

Speed Limits Review 2023

John McCarthy

18 November 2023

What are Speed Limits ?



- Road Safety



- Sensible and Credible to the public



- Appropriate to the road network




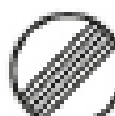
















- Consistent approach across the network

- Signs

Framework of Speed Limits

Framework of Speed Limits

Statutory	Default Speed Limits	Motorway (M) – 120 km/h	
		National Roads (N, NP, NS) – 100 km/h	
		Regional (R) – 80 km/h	
		Local Roads (L) – 80 km/h <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Local Primary (LP)- Local Secondary (LS)- Local Tertiary (LT)	<div></div>
	Special Speed Limits	Built-up area	
		      	
Non-Statutory	Variable or Periodic Special Speed Limits	Any <i>Special Speed Limit</i> but normally lower than the speed limit in effect at the time of variable or periodic change	
	Road works Speed Limits	Any of the above but normally:     	
	Cautionary Speeds at Road Works	Rectangular plates with black text on a white background displaying either 75 km/h, 65 km/h, 55 km/h, 45 km/h, 35 km/h, 25 km/h,	

Framework of Speed Limits

- History of Speed Limits (Ireland)

Pre 2005				48.2 30	64.4 40	80.5 50	96.6 60	112.3 70
Current	20 12.4	30 18.6	40 24.9	50 31.0	60 37.28	80 49.7	100 62.13	120 74.6

- Mph in RED
- Kmh in BLACK

Objectives and Background



RSS (Action 6)



6.

Establish a working group to examine and review the framework for the setting of speed limits. As part of this review there will be a specific consideration of the introduction of a 30kph default speed limit in urban areas.

Department of Transport, Road Safety Authority

DoT Principal, Director - Road Safety, Research & Driver Education

Q4 2022

AGS, TII, CCMA / LA's, NTA

Programme for Government

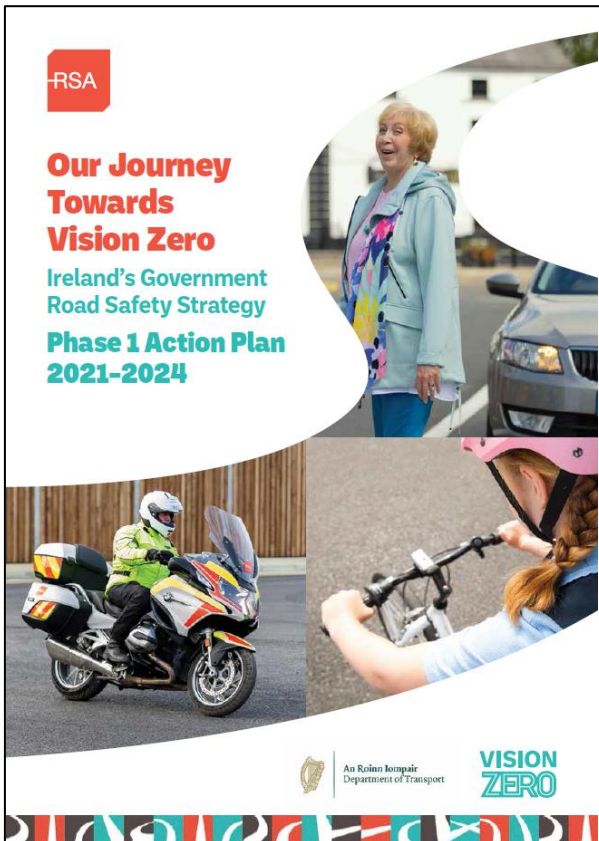
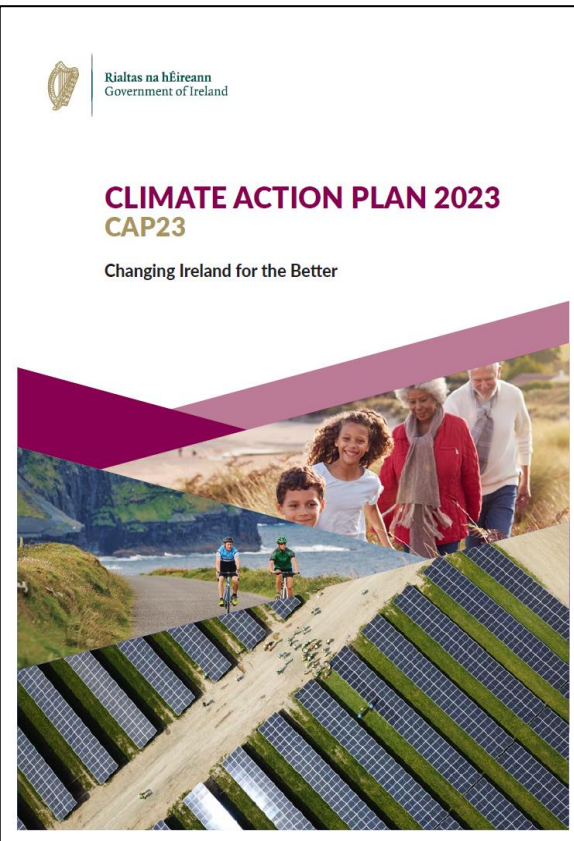
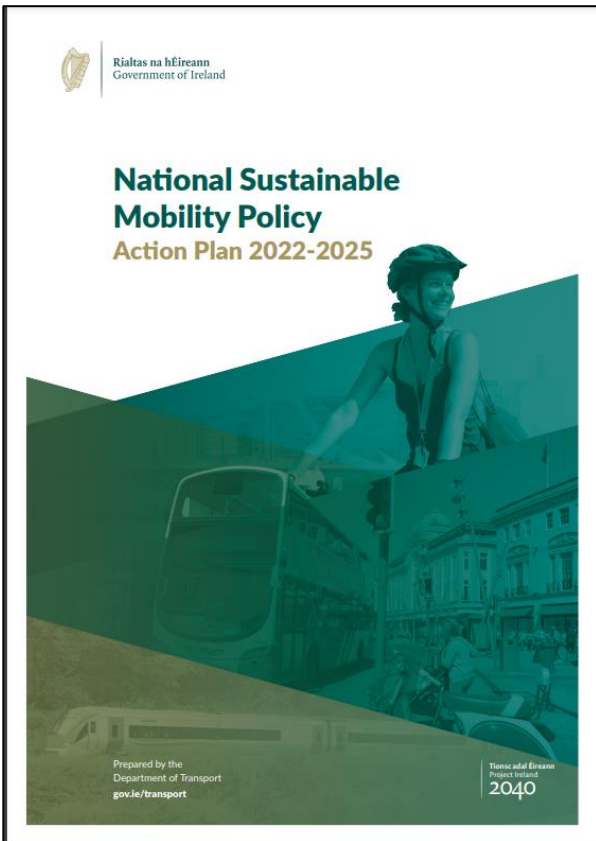


