



**OTTAWA POLICE SERVICE
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La sécurité de notre communauté, un travail d'équipe*

Speeding Costs You...Deerly!
**A Campaign to Reduce Collisions with Wildlife
On Ottawa's Roadways**

A Submission to the
Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrators
Police Partnership Award



Ottawa Police Service Project Lead
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Endorsement:

This Nomination is supported and endorsed by
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Emergency Operations Division

www.ottawapolice.ca/traffic

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Background

Ottawa City Council approved the Integrated Road Safety Program (I.R.S.P.) on June 25, 2003. A partnership between the Ottawa Police Service, Ottawa Public Health and Ottawa Public Works & Services, the I.R.S.P. will try to match Transport Canada’s Vision 2010 goal of reducing fatalities and serious injuries by 30%. To accomplish this the I.R.S.P. began coordinating existing resources, developing new initiatives and encouraging community partnerships under a coordinated 3E approach of enforcement, engineering and education.



In 2002 this vehicle struck a deer causing the carcass to travel through the windshield and kill the vehicle's driver.

Each year the I.R.S.P.’s Steering Committee, comprised of senior members of all three partners, selects two campaigns for the program to focus on. After years of successful campaigns such as “[Safe Young Driver - You Hold the Key](#)” and “[Share the Road... Shift to a Nicer Gear](#)” the committee wished to conduct a campaign with a rural focus. After some debate, a wildlife collision reduction program won the steering committees approval and it was soon being pitched to city councillors, residents attending [Ottawa's rural summit](#), and external road safety stakeholders. All felt that deer collisions were an issue of concern and that raising public awareness would benefit all road users, not just rural residents.

The programs first task would be to examine the severity of wildlife collisions within our cities boundaries. An examination of City of Ottawa collision data (2003-05) revealed that:

- Ottawa, with almost 1,000 a year, experienced the highest number of vehicle/wildlife collisions in Ontario.

Reported Collisions Involving Wildlife Hits & Avoids

Class of Accident	2003	2004	2005	3 Yr Avg
Fatal	0	0	0	0
Injury	51	34	44	43
Property Damage Only	976	892	911	926
Non-reportable	5	7	8	7
Total	1,032	933	963	976

Source: City of Ottawa

- Wildlife collisions account for 7 % of all of Ottawa’s traffic collisions.
- 95 % of Ottawa’s vehicle/wildlife collisions involve deer.
- Half of the collisions occur during the fall months
- 80 % of them occurring between dusk and dawn.
- Half of Ottawa’s personal injuries resulting from vehicle/wildlife collisions involve excessive speed.

The upsurge in Ottawa’s deer population due to milder winters and earlier springs over recent years has only compounded the situation by raising the risk of drivers meeting deer on public roadways. As the movement of deer is greatest during the height of deer-mating season (October / November) and collision data indicates that most wildlife collisions occur during the same period, it was only logical that the campaign be held during the fall months.

Establishing Goals & Objectives

Medium goals of the campaign included decreasing the number of deer collisions by 10% on Ottawa area roadways during the period of October to November 2006. Its primary focus would be Ottawa motorists, in both rural and urban areas, that travel near green space and forests who run the risk of encountering large wildlife on the roadways.

Results-Based Management Logic Mode

Impact	Outcome	Output
Reduce traffic collision-related deaths and serious injuries by 30 per cent by 2010.	Reduce the incidence of motorists colliding with wildlife (namely deer) by 10 per cent by the end of fall 2006.	Make 30 per cent of the motorists aware of the risks of deer collisions by the end of fall 2006.
	Reduce the number of speed-related collisions by 10 per cent by the end of fall 2006.	Make 30 per cent of motorists aware of the risks of speeding – including the decrease of reaction time – by the end of fall 2006.

Partnerships & Support

As in all I.R.S.P. campaigns, external partners were sought out to sit on task teams to develop and implement the campaign. Because of the nature of the campaign the [Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters](#), as well as the [Ontario Provincial Police](#), who patrol provincial highways within Ottawa were asked to join the team. In addition to these members the I.R.S.P. also received support and funding from the [Ontario Ministry of Transportation](#) and by the [Canadian Automobile Association North & East Ontario](#). This funding allowed the campaign to increase its visibility throughout the city and even across the province.

