

# Director's Policy

Number: DP-36

Effective Date: February 15, 2022

Supersedes: New

Responsible Program: Division of Safety Programs

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**Title** Road Safety

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## **Policy**

California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) has a vision to eliminate fatalities and serious injuries on California's roadways by 2050 and provide safer outcomes for all communities. To realize this vision Caltrans commits to:

- A safety first mindset prioritizing road safety.
- Prioritize the elimination of fatal and serious injury crashes through our existing safety improvement programs along with development and implementation of new programs to enhance the safe use of our roadways.
- Eliminating race-, age-, ability- and mode-based disparities in road safety outcomes.

## **Background**

Caltrans has a vision of zero road fatalities and serious injuries by 2050, as committed to in the:

- California Transportation Plan 2050;
- Caltrans 2020-2024 Strategic Plan;
- California State Transportation Agency's (CalSTA) California Climate Action Plan for Transportation Infrastructure (CaPTI); and
- California's 2020-2024 Strategic Highway Safety Plan.

Our vision will be achieved through adoption of the Safe System approach. The Safe System approach aims to eliminate fatal and serious injuries for all road users through a holistic view of the road system. As specified in the United States Department of Transportation's first-ever National Roadway Safety Strategy (released January 2022), the Safe System approach is based on these principles:

- Eliminate death and serious injury: While no crashes are desirable, the Safe System approach prioritizes crashes that result in death and serious injuries.
- Humans make mistakes: Road users will inevitably make mistakes that can lead to crashes, but the transportation system can be designed and operated to be more forgiving. A forgiving system accommodates predictable human limitations and behavior (e.g. diligence, perception, attention) so that roads are self-enforcing, leading people intuitively to safe behavior.
- Humans are vulnerable: Road users have limits for tolerating crash forces before death and serious injury occurs. Therefore, it is critical to minimize the transfer of kinetic energy through adoption of design elements that minimize crash speeds and impact angles.
- Responsibility is shared: All stakeholders (drivers and all other transportation system users and managers, vehicle manufacturers, policy makers, etc.) must commit to reducing fatal and serious injury crashes and commit to working together. The focus is placed on the larger context and network of factors from which traffic death and serious injury arises, instead of the individual road users.
- Redundancy is crucial: Reducing risks requires that all parts of the transportation system are strengthened, so that if one part fails, the other parts still protect people.
- Safety is proactive and reactive: Proactive approaches (e.g., systemic approach, road safety audits) must complement the traditional, reactive programs (i.e., focus on isolated sites that demonstrate a crash pattern over a short period of time) to identify and mitigate safety risks in the transportation system.

### ***Intended Results/ Definitions***

The intent of this policy is to establish a corporate expectation to prioritize safety in order to achieve its goal of zero fatalities and serious injuries by 2050.

All Divisions shall align their programs, plans, policies, procedures, and practices with the Safe System approach as appropriate to their division.

### **Responsibilities (Roles)**

#### Director and Chief Deputy Director:

- Communicate the Caltrans commitment to eliminating fatalities and serious injuries.
- Seek alignment between this policy and similar road safety-related initiatives led by CalSTA, the Office of Traffic Safety, the California Highway Patrol, and other agencies and departments.

#### Headquarters Chiefs, Deputy Directors and Assistant Directors; All Divisions and Programs:

- Develop guidance, programs, and training to support the policy.

#### District Directors, Deputy District Directors and District Division Chiefs; All Divisions and Programs:

- Develop division specific Road Safety Action Plans to support this policy as appropriate for their division or program.

#### Managers and Supervisors, All Divisions and Programs:

- Support employees in incorporating the Safe System approach into Caltrans projects and initiatives.
- Facilitate provision of training to employees on the Safe System approach as appropriate to the division or program.

#### Employees, All Divisions and Programs:

- Promote the implementation of the Safe System approach as relevant to their roles.
- Prioritize road safety while considering race, age, ability and mode-based equity in transportation outcomes as relevant to their roles.
- Adopt road safety initiatives and practices as relevant to their divisions and roles.

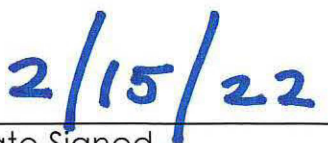
### **Applicability**

This policy applies to all Caltrans employees.



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Toks Omishakin  
Director



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Date Signed