- Review and reduce speed limits where appropriate to address both road safety issues and carbon emissions and we will ensure greater compliance. (Page 12)

Strategies



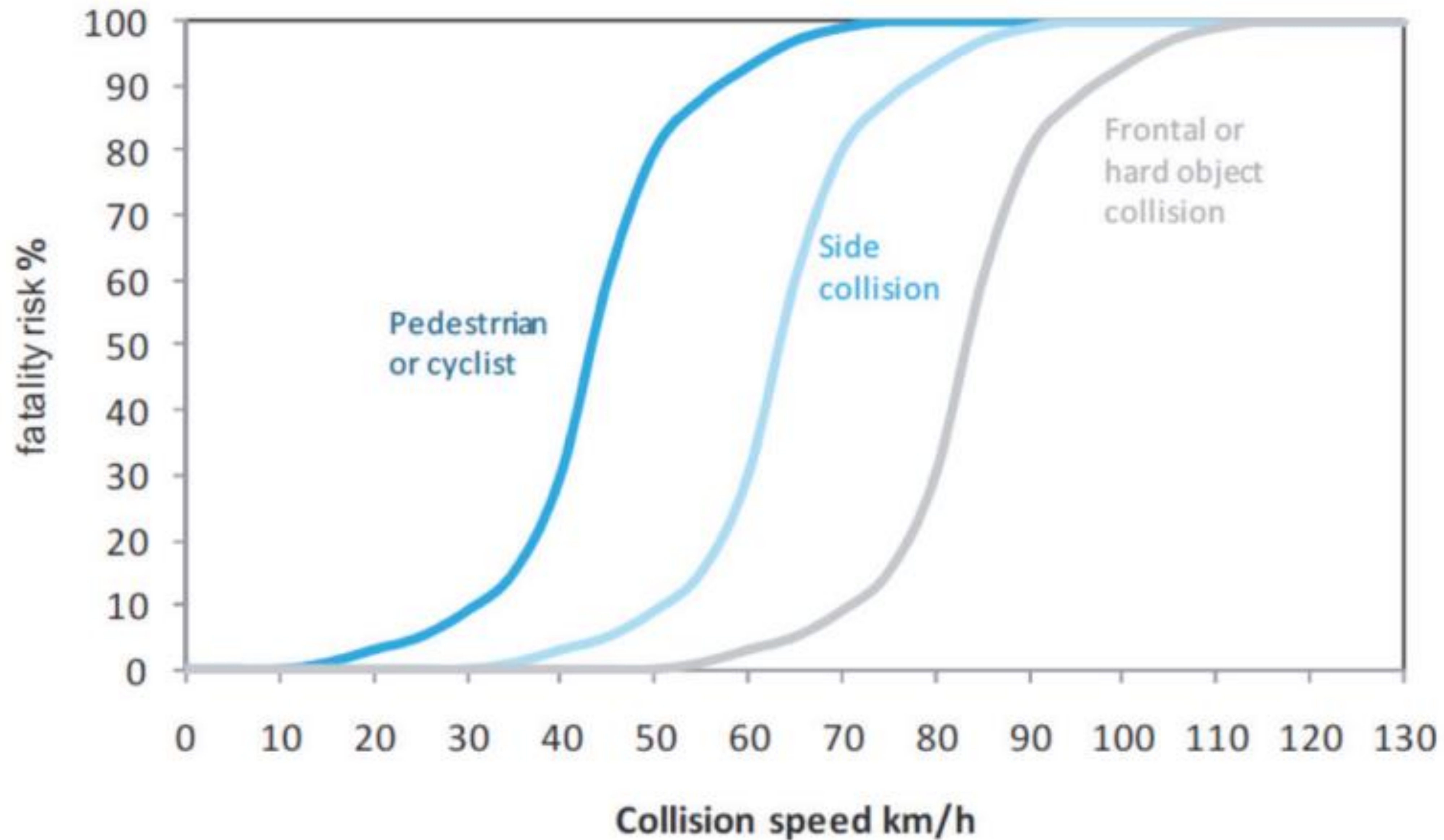
- Road Safety Strategy
- Climate Action Plan
- Sustainable Mobility



