

BUILDING BRIDGES BETWEEN ISLANDS OF SAFETY:

FROM FRAGMENTATION TO COORDINATION WITH THE HELP OF ASECAP

The fifth annual ASECAP road safety event, dedicated to « **Taking on the challenge of Vision Zero : the European motorways' contribution to integrated action for road safety** », took place in Copenhagen on 6 March 2012. The detailed programme of the event can be consulted [here](#).

Together with ASECAP President Mr. Klaus Schierhackl, representatives of the European Commission, the European Parliament and the Danish EU Presidency set the scene for a dynamic political discussion about how to bring Vision Zero into reality. Bearing in mind the shared responsibility across the road safety triangle (vehicles-infrastructure-drivers) for achieving the ambitious EU objectives both in the short and long term, the panellists stressed the need to strive relentlessly towards Vision Zero, without becoming complacent with the excellent safety results already achieved on Europe's motorways. According to Mr. Maurizio Rotondo, chairman of the ASECAP Permanent Committee in charge of road safety, ASECAP motorways are the safest in Europe *“but even one death is still too much: we are not self-satisfied, we want to do more and we will continue to do the best we can!”* As an example, ASECAP President Mr. Klaus Schierhackl put emphasis on the added value of the motorway operators' continuous gathering of relevant safety knowledge about their networks in order to inform their customers in the best possible way.

Moreover, due to the historical fragmentation of road safety practices between the Member States, efficient action calls for increased coordination, cooperation and exchange of information. While Mr. Szabolcs Schmidt, Head of Unit in charge of road safety at the European Commission's DG MOVE, underlined that the policy-makers count on the expertise and experience of the ASECAP road operators, Ms. Anne E. Jensen MEP added: *“In any event, we need to provide a platform for exchange of information, preferably with a coordinator that has the power to get things done”*. As a conclusion, ASECAP Secretary-General Mr. Kallistratos Dionelis stated: *“What we need is common sense. Before taking action, we must ask ourselves whether all the relevant stakeholders are involved. At European level, that can best be guaranteed by, for instance, a road safety coordinator under the auspices of the European Commission.”*

Road infrastructure operators play a fundamental role when it comes to exploiting such coordination potential, namely by exchanging best practices between themselves and making available their field experience for informed decision-making. In this respect, Ms. Jensen and Mr. Schmidt stressed that ASECAP is a key stakeholder and a reliable partner for integrated road safety action, as illustrated in practice during the conference when ASECAP members and their partners presented and discussed how they implement road infrastructure and tunnel safety, deal with vulnerable users, tackle specific issues such as wrong-way drivers and promote safe behaviour through targeted education and campaigns.

Technical presentations made:

- A. Canel (ASFA): *Implementation of EU legislation on road infrastructure safety: state of play and challenges*
- B. Lautner (ASFINAG): *Dealing with vulnerable users: motorcyclists and workers*
- T. Tollefsen (Norwegian Public Road Administration): *Implementation of tunnel safety in Norway* (+ accompanying video [here](#))
- R. Arditi (AISCAT-SINA): *Best practices for education and road safety*
- H. T. Thomsen (Danish Road Directorate): *Development in traffic safety in Denmark*
- H. Ludvigsen (Danish Road Directorate): *Wrong-way drivers (not yet available)*
- H. Ludvigsen (Danish Road Directorate): *Protection of workers on motorways (not yet available)*
- U. Eilersen (Sund & Bælt Holding A/S, Øresundsbron I/S): *Traffic safety at the Storebælt Link and the Øresund Link*
- K. S. Andersen (Sund & Bælt Holding A/S, Femern A/S): *How traffic safety has been planned for at the Fehmarn Belt Link*
- J. Sølund (Danish Road Safety Council) - *Traffic safety campaigns – we meet the road users at eye level* (+ accompanying videos [here](#) and [here](#))