

INCREASED TRAFFIC FINES AND ROAD TRAFFIC CRASHES IN SRI LANKA

doi:10.1136/injuryprev-2012-040590u.18

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Background In the developed world higher traffic fines are known to improve the road safety. In Sri Lanka, the traffic fines were increased markedly in 2005; this was done after 20 years of the previous amendment.

Objectives To evaluate the effects of increased traffic fines on the road safety in Sri Lanka.

Methods We extracted all the police reported crash data and data on traffic offences in Sri Lanka during first quarters of each year from 2001 to 2006.

Results From 2001 to 2005, driving under the influence of alcohol (DUI), driving without driving license and driving without revenue license increased markedly and high speed driving doubled. After the amendments, DUI decreased by 28.0%, driving without driving license decreased by 59.5% driving without revenue license decreased by 18.4%, and high speed driving reduced by 25.9%. After 2005, the fatal injury crash rate decreased by 16.1%. Non-grievous injury rate reduced by 10.0% and the grievous injury crash rate reduced by 2.6%.

Significance After the increase of fines, the traffic offences showed a marked reduction and effectively curbed crashes causing injuries and deaths in Sri Lanka.