

Road casualty in Brunei Darussalam: country commentary

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Abstract

Brunei is a little country, which took many road safety initiatives and implemented many traffic legislations to reduce road toll. It achieved a lot in road safety, but recently many road casualties were reported in media. The main objective of this study is to investigate recent road casualty patterns and examine the road safety situation in recent years. This study is mainly based on field data of various road accidents and casualties in Brunei. It uses regression analyses to investigate the effectiveness of the combined traffic legislations so far implemented by testing the coefficient of trend variable. Observations based on field data (numbers and rates) indicate that road casualties are decreasing since 1993 (except in recent years) after reaching its peak, even though vehicles and population have increased. Increasing trends of road casualties are observed in recent years which are re-confirmed by our short-term positive regression coefficient of trend variable. Young drivers are the major cause of road casualties. Comparisons with other countries which have more vehicle-mix in the region indicate that Brunei has lower rate of casualty. But higher rates are observed when compared with Australia, indicating that there are scopes to improve road safety situation in Brunei. Road casualty in Brunei is also expected to grow unless additional effective road safety strategies are introduced and implemented together with the strict implementations of the existing road safety countermeasures.

Keywords – road, fatality, injury, legislation, trend

1. Introduction

Brunei is a little country with an approximately 400,000 population. It is situated on the north-west of the Island of Borneo, between east longitude 114° 04' and 11° 23' and north latitude of 4° 00' and 5° 05'. It is an oil rich country. Its per capita income per year is approximately US\$40,000. In 2008 there were 780 vehicles per 1000 population in Brunei, which is one of the highest in the world. Brunei has a good road network system, and it has a reasonably good road safety record.

The first set of road traffic regulations was introduced in 1924 and vehicle registration began in 1926. Subsequently, other road traffic regulations were implemented in 1954 (Section 24 & 93 CAP 68 which is popularly known as Enactment No. 12 of 1954), which were mainly dealt with vehicle construction, usages, registration, licensing, traffic signs and lights etc. Department of Land Transport and National Road Safety were respectively established in 1963 and 1977 to maintain high road safety standards as well as to improve traffic safety situation in Brunei.