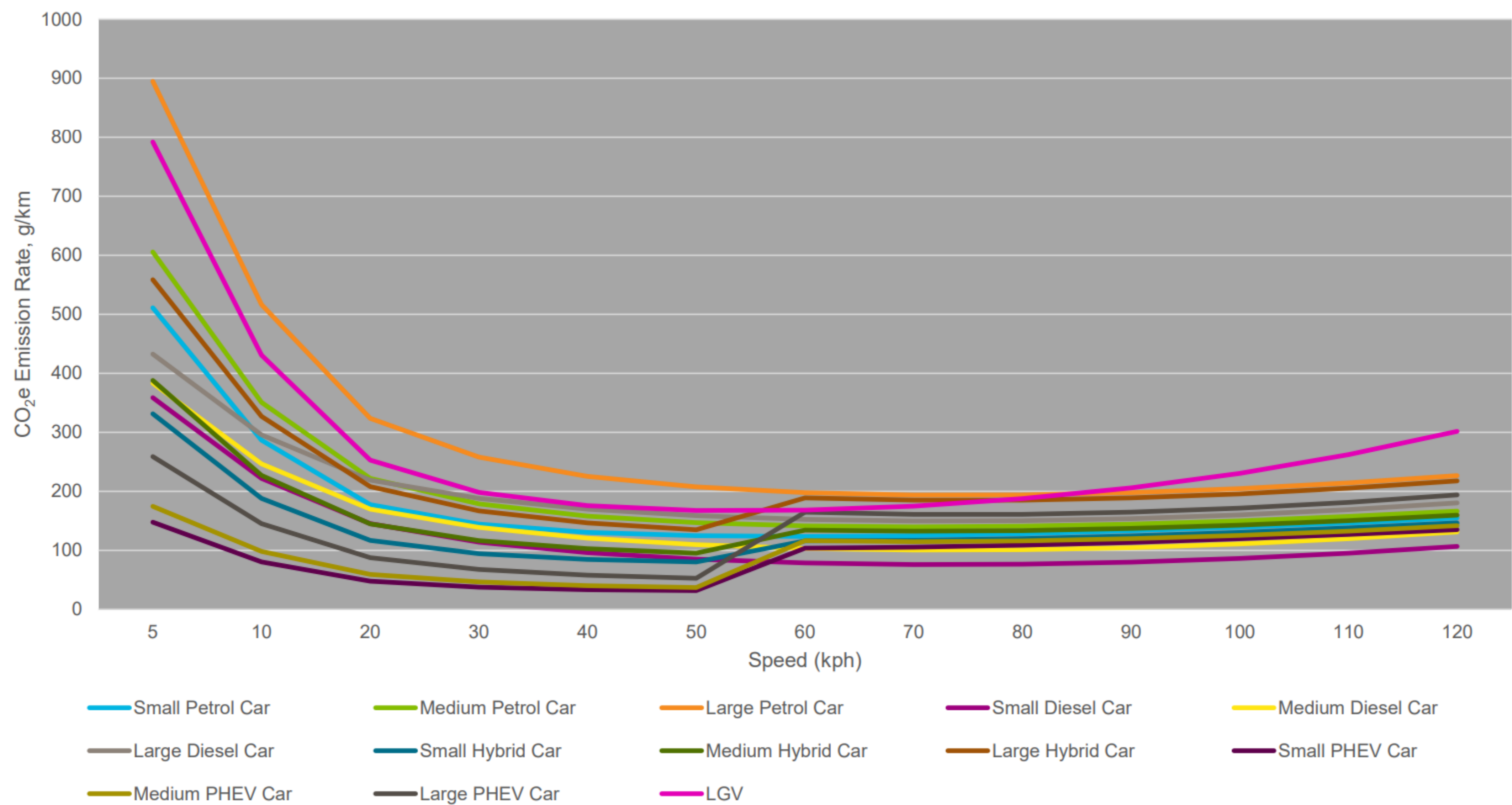
Key Points

- Safe Systems (Vision Zero)
TEN-T, RISM Directives (National Roads)
 - Divided roads will be required for roads greater than 80km/h
 - Undivided roads will be required to have a max speed limit of 80km/h
- Lower Speeds (Pedestrians / Cyclists / Vehicles)
- Most rural roads have had default speed limit reduced to 80km/h from 100km/h in 2005. (90,000km approx.)
- Compliance / Public Acceptance
ISA / Camera Enforcement

Background: Collision Risk



Background: Relationship between Speed and Emissions



Impact Assessment Safety and Emissions

Objectives

- Impacts of a reduction in speed limits in Urban and rural Areas, with a particular focus on:
 - Safety Impacts; and
 - Environmental Impacts
 - Travel time

Methodology

- The TII assess the rural network (> 60km/h) using existing modelling tools
- The NTA's Regional Modelling system has been used in conjunction with a number of Local Area Models (LAM) to estimate the impacts of a speed reduction in the following areas:
 - Cities (Dublin and Cork)
 - A selection of 8 medium sized Irish towns

Note

- First time a joint TII/NTA modelling report covering the entire country

Impact Assessment Safety and Emissions

- Rural

Scenario	Description	Safety (vkm - road type)	Safety (vkm – SC by speed)	Emissions (CO ₂)
DS 1	10km/h reduction on entire rural network	Positive (2)	Positive (2)	Positive (1)
DS 2	10km/h reduction on all single carriageways	Positive (1)	Positive (3)	Neutral (2)
DS 3a	Reduction to 80km/h on all National Secondary Roads	Positive (3)	Positive (5)	Neutral (4)
DS 3b	Reduction to 60km/h on all Local roads	Positive (4)	Positive (4)	Neutral (5)
DS 4	Reduction to 70km/h on all National Secondary and Regional roads	Positive (5)	Positive (1)	Neutral (3)

- Urban

Scenario	Description	Safety	Emissions (CO ₂)
30km/h	Reduction to 30km/h default for Urban and Built Up Area roads (subject to exceptions)	Positive	Neutral

Impact Assessment Safety Emerging Results

Overall

- Reductions in speed limits have the potential to be effective in terms of road safety.

Rural

- For emissions most scenarios neutral with a small positive impact under one scenario where reductions were applied across all rural roads
- Potential for unintended impacts need to be understood before implementation
- Confounding factor in results is the risk of traffic rerouting and role of heavy vehicles
- All scenarios are projected to result in increased global network travel time.

Cities & Towns

- For cities potential for modal shift but less so for towns
- Emissions from Heavy Vehicles increase slightly
- From a safety perspective, there is a **significant transfer to the slower speed of 30kph**, which is shown to be safer (collisions are much less likely to result in fatalities).

Recommendations

VISION
ZERO



Principal

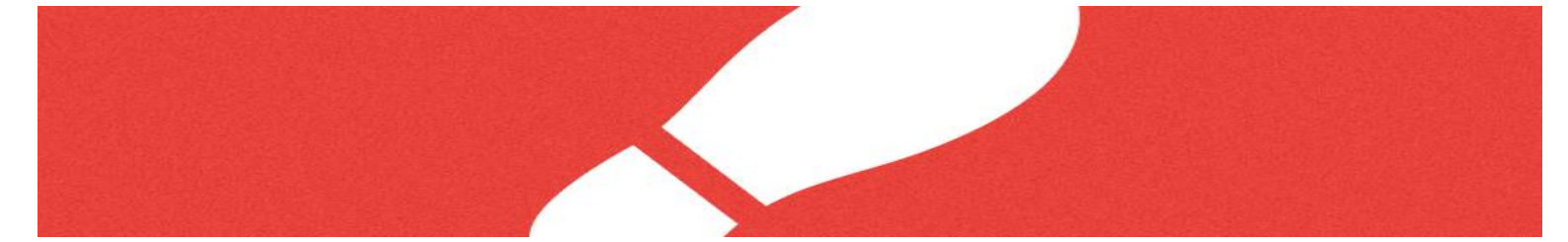
- Rural roads
- Urban roads



Specific

Examples include recommendations for speed limits in:

