca

More about the founding of **BermudaSMARTRISK** in the spring 2001 **SMARTRISK** Canada newsletter **HEADS UP!** at:

www.smartrisk.ca/uploads/cf127136854415703125.pdf

More about Dr. Froncioni’s work on road safety in Bermuda at:

www.smartrisk.ca/contentdirector.aspx?cd=1598&dd=0&sr=1