

Speech by Tim Keown, Chairman, FIA Foundation

'A World Free of High Risk Roads' Conference, London, 15th September 2015

The FIA Foundation is proud to have supported the iRAP initiative since 2002. We've seen it evolve from a research programme launched by a small group of European automobile clubs to an active global network spanning six continents and more than 70 countries. As we've heard this morning, iRAP is now working with governments, road authorities and international donors. It is helping to shape billions of dollars of investment across high, middle and low income countries using a consistent measurement system.

We believe that iRAP safety assessments have added an important layer of transparency to road infrastructure management. For the first time, the risk maps and star ratings provide politicians, the media and the public with information on the safety of the roads they use or fund. This awareness promotes accountability. It can be used to encourage, and measure, action. As we've just seen, the leading road safety policymakers, in the highest performing countries, are using star rating as an effective policy tool, to guide their casualty reduction targets and to measure their results.

Now we need to widen the adoption of health performance targets based on star rating to the middle and low income countries where the need is greatest.

Like the FIA Foundation, iRAP is a charity. It is non-profit, its Trustees are volunteers, and it is required by law to operate in the public interest. We share a deep commitment to improving public health. iRAP's core work is to provide an independent Star Rating measurement system for worldwide use. We fully support this objective, and over the last ten years we have invested millions to help star rating reach its full potential.

Today I am pleased to announce further FIA Foundation support to iRAP to enable the star rating system to be provided 'free to air', and to support training and advocacy to promote its effective use. In addition to the one million euro annual grant we provide to iRAP, the Foundation is providing a strategic grant of eight hundred thousand euro over the next three years to give iRAP additional flexibility to meet the opportunities presented by the new Global Goals.

This will ensure there is wide understanding that Star Rating protocols are open for anyone to use without charge, subject only to simple rules assuring quality, consistency and sharing of information in the public interest. Over the next 3 years it is anticipated there will be more than adequate capacity to apply the protocols globally in the commercial, not-for-profit and public sectors. We hope the 'free to air' commitment will encourage development banks, governments and engineering firms to adopt star rating as a universal safety tool.

We've just heard the need for urgency in building up the concrete actions that can achieve the road safety targets in the Global Goals. I hope our announcement, coming at the end of this inspiring morning, will motivate others to do whatever they can. It is possible to raise the ten per cent of highest risk roads towards a minimum three star rating by 2020. We have the tools. We have the coalition, gathered in this room. Now we need the ambition, the imagination, and the single-minded determination to make it happen. This is the challenge I will leave you with this morning. Thank you for coming today and for all the work you do to save lives on our roads. I now declare the conference closed.

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