- Quiet Lanes
- Rural Cycleways/Greenways
- Cycle Streets (urban)
- School Limits
- Roadworks Speed Limit Zones
- Shared Space (zone)
- Pedestrian (zone)









Supporting

Examples include recommendations for:

- Design standards
- Data
- Guidelines (Priority);
 - Re-allocating Road Space
 - Settlement boundaries
 - Speed assessment framework
- Appeals process
- Enforcement
- Legislation
- Education/Training
- Communications

Principal Recommendations

Rural

-  Default speed limits
 - Remain the same on the road network, except
 -  80km/h for National Secondary Roads (Exceptions permitted) (Currently 100km/h)
 -  60km/h for Local Roads (Currently 80km/h)
 - New roads
 -  Sections of road network with a design speed / speed limit greater than 80km/h to be divided
 - Existing roads
 -  Sections of National Road where it is intended to retain a limit > 80km/h to be divided by 2050 (criteria and plan by 2025)
 -  Sections of Regional and Local Road where it is intended to retain a limit > 80km/h to be divided (criteria and approach by 2025)

Principal Recommendations

Urban



Default speed limit of 30kmh for built up and urban areas



30kmh limit should apply, for all city or town centres, residential roads and locations where there is a significant presence of vulnerable/active road users.



Exceptions may be permitted for the following: -



- Pedestrian zones and shared space/zones whereby a speed limit of 20km/h would apply.



- National, Regional, arterial roads and key public transport routes where limits up to 50km/h.



- Transition zones on National, Regional, arterial roads and key public transport routes where limits up to 60km/h.

- Urban arterial roads with a high design speed such as motorways, certain dual carriageways and roads with limited access where higher limits.

Specific Recommendations



- Cycle Street (Urban)



- School Speed Zones



- Urban Shared Space (Zones)



- Pedestrian Zones



- Slow Zones



- Quiet Lanes

- Rural Cycleway / Greenway

- Variable Speed Limit Zones

- Roadworks Speed Limit Zones

- Gateways and Transition Zones

- Restricted Roads

- Traffic Calming

Supporting Recommendations



- Legislation



- Standards / Guidelines



- Data and Inventory Management



- Speed Limit Guidelines



- Appeals Process



- Urban Area Definition

- Speed Assessment Framework

- Quality Control – Audits and Compliance Certificates

- Traffic Signs

- Classification

- Education / Training

- Public Engagement / Communications

- Reserved Function

- Speed Limits Enforcement

Next steps

September 2023 - Publish Reports



- Main Report and 3 no Supporting Reports to a 'publish ready' standard.
- Peer Reviewed (Sweden and TCD)

Implementation



- Form implementation group with a plan to be developed to include a programme of work for 2023 and beyond.



- Priority to implement the new Default Speed Limits
 - Work has commenced on review of Guidelines.
 - Work has commenced on Legislation.



- Amend Bye Laws.

A hand holding a compass over a desert road. The hand is wearing a green long-sleeved shirt. The compass is a standard analog compass with a white face and black markings. The background shows a paved road stretching into the distance, flanked by dry, yellowish-brown desert terrain. The lighting suggests it's either early morning or late afternoon, with long shadows and warm tones.

