



**U.S. Department
of Transportation**

National Roadway Safety Strategy

United States Department of Transportation | January 2022



Objectives and Implementation

Implementation of the NRSS will be arranged around five complementary objectives corresponding to the Safe System Approach elements:

- **Safer People:** Encourage safe, responsible behavior by people who use our roads and create conditions that prioritize their ability to reach their destination unharmed.
- **Safer Roads:** Design roadway environments to mitigate human mistakes and account for injury tolerances, to encourage safer behaviors, and to facilitate safe travel by the most vulnerable users.
- **Safer Vehicles:** Expand the availability of vehicle systems and features that help to prevent crashes and minimize the impact of crashes on both occupants and non-occupants.
- **Safer Speeds:** Promote safer speeds in all roadway environments through a combination of thoughtful, context-appropriate roadway design, targeted education and outreach campaigns, and enforcement.
- **Post-Crash Care:** Enhance the survivability of crashes through expedient access to emergency medical care, while creating a safe working environment for vital first responders and preventing secondary crashes through robust traffic incident management practices.

The sections below highlight the importance of each NRSS objective area and outline notable actions that U.S. DOT is committed to taking in each area.

Addressing each of these areas is critical, as their impact can be complementary and build redundancy. The overlapping set of safety measures in a Safe System Approach is similar to the Swiss cheese model for safety long used in the aviation industry, which notes the importance of differing layers and types of defenses and aligns with Safe System Approach principles.¹⁴ The purpose of the NRSS and its adoption of the Safe System Approach is to address contributing factors from all angles and build layers of prevention, protection, and mitigation. Similarly, actions taken by the Department must be augmented by actions taken by partners across the entire transportation community to ultimately be successful in reaching our goal of zero. Crashes are complex events involving a multitude of factors. Certain strategies or interventions could have prevented some of the crashes described above from occurring, while others, such as seat belt use, could have prevented them from being fatal or causing serious injury.

¹⁴ Reason, James (1990-04-12). "The Contribution of Latent Human Failures to the Breakdown of Complex Systems". *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London. Series B, Biological Sciences*. 327