Key Messages

As the campaign was occurring during a municipal election its key messages had to be clear so that they could effectively be conveyed to the public without confusing messages or becoming entangled with the election itself. After consultations with task team members it was decided that the campaign focuses on drivers paying extra attention to possible encounters with wildlife on the roadway in the fall during the dusk-to-dawn period. The campaign would retain the successful “Speeding Costs You” theme, but a sub-theme would be developed to iterate that speed reduces reaction time – especially

during dark, wet and/or cold conditions.

Shortly after establishing these parameters it was decided that “Speeding Costs You...Deerly!” become the moniker of the campaign’s visual images. The team then agreed to reinforce three points to the campaign’s audience:

- Be Alert – scan the roadway
- Reduce Your Speed – increase your reaction time & decrease your stopping time
- Stay in Control – brake, sound your horn & never swerve suddenly

Encouraging motorists to scan alongside the road allows them an opportunity to be vigilant for any objects, especially light reflection from the eye of an animal that might cross the path of their vehicle. Reducing speed and using the vehicle’s high beams (where possible) allows the driver a better view, especially in areas where yellow wildlife warning signs are located. It also increases the driver’s time to safely react to an unexpected encounter and decreases the extent of any personal injury and/or property damage, should a collision be unavoidable. In such cases, the driver should brake and sound the horn, while remaining in control & not swerve suddenly. Doing so may lead to an even worse situation such as a head-on collision with another vehicle.

Message Delivery

A formal communications plan was developed by Client Services & Public Information section, utilizing the following methods of delivering key messages.

a) Billboard Advertising



A campaign billboard installed along Hunt Club Rd.

Billboard advertising was used as the primary visual medium for the wildlife on the roadway portion of the campaign. It features the “Speeding Costs You...Deerly” slogan combined with the image of a dashboard and a deer “caught” in the headlights of a vehicle. A total of six billboard sites were used along corridors where wildlife collisions had occurred. Unfortunately due to budget constraints the visual could not be placed on OC Transpo bus boards, as in previous campaigns.

b) Television Interstitial



Cst. Nicole MacLaurin speaking about “staying in control” when you encounter wildlife on a roadway

A [television interstitial](#) was produced and aired on CTV Ottawa following the noon, 6:00 p.m. and 11:00 p.m. newscasts. Due to the size of the stations broadcast area, the audience for this portion of the campaign extended beyond Ottawa’s boundaries including Pembroke and Kingston. Television provides strength in a campaign’s ability to reach and resonate with the target audience – especially in the fall and winter months.

c) Radio Advertising

Since the majority of the encounters with wildlife occur on or near the rural locations, radio ads aired on Y101 (country) and CFRA (talk radio) – stations with a large rural reach. CIMF (Rock D tente) was the primary French language station and ads focused on young drivers aired on CKQB (The Bear). The addition of these young driver ads were made possible by funding received from the CAA.

d) Canned Articles – Community Papers

City staff wrote an article on speed, reaction time, and deer so that it would be included in rural and urban community newspapers. A paid ad was also provided for communities that have or are near roadways that have a high incidence of deer crossings, a paid ad was also provided.

e) Information Card

The information card was created to remind motorists of issues related to deer collisions. The card was available at city information centres, police facilities and provided to offenders in target areas.



f) “Zero Tolerance”- Police Enforcement

In addition to the awareness component, members of District Traffic and the Escort & Enforcement Unit conducted an educational/enforcement campaign on roads that statistically show high incidences of speed-related deer/vehicle collisions. A zero tolerance policy was adopted on these 20 roads, with wildlife collision information pamphlets being distributed to offenders. Radar-equipped digital sign boards as well as temporary signs indicating “Speeding? Zero Tolerance!” were posted along those same roadways..

g) Ministry of Transportation Media Briefing



Greg Ferrant (O.F.A.H), Tim Georgeoff, (CAA North & East Ontario) and Minister Donna Cansfield

On October 24th Transportation Minister Donna Cansfield conducted a media briefing at Ottawa’s Britannia Park to highlight the Integrated Road Safety Program’s deer campaign and its partnerships with the Canadian Automobile Association, the Ontario Federation of Anglers & Hunters, Ontario Provincial Police and the Ministry of Transportation.

h) Variable Message Boards



Variable message signs (5) displaying “DEER ALERT - REDUCE SPEED“(in both English and French) were placed along the 20 roadways with high incidents of wildlife collisions. Each board was in place for one week and then moved to the next location.

i) Earned Media

Daily newspaper, radio and television provided favourable and positive approaches to the campaign story. These media reports reinforced our key messaging and provided opportunities for task team members to expand upon those messages. The Ottawa Citizen published a story on the front page of the paper’s City section in early October and a main front-page story in early November. The Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters magazine, with a circulation of 130,000 featured the campaign in their October/November issue. Copies of some of these articles have been included with this submission.

