

CHALLENGES TO BRIDGE IN THE REALISATION OF STRATEGY 2000-2004

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1 BACKGROUND: THE ROAD SAFETY PROBLEM

“1,750 jumbo jets each carrying 400 persons crash this year.” This kind of headline would bring worldwide coverage and attention. Governments would set up International Commissions and the air travel industry would become bankrupt overnight because no one would ever fly again.

Yet this is the same order of deaths, (700,000) which occur worldwide each year through road accidents but because they happen one or two at a time, society hardly registers interest. Over 700,000 deaths and over 10 million crippled or injured per year. Six million deaths and 60 million persons crippled or injured in road accidents during the next 10 years. Is this acceptable to society as we move into the new Millennium?”

- Dr. Alan Ross (1999)

Throughout the world there is an acknowledgement that road safety is a major social problem, yet literature on this subject suggests that in most parts of the world, road safety has not gained its rightful place on the priority list of government expenditure. Ross (1999: 44) makes the observation that whilst road accident deaths and injuries are declining in the developed countries, such deaths only amount to around 25 per cent of the global total of road accident deaths and do not “begin to compensate for the growing problem in the developing world” (Ross, 1999: 44).

It is notable that even though the developing countries have only 32 per cent of the total motor vehicle fleet, “they contribute around 75 per cent of the total global road accident deaths. Thus the fact that OECD¹ countries have done well in recent decades does not mean that the war is over. (But) ...that the battle ground has moved over to the developing world” (Ross, 1999: 44). Apart from the observation that road safety is a worldwide problem, policy analysts, road safety experts and other interested parties agree that the road safety situation in South African is equally unacceptable.

1.1 Defining the Problem

If road safety is a “battle” that has been won elsewhere in the world, then the critical question is: *how has it been won?* In other words, what are the “battle tactics” or strategies that have been used in those countries, and what are the lessons that the developing world can draw from these approaches. Whilst acknowledging the importance of this question, it is also necessary to appreciate the fact that some of the dynamics that militate against potential successes that could be achieved in terms of reducing road deaths are unique to the South African environment. Following from this observation, it should be stated that even though road ‘unsafety’ is a problem in its own right, the

¹ Organisation For Economic Cooperation And Development – member countries of this organisation are generally the wealthy countries of this world. Thus the acronym OECD, is generally used to refer to the “developed” or the “highly motorised” countries of the world.

problem under observation in this paper is not the road ‘unsafety’ problem per se, but the challenge of developing an effective approach for tackling this problem.

An approach that seeks to analyse a methodology or an approach to a problem is referred to as the meta-analysis, or the ‘analysis of an analysis.’ Introducing this approach to problem analysis, Parsons (1995: 1) says: “when we engage in meta analysis we are considering the methods and approaches used in the study of public policy and the discourse and language which it employs.” It should therefore be understood that the research problem addressed in this paper is *an observed problem* with the approaches through which the road safety problem has hitherto being tackled. The idea is to highlight some of the flaws of these approaches as challenges that will have to be bridged if the strategy proposed in *Strategy 2000-2004: An End to Carnage on South Africa’s Roads* is to stand any chance of impacting on the carnage on our roads in a meaningful way.

2 RESPONDING TO THE CARNAGE ON SOUTH AFRICA’S ROADS

*We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.*

T.S. Eliot, *Four Quartets*

2.1 What is a strategy?

Processes that produce lofty documents commonly known as strategic plans and the whole notion of strategic planning are often accorded a status they do not deserve. The truth is that a strategy is nothing more than *a statement of intentions* and *organisational priorities*; it is a plan with no inherent value in itself. The essence of strategic planning is therefore not the production of a blueprint document, but the development of an organisation or a nexus of organisations that are managed with a keen sense of strategic priorities. What does this mean in the context of the discussion document issued by the Ministry of Transport - *Strategy 2000-2004: An End to Carnage on South Africa’s Roads*?