Guidelines for Setting and Managing Speed Limits

Framework & Legislation



Road Traffic Act 1961



Road Traffic Act 2004



Road Traffic and Roads Act 2023



Guidelines for Setting and Managing Speed Limits

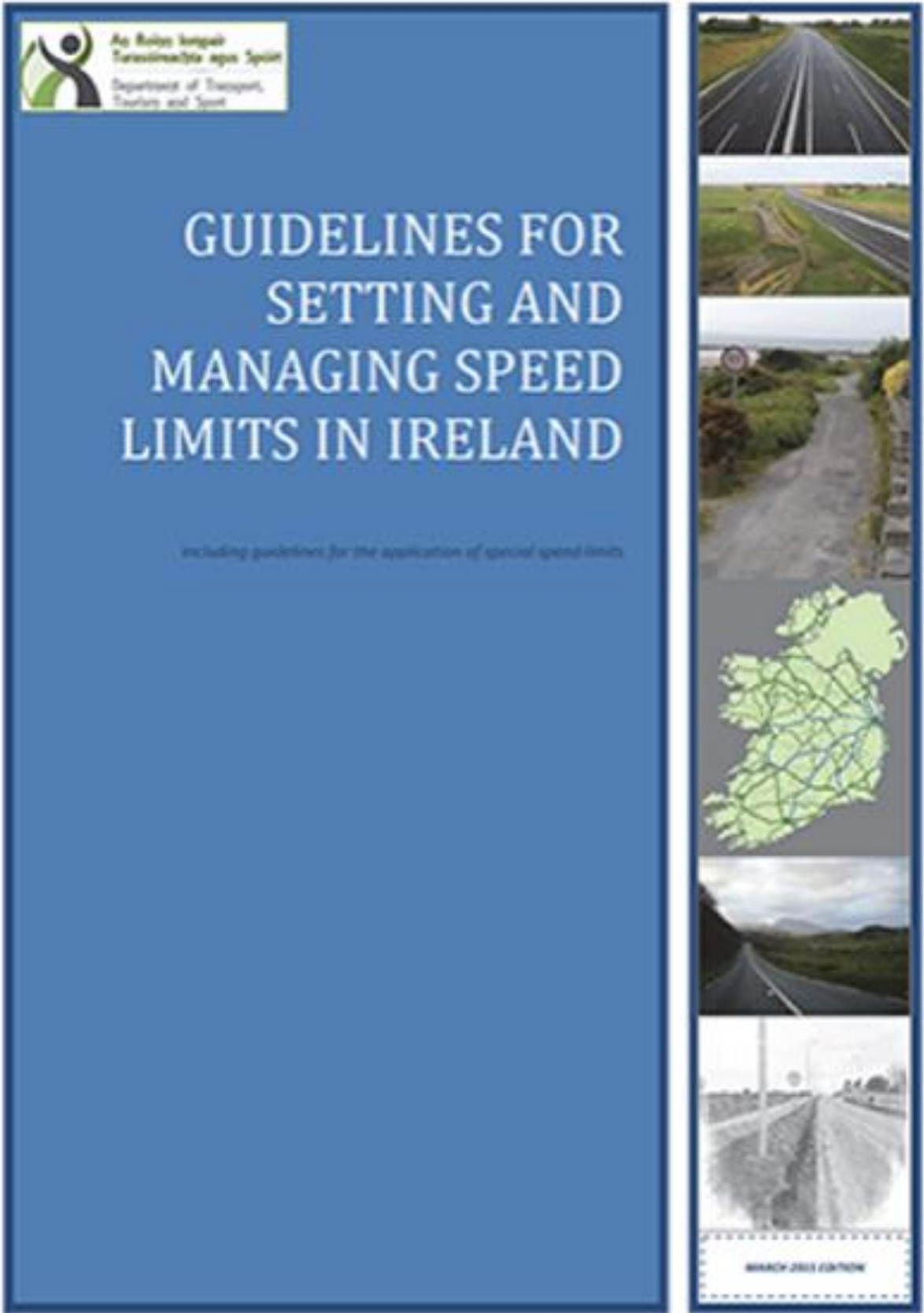
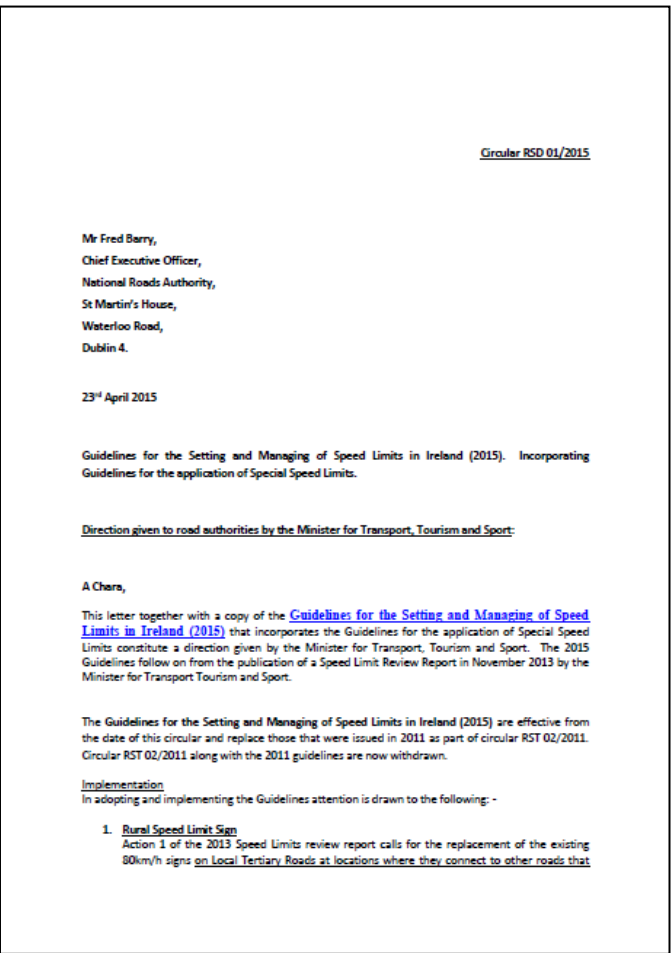
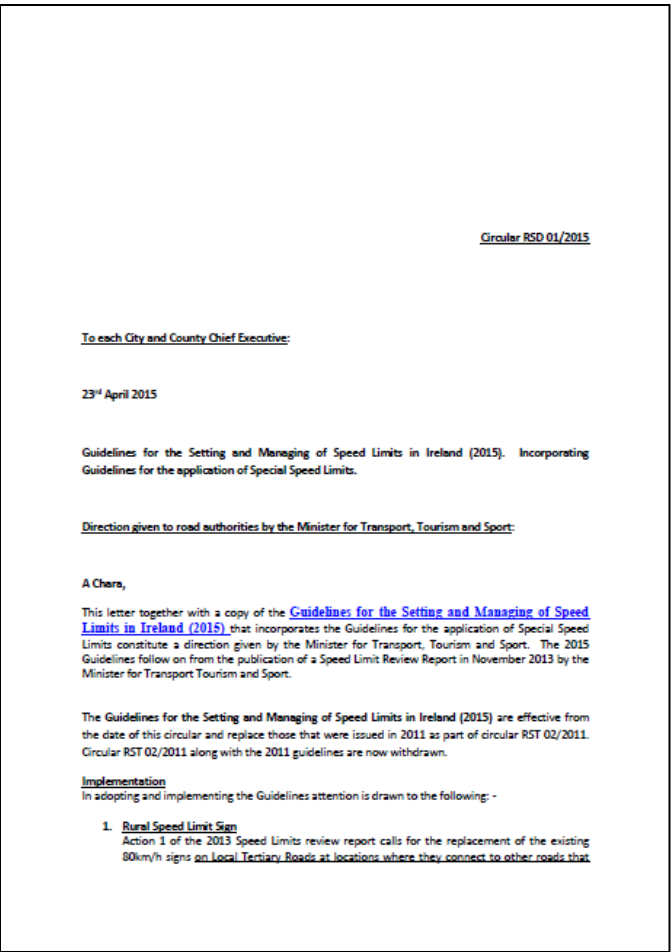
Statutory Guidelines based on Subsection
9 (9) of RTA 2004

