

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE COMPLETION REPORT¹

Division: EATC

TA No., Country and Name TA 4698-PRC: Road Safety Improvement			Amount Approved: \$625,000	
			Revised Amount: \$625,000	
Executing Agency: Traffic Management Bureau, (TMB) Ministry of Public Security (MPS)	Source of Funding TASF and Global Road Safety Partnership (GRSP)	Amount Undisbursed: \$15,811.71	Amount Utilized: \$ 609,188.29	
TA Approval Date: 24 November 2005	TA Signing Date: 5 January 2006	Fielding of First Consultant: 24 May 2006	TA Completion Date	
			Original: 31 October 2008	Actual: 30 April 2009
			Account Closing Date	
			Original: 31 October 2008	Actual: 20 July 2009
Description				
Rapid economic development, rising vehicle ownership and strong transport demand in the People's Republic of China (PRC) have resulted in a substantial increase in road accidents with associated loss of life and property damage. The PRC has one of the highest road accident rates—with over half a million road fatalities and 2.6 million injuries during the period 2000–2004. The social costs of avoidable death and disability from road accidents have a growing impact on the PRC economy. Economic losses from road accidents amount to 1–3% of gross domestic product and exceed the national budget for public health sector. The situation is likely to further deteriorate unless urgent measures are taken to improve road safety. A multidimensional road safety program known as the National Road Safety Reform Program (NRSRP) was formulated with the assistance of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to address various road safety problems and constraints. The TA was to examine impediments to improving road safety and address how best to advance the implementation of the remaining components of the NRSRP.				
Expected Impact, Outcome and Outputs				
The TA aimed to improve the safety and efficiency of road transport operations and strengthen traffic law enforcement in the PRC. This was expected to increase the overall benefits from road network investments and particularly benefit the poor. It was intended to help reduce the severity, frequency, and cost of road accidents, and strengthen the capacity of road and traffic agencies to implement the NRSRP. This was to be achieved by formulating a road safety investment plan and a road safety action plan, by incorporating appropriate road safety remedial measures that would be effective and relevant to the PRC environment, and by strengthening the capacity of the Traffic Management Bureau (TMB) to enforce traffic regulations.				
The TA was expected to have three major outputs: (i) various technical reports to provide guidance to relevant authorities in the PRC in advancing the implementation of the NRSRP, after pilot testing of policy and institutional reforms in a model province and capacity building of relevant road safety agencies through domestic and international training activities; (ii) development of a monitorable national action plan to advance implementation of the NRSRP; and (iii) formulation of a road safety investment plan.				
Delivery of Inputs and Conduct of Activities				
Five individual short-term international experts covering road safety strategy, safer road engineering, and traffic safety were recruited. Over the period from August 2006 to October 2008, they provided about 10 person-months of consulting services to prepare technical reports and to conduct training activities. In addition, a team leader was fielded in May 2006 to provide overall coordination and supervision. However, the team leader did not carry out his assignments effectively. Consequently, pilot testing in the model province, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, of black spot identification and treatment, road safety publicity, and speeding and seat-belt enforcement was poorly supervised from June to December 2006. No comparative study was conducted to gauge the effectiveness of such pilot testing. The team leader also failed to adequately coordinate the activities of the international and national experts. Measures to improve communications and to strengthen the implementation arrangements were agreed with the team leader, TMB, and Traffic Management Research Institute (TMRI). However, before these measures could be effectively carried out the team leader opted to resign from the TA in April 2007 after providing about 6 person-months of services. His sudden resignation coupled with unsatisfactory TA outputs and difficulties in recruiting a suitable replacement in mid-stream prompted the co-financier the Global Road Safety Partnership to cancel its parallel grant of \$375,000. This was despite				

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a strong appeal by ADB, replacement of the project officer, and a jointly formulated remedial action plan. With this cancellation, further pilot testing could not be carried out and the international training activities had to be scaled-down. Due to limited remaining TA funds, the replacement team leader was only engaged for two person-months on an intermittent basis between April and August 2008. His scope of work was limited to revision and completion of the technical reports produced by the five short-term international experts and the previous team leader. The TA inputs in the form of counterpart staff, individual short-term national consultants, office facilities, pilot testing facilities, and training of the traffic police officers were provided as planned. TMRI provided the required training facilities including teaching aid and translators. ADB fielded an inception mission nearly four months after fielding of the team leader although the project officer made two informal visits, at the time of undertaking loan processing missions, to finalize implementation. In total ADB fielded five review missions. In spite of these missions, ADB's support for coordination of the TA activities was inadequate; this combined with a lack of consultation with local technical experts contributed to reports being poorly prepared, too little supervision of pilot testing activities, and discord among the GRSP, TMB, TMRI and the team leader. TMB and TMRI were not satisfied with the performance of the team leader. ADB also had to replace its project officer in the middle of the TA implementation period which further disrupted work on the TA, and contributed to an extended delay in replacing team leader. Hence, the performance of ADB is rated partly satisfactory. The performance of TMB and TMRI is rated as satisfactory. The performance of the five short-term consultants and the replacement team leader is also rated as satisfactory, while that of the initial team leader is rated unsatisfactory.