The Ministry of Transport has produced a discussion document that constitutes a draft plan of what is intended. In other words, *Strategy 2000-2004: And End to Carnage on South Africa’s Roads* is not yet the intended comprehensive road safety strategy, but a baseline out of which this strategy is meant to emerge. With this understanding, this paper intends to highlight some of the specific challenges that need to be bridged in order to realise the strategic intents contained in this discussion document. The thinking here is that creating an awareness of the factors that may be detrimental to the realisation of these strategic intents, will not only result in a strategy that is capable of achieving substance, but that which will also produce a cadre of managers who understand the notion of managing by strategic objectives or a goal-directed approach.

The view held in this paper is that the real value of a strategy can only be realised when its intended results are achieved. We therefore subscribe to the view that, “the most challenging aspect of strategic planning for organisational change and development is not developing a viable plan (although that is a challenge) but getting the whole mass of senior and middle managers to manage strategically, i.e. in the spirit and intentions of the plan” (Bunning, 1992:58), In other words, the real test of the success or the failure of Strategy 2000-2004 will only be evident when we reflect back to check if the objectives for which the strategic plan was developed were realised or not.

2.2 The Contextual Background to Strategy 2000-2004

The combination of the complex dynamic that characterises intergovernmental relations, the extent and the nature of operations required for the actualisation of the spirit of the proposed plan all point to the fact that it would be naïve to assume that the comprehension of its strategic intents is going to be unproblematic.

Apart from the challenges that may militate against the realisation of the intended strategic objectives of this plan, it is also necessary to reflect on the fact that this discussion document attempts to respond to a very complex situation, where the problems are large and the solutions uncertain. It is with this understanding that this paper proposes that the approach adopted in respect to the whole process should be well informed, and sufficiently grounded on a proper analysis of both the internal and the external environmental factors, which constitute the context within which the objectives of Strategy 2000-2004 are to be pursued. In an effort to characterise the background that provides the context for the emergence of this plan, it is necessary to reflect on the following observations on the approaches that adversely affect strategic planning in the public sector:

- ❖ In the first place, it is important to understand that a process like the one that led to the formulation of the discussion document for Strategy 2000-2004 does not normally emerge out of internal processes in most government departments, but that it is *often introduced by mandate*.
- ❖ Secondly, it is necessary to appreciate the fact that the type of *lateral thinking required by strategic planning* is often lacking in government departments.
- ❖ Thirdly, it is often stated that strategic planning, by definition, challenges many *traditional beliefs and basic assumptions* embedded in the organisational culture of most public sector institutions.
- ❖ Finally, the systems and structures that govern the functioning of most public sector organisations are not geared for the entrepreneurial spirit that is necessary to induce the debates that can result in improved *organisational performance*. It is therefore important to realise that organisational performance is the function of people performance, and where performance is not sufficiently recognised or rewarded, there is usually no incentive to perform.

2.2.1 Prominent Approaches to Strategic Planning in the Public Sector

The four observations noted above should assist us in understanding and appreciating the principal dynamics that underpin the following approaches introduced in Bunning (1992) as the three prominent approaches to strategic planning in the public sector. Most of the participants in this conference should have no difficulty in recognising the manifestation of these approaches in our own road traffic environment:

1. *A ritual* – this is where strategic planning is performed not with a view to achieving a specific objective, but “essentially to meet the expectation or demands of others – particularly central government policy or funding bodies.” In this approach, the focus and attention is “on *the production of a plan on paper*, so as to be eligible to acquire the desired resource inputs” (1992:55 – author’s italics). Experience with the *Arrive Alive* provincial business plans suggests that as soon as decisions on resources are made, the energy and attention given to producing the plans dissipates thus suggesting that in some quarters, strategic planning is viewed as a ritual or the means of obtaining *Arrive Alive* funds. The problem with this approach is that the underlying dynamic to the planning process is one of *conformity* and/or *cynicism* rather than a genuine intention to impact on the prevailing socio-technical problem of road safety.

