

Protocol for the Investigation of Crashes Involving M1 and N1 Cars and Vans

Final Report for

Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions

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Executive Summary

An on-the-scene investigation of a road traffic accident is one method of capturing accident data. The advantage of this methodology is that the quality and accuracy of the data obtained is potentially enhanced over studies in which the data are obtained by other means. Data collected from an on-the-scene investigation can be used to determine the cause of the accident, to determine the cause of the injury and in the development of potential counter-measures.

There are several pre-requisites for establishing an on-the-scene study. These are as follows;

- the establishment of a risk assessment exercise for an on-the-scene project:
- identification of a suitable area for operations where the likely pool and distribution of accident types and accident severities can be pre-determined:
- developing an effective means for obtaining notification of accidents:
- adopting an effective means of rapid access to the scene:
- utilisation of effective data capture procedures whilst on-the-scene using trained accident investigators - this involves the development of a suitable protocol:
- effective retrospective investigation techniques:
- use of appropriate accident reconstruction techniques:
- provision of suitable data storage provision for future analytical work.

This report is concerned with the above pre-requisites and therefore contains the following sections;

- a review of previous and on-going on-the-scene accident investigations:
- the development of research objectives for an on-the-scene project in respect of anticipated future research questions:
- a protocol for the investigation of M1 and N1 cars and vans using an on-the-scene investigation methodology:
- a review of a visit to the Accident Research Unit based at the Medical University of Hannover for the purposes of consultation with members of an existing on-the-spot investigation team (including some on-the-spot investigations):
- a review of a sampling system that has been developed by the VSRC in order that data captured for a future on-the-spot study can be made representative of the UK national perspective: and
- a review of data capture, storage and dissemination equipment that has been appraised by the VSRC for the purposes of performing an on-the-scene project.

During the preparation of this report, the VSRC have prepared the ground-work for performing an on-the-scene study which has involved developing links with the Nottinghamshire police and identifying an area within Nottinghamshire from which a sample of accidents can be obtained. A mechanism for notification and early arrival at the scene has also been developed and consequently trained members of the VSRC are capable of commencing an on-the-scene study at short notice.