TA implementation took longer than expected as a result of the need to replace the team leader. Also the international training activities had to be deferred to early 2009 due to active involvement of many of the selected participants with traffic planning and management in connection with the Beijing Olympic and Paralympic games.

Evaluation of Outputs and Achievement of Outcome

The terms of reference were too broad and ambitious for the TA objective to be achievable within the available TA resources. As a result, some activities such as pilot testing of the NRSRP in the model province and international training activities were curtailed.

Ten technical reports were produced mostly by the team leader. These covered areas such as road safety education, road safety information, safer road design, and black-spot treatment. These reports are: (i) road safety information report; (ii) road safety education report, (iii) road safety improvement action plan; (iv) road safety design and audit guidelines; (v) road safety investment plan; (vi) guidelines on encouraging public participation in road safety; (vii) operational guidelines for data-led enforcement of speeding violations; (viii) social economic cost of road crashes in the PRC; (ix) road accident black spot guidelines-identification and treatment; and (x) technical report on traffic law enforcement. The Government has launched a multi-agency action plan in 2007 with the aim of establishing a safe and harmonious road traffic environment through education and publicity as well as stricter drivers training and supervision of transport service enterprises as recommended in these technical reports. Due to limited time available to the new team leader, the technical report on road safety investment plan only provided best practices and insights from successful programs in other countries instead of concrete investment proposals and funding sources. The ten reports were briefly reviewed by local experts before translated into Chinese language and published for dissemination to all provincial traffic police bureaus within the country. The reports contain some good practices and their recommendations were generally practical and applicable to the current situation in PRC. However these reports lacked in-depth analysis of safety issues in PRC resulting in their low utilization as reference materials by local traffic police units.

The five short-term experts who had considerable experience and knowledge as former or active traffic police officers were able to impart their knowledge to trainees during the training activities. These covered topics such as accident investigation, accident data collection, and traffic law enforcement. They were attended by 926 traffic police officers from all provinces and regions within the PRC. Fifty high-ranking police officers received international training in the European Union and the United States covering driver management, vehicle registration, traffic law enforcement, traffic management information system, emergency response, and vehicle collision prevention and investigation. Based on feedback from the participants, the training was useful as it enhanced their knowledge and skills in traffic management and accident prevention. Equipment for training such as driving simulator and multimedia training equipment purchased under the TA was installed in the new training center of the TMRI in Wuxi and used regularly to train traffic police, using some of the TA trainees as resource speakers. In addition, a small quantity of equipment for pilot testing such as mobile speed detectors was procured for Guangxi Traffic Bureau to conduct testing.

The number of the national road traffic accidents has decreased from 450,254 in 2005 to 327,209 in 2007 despite a significant increase in number of vehicles and the road accident fatality rate has slowed from 0.757 death per thousand vehicle (or 0.76 per million people) to 0.511 (or 0.62 per million people) over the same period. However, it is difficult to attribute such progress directly to the TA.

Overall Assessment and Rating

The TA is rated as partly successful. Although it made a useful contribution to road safety in the PRC such as the multi-agency action plan as part of the NRSRP, two of the three objectives were not fully achieved.

Major Lessons

Even when the TA subject is highly relevant and there is ownership by the executing and implementing agencies, if the TA scope is too broad it may not be possible for the TA experts to provide all of the expected outputs.

A good working relationship among the individual consultants, the executing and implementing agencies, and ADB was essential for the smooth implementation of the TA.

Properly supervised pilot testing with clear objective and planning is essential to achieve meaningful results.

Given that so many technical reports were produced to provide guidance to the various traffic bureaus and that these reports needed to be widely reviewed and disseminated, it would have been useful to have a longer implementation period for the TA and to recruit a more diverse range of individual experts to take part in the TA so that national experts could have reviewed the technical reports.

Recommendations and Follow-Up Actions

The progress on the implementation of the action and investment plans should be followed up during the ongoing policy dialogue with the Ministry of Transport and Ministry of Public Security on road safety in connection with the processing of lending and non-lending projects in the PRC.

Since road safety continues to be a major concern in the PRC, ADB should continue to explore ways to assist the PRC Government in developing effective measures to address safety problems and constraints through adaptation of proven and cost-effective safety remedial measures such as the proposed TA on improving road safety through application of intelligent transport system.

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