2. *A decision-making process* – in this approach to strategic planning, “the focus and attention are typically on the technical feasibility of various alternatives proposed, rather than the situation as an interactive political/social/technical system. Implementation is seen as an essential operational detail and the underlying dynamic is one of rational, impersonal goal setting and decision making” (Bunning, 1992:56). Again, experience with the previous phases of the *Arrive Alive* campaign suggests that very little attention was given to community-driven approaches, involvement of NGO’s and the general public in the development of the plans and the need to establish the basis for a collective effort to the realisation of the intended objectives. This observation suggests that the underlying dynamic to the *Arrive Alive* processes has been that of an impersonal goal setting and technical decision-making. Similar to the previous one, this approach also fails to appreciate the role of people as the necessary catalysts for transplanting words from paper into tangible and actionable behaviours. As such, planning is viewed as a paper exercise where neither those that are responsible for the implementation (i.e. the officials) and those that are to be impacted upon by the proposed plans (i.e. the general public) are consulted on the proposed strategy. It is therefore not surprising that in both cases the goals are either not met, or in the case of the *Arrive Alive* campaign, the goals that are met are not satisfactory to external observers and the general public. Given the underlying dynamic that informs this approach, those that are involved with the planning processes are convinced that they are consistently achieving their targets (i.e. the reduction of fatalities by 5 per cent year on year). This remains the case, regardless of the perceptions of the outsiders and the general public (who are viewed as the uninformed).
3. *A consensus-seeking process* – the purpose here is to develop a plan that is “*not objectionable to any of the major power holders who would be affected...* In the process, the needs of *the clients* (i.e. the road-users) and *the public* tend to be subordinated to the expressed needs or sensitivities of the power holders.” It follows that the underlying dynamic of this approach is “political bargaining and contracting, on the assumption that there are disparate interests which are irreconcilable” (Bunning, 1992:56). Given the provisions of our constitutional regime and its specification on concurrent powers amongst the three levels of government, it is clear that this dynamic is very prominent in almost every process that involves some form of collaboration between the three tiers of government. However, the question that begs for an answer, in this scenario, is whether there are *disparate interests* and *irreconcilable objectives* between the three tiers of government, and if so, why would a situation like that be allowed? It therefore remains unclear that it possible for the policy objectives of the three tiers of *one government* to be irreconcilable when the constitution that governs each of these layers makes specific provisions on questions such as the overall policy framework for transport, and on how such a framework should be developed.

The observation pertaining to the manifestation and their underlying dynamics that inform the approaches discussed above suggests that there are typical problems associated with these approaches. It is also not difficult to appreciate that, to the extent that each of these approaches have manifested themselves in the management of the road safety environment in South Africa, they have militated against the true potential of the Road Traffic Management Strategy (RTMS) of 1996 and the previous four phases of the *Arrive Alive* campaign. In the first approach, where the goal is basically to acquire the funds or comply with external requirements, “the subsequent pressure of everyday events tends to overwhelm the rather fragile commitment to the particular course of action” (Bunning, 1992:56). In the second approach, where the planning process is founded on the basis of a false assumption that complex socio-technical questions can be resolved by means of a reductionist, science- or technology-driven answers, major social and human factors emerge and disrupt the original plan because little consideration was given to “all the important vectors of

influence in the first place” (Bunning, 1992:56). Finally, in the consensus-seeking approach, the potential of the RTMS and the *Arrive Alive* campaign to have any real impact on the safety problem were undermined by the “compromises which were made in order to get agreement of the various parties” (Bunning, 1992:56).

2.3 A Conceptual Approach to Strategic Planning

The preceding discussion suggests that to increase chances of success for the unfolding process of developing a comprehensive road safety management strategy, a different approach is needed. The approach proposed here is aimed at developing a mechanism for developing and managing the proposed strategy for ending the carnage on our roads. Equally important is to realise that the defining characteristic of the approach proposed here is that it is underpinned by the dynamic of *openness, synergistic interactions and collaborative learning*². In the collaborative approach, strategic planning is viewed as “a method for transforming experience into knowledge as a basis for future action” (Bunning, 1992:57). The fact that such an approach *relies on the shared experiences of all the participants as the basis of its content*, means that the outcome sought in this approach is not a blueprint for success, but the establishment of a commonly shared basis for effectively responding to the environmental context.

The ensuing discussion should therefore be seen as an attempt aimed at capturing some of the fundamental tenets of this approach, which will require the attention of key decision-makers and the policy makers in an effort to increase the prospects of success for *Strategy 2000-2004: An End to Carnage on South Africa’s Roads*. For purposes of this discussion, we will only focus on the following three critical elements of developing such an approach: the need for *a shared vision of the desired future scenario*, the need for *convergence of viewpoints* and the need for *developing an enabling environment*.

