ROLE OF PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS IN ROAD SAFETY
Sibylle Rupprecht
International Road Federation
srupprecht@irfnet.org, www.irfnet.org

Background
When the first road fatality occurred in 1896 after a pedestrian was hit by a car, it was hoped that this would never happen again. Today, with over 1.2 million reported road fatalities and 50 million injuries, we are far from such a statement. According to the WHO, these figures are indicated to increase by about 65% over the next 20 years.

It is currently recognised that road accidents are rarely the result of a single factor but a series of random events and an interaction of three elements: the user, the road and the vehicle. Significant improvements in road safety can only be achieved if we address all the components of the road transport system, including combinations of them.

Building safe road infrastructure can show immediate results – as forgiving roads are safer for their users. But the biggest challenge when tending to infrastructure works is funding. Traditional sources of funding are increasingly incapable of meeting the needs of public works and most of the times put at risk the ‘road safety’ factor, which is often neglected.

Partnerships are essential, not only for improving road infrastructure, but also for educating drivers and road users. Partnerships must engage community, government, business, and civil society.

This paper will demonstrate practical examples of successful partnership in road safety projects which have contributed to decreasing road fatalities.

Introduction
The road sector is becoming one of the fastest growing sectors in terms of private participation, funding and need for cooperation. This sector differs in financing from other private financing in that governments tend to be very intimately involved, thus government participation and how it sets the private sector environment is critically important. Partnerships do not limit themselves to financial participation. Partnerships with the private sector are also important to strengthen business participation and to involve civil society.

Examples of successful partnerships
Vigiroute (France)
Road accidents accounted for over 60% of work-related fatalities with Eurovia, an international contractor. Signing a partnership charter with the government to reduce the number of accidents, they created the Vigiroute road accident prevention plan, aiming at continuously implement driver training for its entire experienced driver staff and to share its expertise to an audience as broad as possible.

The A77 Safety Group (Scotland)
The major transport corridor A77 consists of mixed traffic and different carriageways, and was reputed as one of the most dangerous roads in Scotland. The partnership involved owners and managers of the route, the emergency services, and the local authorities and pressure groups. Focus was put on engineering, education, enforcement, and encouragement.

Laiki Insurance and Road Safety (Cyprus)
“Road safety concerns people’s lives and is the responsibility of all of us” using this as their slogan, Laiki Insurance in collaboration with the Traffic Department of the Police Headquarters, took the steps to lead a Road Safety Week in a campaign to educate children on “Safety…from the first steps”.

The Scrg Nord Picardie License (France)
The Colas Group, of which Scrg Nord Picardie is a member, signed a Road Safety Charter with the French Inter-minister Road Safety Delegation. Scrg Nord-Picardie decided to take it a step further and create its own Road Safety Challenge aimed to increase awareness among its national-wide staff. Employees were provided a Corporate Driver License containing 12 points which linked to the driver’s behavior. Those who exhibited exemplary behavior were rewarded by earning points on their Scrg Nord-Picardie license and entered into the national competition.
The City of Tshwane Road Safety Master Plan (South Africa)

The local government of Tshwane was facing a problem in areas with a lot of pedestrians which resulted in high number of fatalities. They decided to involve government departments, road safety organizations, community leaders, civil society, private sector, enforcement divisions as well as educational institutions to meet the challenge. A master plan was elaborated and implemented. The road safety master plan has proven to be sustainable and has won many awards across the nation for reducing injuries and deaths on their roads.

Conclusion

Road safety is an important issue that should be taken into account when designing infrastructure projects. However, infrastructure safety is only part of the concept. Therefore, it is important to encourage and acknowledge public/private initiatives to create synergies for the benefit of the road user and the entire community.

Thus, with safe infrastructure design, law enforcement, driver’s education and capacity building, all areas of the ‘road safety systems’ are taken into account.