CBC Radio One’s *Ontario Today* produced a segment inspired by the campaign and it was also profiled in community papers through our canned articles and editorials. A feature was also produced for the [The Angler & Hunter](#), a hunting and fishing show that airs across Ontario, and interviews appeared on the CTV Ottawa’s *News at Noon* and *A-Channel Morning* show.

Evaluation – Ottawa “Buck’s” Trend

Both through earned media and advertising, the campaign created almost 28,000,000 possible impressions. Radio created 20,000,000 impressions and, due to frequency of four ads per day on three stations, television created 6,930,000 impressions while earned media generated almost 500,000 impressions.

A Decima Research assessment of *Speeding Costs You...Deerly* found that 62% of Ottawa residents recalled the campaign, and the key messaging resonated with 71% of those respondents. The survey also helped to determine how the residents received the campaign messaging. Television rated 48%, radio and the Ottawa Citizen recorded 43%, while community papers were at 16 % and the billboards had a 14% rating.

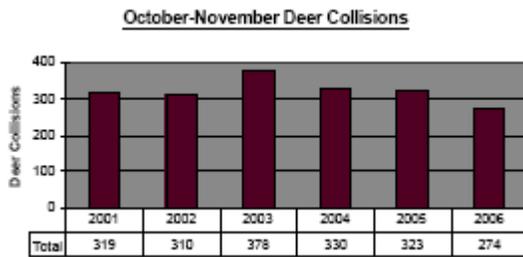
Such recall is even more impressive considering in our early consultations with Decima, that considering the dollar value of the campaigns resources, staff were advised to expect a 10% or less recall. However, the survey surpassed those expectations with 43 per cent of the residents - who drive - clearly recalling the campaign. In addition, 71 per cent clearly recalled the main message to reduce speed to avoid deer collisions. And, 53 per cent of those respondents considered deer/vehicle collisions a risk on Ottawa’s roadways.

Achieving 43% clear aided recall is a noteworthy achievement for any public awareness campaign, regardless of budget. To achieve 71% aided awareness of the key message ('reduce your speed') among those who recall the campaign is evidence that the main message was effectively conveyed. Taken together, the survey results are a very positive assessment of the effectiveness of this campaign.

Doug Anderson,
Vice President, Syndicated Products, Decima Research

These high recall figures occurred during a City of Ottawa election that featured a tight and sometimes contentious mayoralty race. Even with this increased competition for earned media space, the campaign was able to resonate with almost half of respondents. It is important to note that these results include “clearly recall” figures only. If we include the respondents who “somewhat recall” the campaign, the message saturation figure would rise above 60%.

Such positive recall figures may have also had an impact on the number of wildlife collisions. Statistics show that, during the campaign, Ottawa reversed a six-year trend for October-November vehicle-deer collisions by dropping to 274 and by recording a **20% decrease** in collisions when compared to 2003-05 figures.



Such a decrease in wildlife collisions is estimated to have created \$650,000 savings in personal and property damage costs for Ottawa residents. An even greater achievement in the midst of the recent deer population explosion and increasing displacement of deer from their natural habitat that has been creating higher incidences of deer on Ottawa’s roadways.

Conclusion

The Integrated Road Safety Program is an ongoing initiative that is strongly supported by all three senior representatives of the participating City Departments, the Mayor’s Office, and the Police Services Board. It also receives tremendous support from the participating community and road safety partners. Community members have also embraced this effective and coordinated approach.

The “*Speeding Costs You... Deerly!*” campaign is a proven example of how the Integrated Road Safety Program’s approach can make the best use of resources, while making an impact on road safety. It is why the I.R.S.P. is in the forefront of road safety initiatives and why other jurisdictions model their own road safety strategies after it.