2.3.1 Developing a Shared Vision

Clearly one of the missing elements in each of the approaches identified by Bunning as the ones that dominate strategic planning in the public sector, is *a shared vision of what is intended*. It is also self-evident that developing a shared vision of strategic intents requires a different approach from the type of approaches discussed above. Experience obtained from similar processes suggests that the meeting of minds that results in the development of a shared vision also produces the commitment necessary to work towards the realisation of such a vision.

Secondly, when the desired state of affairs is developed as a collective effort, the need for compromises is undermined because all the participants become co-owners of the vision. And finally, as a collective they develop an appreciation of the social and human factors that are likely to be detrimental to the achievement of their vision.

Dr. Abdulah Omar has also recognised the fact that one of the missing ingredients in existing efforts aimed at ending the carnage on our roads is the absence of *a shared vision of what is intended*. In trying to address this situation, he says: “What I am specifically inviting you to do is to *join the debate* around the new strategic perspectives that are *reorganising this thinking*. Let’s put all of *our collective energy* into *reaching consensus* on these perspectives and *agreeing on the action priorities* that follow from them – and then let the delivery agenda start to roll” (Omar, 2000:3 – author’s italics).

² Different strategists use different names for the type of approach that is proposed here. Some scholars, refer to this approach as ‘*organisational learning*’, others call it ‘*a collaborative approach*’ and yet others will refer to it as ‘*explorative convergence*’. The view held here is that it really should not matter what label is attached to such an approach, as long as we recognise its defining characteristics.

2.3.2 Convergence Through a Partnership for Road Safety

As evidenced by the words quoted above, it is heartening to note that the approach that is advocated for in the discussion document produced by the Ministry of Transport is the type of approach that is proposed in this paper. Of critical importance, however, is the need to confront the reality that without the establishment of a proper context for communicating the strategic intent of this discussion document, there is a danger that its essence and its distinguishing features may not be discernable to all the parties concerned, which is one of the primary motivations for which the present paper has been written. The view held here is that the approach called for in the discussion document for *Strategy 2000-2004: An End to Carnage on South Africa's Roads*, is so fundamental to the success prospects of this strategy that unless its essence is fully grasped, the foundation for the intended action will be severely compromised.

However, before we proceed with the discussion of the distinguishing features of the approach that we claim is advocated for in Strategy 2000-2004, it is necessary to explain the assumption that we make in this regard. In seeking to clarify this question, it is necessary to quote directly from the opening paragraph of the foreword to Strategy 2000-2004: "We have reached a crossroads in road safety in South Africa. Three consecutive years of the *Arrive Alive* campaign have taught us all some important lessons, which must now be generalised across the whole range of road traffic safety and management disciplines, and internalised by all South Africans who are *committed to ending the carnage on our roads*" (Omar, 2000:1 – author's italics).

It is primarily because of this statement and similar viewpoints expressed in the speeches by the Minister of Transport that the conclusion arrived at in this paper, is that Strategy 2000-2004 is aimed at transforming historical experiences into knowledge that will establish a basis for future action. It should also be noted that the spirit captured in these words, is understood to be the first distinguishing feature of a collaborative approach. On the basis of this evidence, one can lay the claim that the collaborative approach proposed in this paper is not different from the approach that is advocated for in the discussion document for Strategy 2000-2004.

The second distinguishing characteristic of the collaborative approach advocated for in Strategy 2000-2004 is that it views strategic planning as a process that creates opportunities for the representatives of the involved parties to *interact in a synergistic way*. According to Bunning, the very aim of this approach is to present a platform through which "everyone's understanding of the dynamics of the current situation and the nature of a more desirable situation grows and becomes more *convergent*" (1992:57). Again, it is necessary to clarify this fact as one of the founding strategic intents of Strategy 2000-2004, hence the reference to the following words: "Just as importantly, we need to build much stronger and more *active partnerships* between government, road transport associations, trade unions, business sponsors, schools, churches and the many other grass-roots organisations that can help society as a whole *to take ownership* of the many projects which make up *an active culture of road safety*" (Omar, 2000:1 – author's italics).