Issued in April 2015

Complete revision to previous Guidelines
from 2012

More Explicit as to circumstances as to
what speed limits apply

Self Regulating/Explaining Roads



Guidelines

Appendix 1 to Circular RSD/01/2017

Addendum (in respect of 20 km/h speed limits) to the 2015 Guidelines for Setting and Managing Speed Limits in Ireland issued under Section 9(9) of the Road Traffic Act 2004

The *2015 Guidelines for Setting and Managing Speed Limits in Ireland* provide detailed guidance in respect of the application of 30 km/h speed limits in housing areas and in other appropriate districts; for example in urban centres where the road has no strategic or distributor function.

It is clear from these Guidelines that 30 km/h is a more appropriate speed limit than 50 km/h for most housing estates. In particular, Appendix A2 of the Guidelines sets out the major safety gain in terms of reducing the risk of fatalities where vehicle speeds are reduced from 50 km/h to 30 km/h.

New legislation now provides for an even lower speed limit of 20 km/h. It is envisaged that this new lower limit will only be used in limited circumstances. It is not intended to replace the use of the 30 km/h speed limit as the norm in housing estates or on non-distributor urban centre roads. It should be noted that distributor roads in urban centres would normally be 50 km/h.

Under these Guidelines which constitute a Direction of the Minister, Road Authorities may only introduce a 20 km/h speed limit where Warrant Number 1 applies and where one of the sub-categories of Warrant 2 also applies:

1. The 85th percentile speed of traffic on a street does not exceed 30 km/h
and one of the following applies
2. (a) In a largely pedestrian zone where there is very limited access for vehicles;
(b) On a street which is pedestrianized for most of the day but which allows limited access for delivery vehicles at certain times; or
(c) On a shared surface street in an urban area where there are no separate footways.

