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Glossary of Terms – Quick Reference Guide

Accident (traffic)	An interaction where two road users have collided that results in injury, fatality or property damage
Accident outcome	Consequences of an accident in terms of injury severity, fatality and material damage
Accident rate	Number of accidents in accordance with a measure of exposure
Accident risk	Risk for accident involvement (for different road-user classes). Objective risk reflects accident frequency in relation to a measure of exposure or population
Accident severity	Level of injury sustained in a traffic accident: usually categorized as slight, serious or fatal
Adaptive situation	An interaction between road users with lower severity than an accident or a serious conflict
Auxiliary Lanes	The portion of the roadway adjoining the traveled way for speed change, turning, storage for turning, weaving, truck climbing, and other purposes supplementary to through-traffic movement
Average Hourly Conflicts	Refers here to the total number of observed conflicts at a U-turn divided by the number of observation hours
Collision	Impact event between two or more road-users/vehicles, or a road-user (vehicle) and stationary object
Collision course	Unless the speed and/or the direction of the road users changes, they will collide
Conflict	A potentially unsafe interactive event that requires evasive action (braking, swerving or accelerating) to avoid collision
Conflict observation	Method that is used by trained observers to determine objective parameters (Time-to-Accident values etc.) in accordance with the Traffic Conflict Technique or subjective estimation of speed and distance or evasive maneuver of road-users/vehicles that are in a conflict situation
Conflict point	Common spatial location of projected trajectories for two or more road-users/vehicles
Conflict zone	Common area used by road-users/vehicles approaching from different trajectories
Conflict severity	Seriousness of a potential collision or near-accident measured by temporal or spatial proximity

Crash	Term that is sometimes preferred to (traffic) accident due to the fact that it implies an element of causality rather than an unforeseen random occurrence
Downstream	The direction of traffic flow
Evasive action/ maneuver	Action taken to diverge from a collision course by changing speed or direction involves braking, accelerating, and/or swerving
Event	Any kind of incident or occurrence in traffic
Event severity continuum or safety hierarchy	Conceptions of unsafeness and severity of an event whereby all interactions are placed on the same scale with safe passages at one extreme and accidents involving fatalities at the other
Fatality	Death resulting from a traffic accident (usually within a 30 day period after the accident occurrence)
Hard traffic conflict	Refers here to a traffic conflict situation where one or more road user(s) use "hard brake" resulting braking sound or skid marks on road to avoid collision
Hourly Conflict Rate	Refers here to the "Average Hourly Conflicts" divided by "Hourly Volume"
Hourly Volume	Refers here to the total number of vehicle entering at a U-turn divided by the number of observation hours
Injury accidents	Traffic accidents that result in minor or serious injury to one or more parties. Some statistical measures and accident risk quotients include accidents that involve both injury and fatality
Interaction	A traffic event with a collision course where interactive behavior is a precondition to avoid an accident
Light traffic conflict	Refers here to a traffic conflict situation where one or more road user(s) force to reduce speed (without applying brake) and change lane to avoid collision
Loon	Expanded paved aprons opposite a U-turn/ median crossover used to facilitate the larger turning path of commercial vehicles along roadways with narrow medians
Median	The portion of a divided highway separating the traveled ways for traffic in opposing directions
Moderate traffic conflict	Refers here to a traffic conflict situation where one or more road user(s) apply brake (braking light glow) and almost stop to avoid collision

Near-accident	Any circumstance that requires a rapid, evasive maneuver by the participant vehicle, or any other vehicle, pedestrian, cyclist, or animal, to avoid a crash. A rapid, evasive maneuver is defined as steering, braking, accelerating, or any combination of control inputs that approaches the limits of the vehicle capabilities
Non-serious conflict	Conflict event in accordance with the Traffic Conflict Technique that is not of sufficient severity to be classed as serious according to a specified severity threshold function
Police reported accidents	Accidents that are reported to the police and are recorded in the accident database of accident statistics
Post-Encroachment Time (PET)	A safety indicator that represents a measure of the time measured from the moment the first road-user leaves the potential collision point to the moment the other road-user enters this conflicting point
Required braking rate (RBR)	Measure of conflict severity based on a momentary measure speed and distance to a conflict point, that represents the average (linear) braking required to avoid a collision from the point the measure is taken
Safety	Freedom from accident or loss
Safety hierarchy	Conceptions of unsafety and severity of an event. The serious injury accident is at the top
Serious conflict	An interaction where without an evasive action the impression is such that the situation easily could have ended up in an accident instead or event that cross severity threshold value of measuring parameters such as Time-to-Accident or Post-Encroachment Time etc
Severity hierarchy	The safety hierarchy transferred into measurable parameters based on certain presumptions
Shoulder	The portion of the roadway contiguous with the traveled way that accommodates stopped vehicles, emergency use, and lateral support for subbase, base, and surface courses
TCT	Traffic Conflicts Technique(s). TCT is a tool for estimating accident potential at road infrastructure, indirect measurement of safety and indicating methods of reducing hazardous conditions
Time-to-Accident (TA)	Conflict safety indicator measure determined in accordance with the Traffic Conflict Technique. Based on subjective estimation of speed and distance by trained observers for conflicting road-users in relation to a conflict point. The Time-to-Accident measure is recorded only once at the time when evasive action is first taken by a conflicting road-user

Time-to-Collision (TTC)	A continuous function of time as long as there is a collision course; Safety indicator measure based on an objective measure of speed and distance (usually involves photometric video-analysis) for conflicting road users in relation to their conflict course. The Time-to-Collision measure is recorded continually throughout a conflict course and is not dependent on evasive action by the conflicting road-users
Traffic conflict	An accepted definition is stated as: "an observable situation in which two or more road users approach each other in space and time for such an extent that there is a risk of collision if their movements remain unchanged" (Amundsen and Hydén, 1977)
Traffic safety	Traffic safety refers to methods and measures for reducing the risk of a person/ vehicle using the road network being injured, death or harm and/or damage to material
Underreporting	Term used to describe the fact that many accidents are not reported to the police or concerning agencies and therefore are not represented in accident statistics
Upstream	The direction from which traffic is flowing
Validity	Validity concerns the accuracy with which a measure represents a theoretical construct (assessed often through consensus)
Weaving	The crossing of traffic streams moving in the same general direction accomplished by merging and diverging