Assuming that it is still not self-evident, let's recap the Minister's invitation to his colleagues in government, the public servants entrusted with the responsibility for safety and the South African public as contained in this discussion document that is meant to provide a foundation for Strategy 2000-2004: He is inviting you and I to collaborate with the government departments (at all levels of government) and other important decision-makers; to work together in a spirit of no compromise on the critical principles that are fundamental to success. He is also inviting all of us to develop a common perspective of the desired future, to agree on the priorities that follow from such a shared vision, and more importantly, to commit to a process that is genuinely aimed at changing the current state of affairs. Given the strength and the clarity of this invitation it is evident that all those who have any concern for the prevailing state of affairs in the road traffic environment, have been empowered to intervene in a meaningful way to the development of a comprehensive road safety strategy for South Africa.

It is also notable that in the spirit of the collaborative approach called for here, Dr. Abdulah Omar does not elevate himself to the status of a school principal by prescribing the process that is to emerge out of his invitation. The challenge of developing a genuinely collaborative approach aimed at resolving the carnage on South African roads by developing, and working at the implementation of a comprehensive road safety strategy is left to you and me. Following from these assumptions, the view expressed in this paper is that only a well-founded and informed approach can produce the process that is necessary to produce the type of inputs that will truly reflect that all of our collective energy is working synergistically with a view to reaching consensus on a South African road safety perspective, i.e. our shared vision of the desirable future state of affairs.

2.3.3 Creating an enabling environment

Unfortunately it is going to require more than an appreciation of the need for operating on the basis of a shared vision to produce the type of process that is required for the evolution of such a vision. As pointed out in the previous section, the development of a collectively shared vision requires an approach whose underlying dynamic is genuine collaboration and openness, which can only result from the commitment of the leadership of the planning processes to create a platform for such a process.

It is also essential to realise that the development of such an approach lies in the recognition of the following fundamentals: “There are *no quick fixes* or *one-off solutions*. While we are currently putting a great deal of energy into shaking things up, we are at the same time fully aware that *road safety is a long term, complex end-product which has to be tackled in a systematic, incremental way*” (Omar, 2000:3 – author’s italics). Realising that the systematic approach that is called for here may be seen as undermining the need for urgent action, it is important to point out that urgency without substance is congruent to a theory that cannot be validated in practice; or to bring it closer to home, it is like introducing a speed limit without the means for enforcing it. In short, it is a travesty.

On the other hand, being conscious of the fact that there are no short cuts to addressing the endemic road ‘unsafety’ problem points to the need for the creation of an enabling environment as an essential ingredient for developing a methodical approach for tackling this problem. Equally important is the need to take note of the critical elements that define a systematic approach to tackling this problem, the following are some of the elements that have been identified in this regard: “It is about *planning*, getting *good data* to support decision-making, *cooperation at all levels*, and the ability to *design systems* which can respond fast and *flexibility to immediate crises* without destabilising the integrity of *tested programmes* and *structures* that are already in place” (Omar, 2000:3 – author’s italics).

In tandem with highlighting the elements of a systematic approach, it is also necessary to explain the need for creating of an enabling environment as one of the critical aspects of a collaborative and yet systematic approach to the management of this strategic agenda for change and development. Following from this realisation it is important to consider the following four compelling reasons for the creation of an enabling environment for the management of a strategic development agenda:

- ❖ In the first place, the operational environment within which the majority of public sector managers were groomed required of them to be ‘nuts and bolts’ thinkers where prescriptions of what is to be done were developed and handed from above; a typical school principal scenario. It is therefore a daunting task for the public sector manager to find himself/herself being expected to think imaginatively about alternatives to what is being done. As clearly expressed in Bunning (1992:55), “it is wellnigh impossible to get a genuine strategic plan out of a group of managers, who do not, by nature, think strategically.” The driver of the strategic development agenda should therefore be cognisant of this reality, and also recognise as one of his/her challenges

the need to develop amongst members of his/her team the notion of what is strategic and what is not. As many government departments have learned the hard way, failing to appreciate this reality is likely to frustrate the development agenda in the sense that the actions of the managers will always lapse into the familiar and thus wobble the strategic thrust of what is new and different.