Guidelines for Setting and Managing Speed Limits

- Roadworks Speed Limits
- 20 km/h
- Speed Assessment Framework
- Definition of Urban / Built Up Area

Section	Description		Speed Limits
7.1	Motorways and High Speed Dual Carriageways		120 km/h
7.2.1	Rural Roads	Standard Dual Carriageways & 2+1/ 2+2 roads	100 km/h
See section 7.2.2.1		Single Carriageway Roads	100 km/h 80 km/h
7.2.2.2		High Standard Single Carriageways	100 km/h
		At-risk locations	Lower limits can be considered as appropriate
7.3.1.1	Urban Roads (adhering to DMURS) (See Table 7.3.1)	Limited access Dual Carriageways / Single Carriageway Roads	80 km/h 60 km/h
7.3.1.2		Arterial / Link Single Carriageway Roads (See table 7.3.1.)	60 km/h (max)
7.3.1.3		Narrow / Minor Local Road and Housing Estate Roads	30 km/h
7.3.1.4		Specific Circumstances Only	40 km/h
7.3.1.5			30 km/h

Table 7.6 – Summary of Speed Limits by Carriageway Type

Guidelines – 2015 – Rural Roads





SPEED LIMIT (km/h)	PAVED ROAD WIDTH
80	Less than or equal to 7.0 m
100	Greater than 7.0 m



Guidelines for Setting and Managing Speed Limits

- Setting Limits – Urban Roads

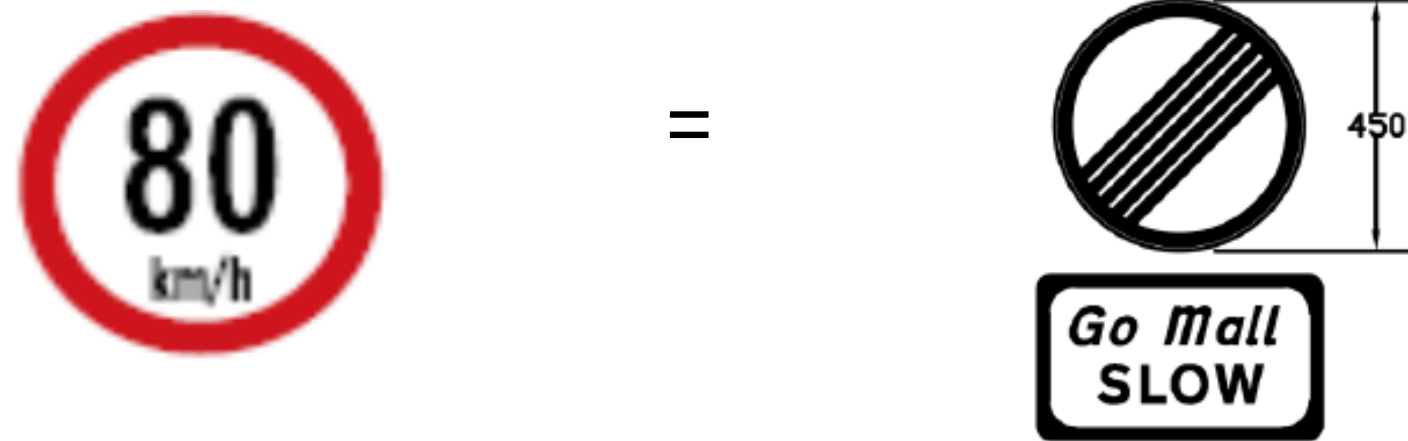
		 Pedestrian Priority	 Vehicle Priority		
		Urban Centers / Commercial Centers	Suburban and Housing Areas	Out of Town Business / Industrial Areas	
Function	Arterial	40* - 50	40* - 50	50 - 60	
	Link	30 - 40*	30 - 50	50 - 60	
	Local	30	30	30 - 50	
		Context			

** The use of 40 km/h shall only be considered in circumstances as prescribed section 7.3.2.*

Table 7.3 – Recommended Speed Limits for Urban Areas (km/h)

Guidelines for Setting and Managing Speed Limits

- New Rural Speed Limit Sign (RUS 041A) alternative sign for 80 km/h: -



- 450mm diameter only
- to be used at locations where a single lane local tertiary or certain single lane local secondary road connects to roads with a: -
 - Speed Limit of 100km/hor
 - A Speed Limit that differs to 80km/h



Guidelines for Setting and Managing Speed Limits

- 30 km/h should be used for Housing Estates
- Option of new Slow Zones (30 km/h) for Urban Roads such as Housing Estates: -
 - community supported
 - safety measures
 - lower the incidence and severity of collisions
 - enhance quality of life
 - Self enforcing





An Roinn Iompair
Department of Transport



Transport Research Arena

Speed Limits Review

END

John McCarthy

john.mccarthy@transport.gov.ie

18 November 2023