- ❖ Secondly, it is important to grasp the fact that the road ‘unsafety’ problem manifests itself in a complex environment of multiple agencies with varying levels of expertise, experience and technical know-how. This point also highlights the importance of adopting an approach underpinned by openness, and which is tuned to empower not only the stakeholders, but the key role-players as well. It is therefore necessary to appreciate the fact that public sector managers are managing in an environment that is characterised by complexity and where “the problems are large and the solutions unclear and perhaps unattainable in any 100 per cent sense” (Bunning, 1992:57).
- ❖ The third and perhaps the most telling of the challenges to introducing a collaborative approach that is characterised by a genuine concern for people, relates to the appreciation of the dynamic of “personal and organisational learning, rather than the defence of individual beliefs and interests” (Bunning, 1992:57). The difficulty with this particular aspect stems from the fact that it is not only a challenge for the traditional public sector manager, but also for the driver of the process of change, i.e. the person or group of persons entrusted with the responsibility of transforming the way things have always been done. The difficulty with this aspect stems from our inherent need for control and predictability. One cannot approach a planning situation with a genuinely open mind, unless he/she is able to let go of the need for control and for ensuring a particular type of results or outcomes.
- ❖ The fourth reason that explains the need for the creation of an enabling environment, relates to need for the appreciation of the fact that it is not easy for a person entrusted with the leadership of a process to be open about his/her own limitations and to acknowledge (in the manner that he/she conducts him/herself) that not all the answers are known to him/her or to any of the participants involved with the development of a strategic process. Ironically, it is this very fact that lies at the foundation of an approach whose underlying dynamic is one of openness, where all views are accorded an equal status and importance. In the final analysis, “genuine collaborative exploration requires a willingness to leave behind vested interests for the sake of finding *answers which are in accord with the real needs of the actual situation*” (Bunning, 1992:57 – author’s emphasis) and not necessarily those of that the leader would have liked to see or had hoped for.

Contrary to how the preceding discussion may sound, the intention is not to disempower or to discourage the energetic and enthusiastic politicians, government officials and experts alike. The intention here is simply to develop a deep sense of appreciation of the task at hand, and thus creating an environment that facilitates rather than hindering the process of delivery. In essence, the enabling environment is about the creation of a set of norms that encourage diagnosis and learning, and used in the collaborative approach, it presents “a very powerful self-correcting mechanism and guidance system for any (development) programme.” In other words, this approach is not only to be employed at the planning stage, but as “a regular cycle repeated throughout the programme” (Bunning, 1992:57). However, unless there is commitment for the creation of such an environment, which needs to be demonstrated in a tangible way through proper *resourcing*, the whole exercise will remain a pipe dream.

3 STRATEGY 2000-2004: ESSENTIAL PLANNING INGREDIENTS

In the first place, if it is true that the *Arrive Alive* Campaign has consistently reduced road deaths by a margin of 5 per cent or more, then there is no need for another strategy that intends to achieve no more than what is being achieved currently. Accordingly, Bunning (1992:59) makes the following important observation, “if the organisation is already performing up to your vision, then what you have is not a vision, but a sense of satisfaction with how things are.” In other words, for Strategy 2000-2004 to have any significant meaning to the South African road user, it should aim to achieve something that will positively impact on the existing reality and thus have a real meaning for the general public and not only for the officials, their technical advisors and experts and the politicians.

Secondly, for the scope of required changes to be considered strategic, they should be sufficiently robust and of such a profound nature that they could not be achieved as part of the normal operations achievable within a given financial year. Clearly a plan that can be achieved in the normal course of events is *an operational plan* rather than *a strategic* one. It is therefore important to distinguish between the set of strategic intentions contained in Strategy 2000-2004 (whose lifespan is five years) from the *Arrive Alive 2000-2001: Business Plan*, an operational plan to be realised within a period of one financial year. This distinction is important for purposes of differentiating between the short-term imperatives of the operational plan and the medium to long-term objectives of the strategy.

Thirdly, for a strategy to be worth its name, it should aim to reposition the operations of an organisation (or in the case of Strategy 2000-2004, a nexus of organisations across the three tiers of government) in some significant way. This means that the success of the proposed strategy will not lie in an attempt to address every little detail, but should seek to focus the attention of participating departments on a few strategic change priorities. Each of the four to five selected priorities will need to be managed as projects on the basis of project management techniques in order to accord them the strategic importance that they deserve.

In the fourth place, it should be stated that no strategy is worth the paper that it is written on, unless the means for the realisation of its objectives are also made available. To avoid a situation where strategic planning is reduced to a talk shop, the drivers of the process should ensure that resources for funding action plans that arise out of the intended objectives of the strategy are also planned for in a budget and made available for this purpose. On the other hand, it is also important to develop rigorous procedures for monitoring and evaluating whether the resources made available for the purpose of pursuing the objectives of the strategy are actually utilised for this purpose, rather than subsidising other operational activities. It should also be noted that, to the extent that proper business plans of intended actions can be demonstrated, resources may also be accessed from external sources such as the European Union, as part of the cooperation deals struck between our President and the heads of state of the governments represented by this organisation. It is also important for government to appreciate the fact that a rigorous, structured and a systematic pursuit of these objectives requires the involvement of external role-players as well. For instance, by involving private sector concerns in these planning processes, one can draw on their expertise, obtain their buy-in and thus make them co-owners of the shared vision being developed. More importantly, in so far as the business plans can demonstrate their operational viability, government can also make use the private sector as additional channels of funding or as agents for sourcing other funding channels.

And finally, viewing a strategy as a statement of intended changes means that there should be an annual review of progress attained. Establishing such a review mechanism enables the decision makers to develop a barometer through which both the successes and failures of the strategic objectives are assessed on a continuous basis. Another objective that can be achieved through regular review processes is the stimulation of continuous organisational learning opportunities and

to check if the current strategic projects are sufficient for the development of the desired future state of affairs.

4 CONCLUDING REMARKS

One of the assumptions that constitute the foundation of this paper is that road safety contributes to improvement of the welfare of society. In the first place, if road crashes can be prevented and their consequences reduced, the loss of resources (R 13.6 billion in 1998) that they cause would be avoided. Secondly, through improved levels of safety, resources can be saved which otherwise would be devoted to the relief of the consequences of road crashes. In other words, where the first category is concerned with *direct costs* that result from road crashes, such as production losses (due to the incapacitation of crash victims) and damage to capital goods; the second is concerned with *indirect costs* that are a consequence of road crashes – medical treatment, hospital costs for the rehabilitation of accident victims, production and welfare costs, repair of property damage, police investigation costs, legal and court procedures and insurance administration costs.

What does all this have to do with the development of a process for managing the strategic intents of Strategy 2000-2004? The view held here is that this strategy is proposed within the context of the developmental framework whose very foundation is the improvement of the welfare of society and the optimal use of the limited resources available to public sector institutions. It is therefore appropriate to draw on the following observation paraphrased from Heymans (1996:28): the challenge of real transformation lies in the government's ability to develop institutions which can deliver on its development policies.

This observation is pertinent here because this paper has attempted to confront the question of delivery on road safety policy objectives. As already indicated, the assumption behind this paper is that through a collaborative approach to the management of the policy processes, (1) a dramatic reduction of road deaths and injuries can be achieved; and (2) a significant economic saving (resulting from the reduction of the costs of road accidents) can be realised. By achieving these objectives, Strategy 2000-2004 would have made a significant contribution to the country's development agenda because it would free the resources that are consumed by road deaths and injuries to be utilised in other worthy causes.

Finally, it is believed that the conceptual approach proposed here stands a better chance of impacting on the problem in a meaningful way because it will result in a situation where road safety is managed in a goal-directed manner, with clear lines of accountability and unambiguous roles and responsibilities. On the other hand, adopting such an approach will assist with the skilling of the public sector manager and thus enable him/her to respond to the mandate of his/her department in a less cynical way; it will clarify objectives and thus begin to challenge some the deeply held views; but more importantly, it will create an enabling environment for the delivery agenda to begin to roll.

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