



Cell Phone Use While Driving

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Outline of presentation

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**Data available prior to
decision being made**

Availability of data

Problem emerged recently: little data available on cell phone use as a contributing factor in accidents

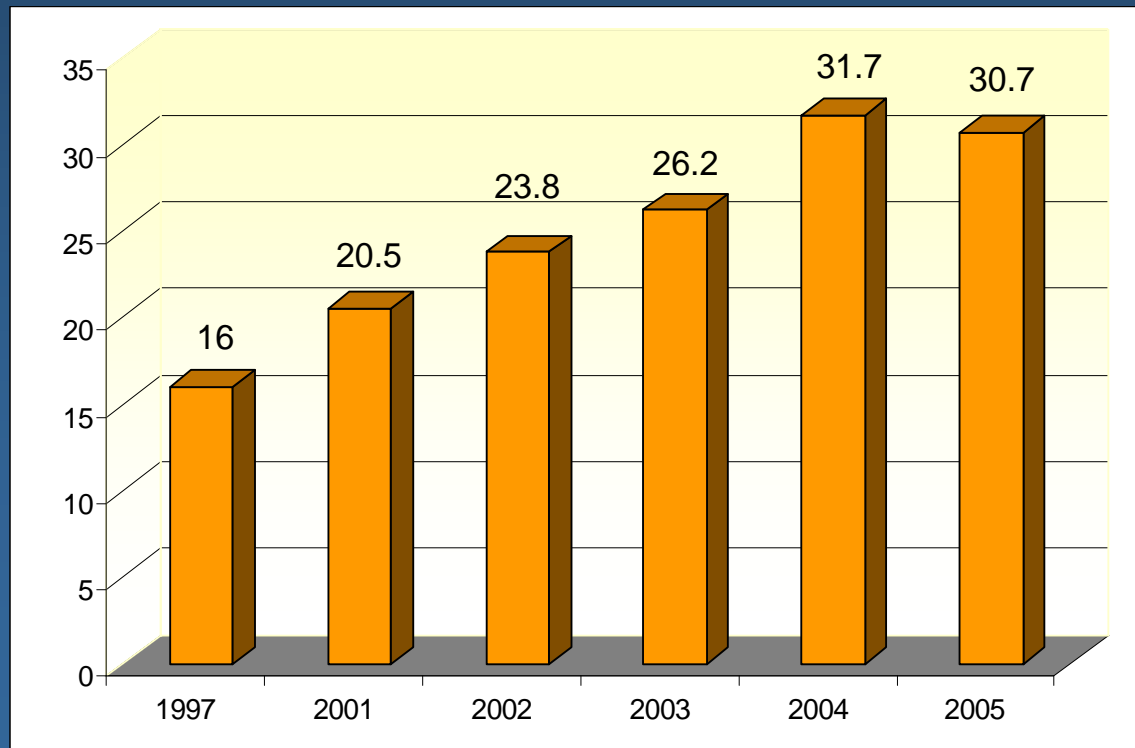
- Current accident reports do not allow all information to be compiled
- No field survey has been carried out in Quebec or Canada

However, provincial and national polls, as well as scientific research, have revealed certain disquieting facts...

Cell phone use while driving- statistics

- Canada

- The rate of cell phone use while driving has been rising since 1997



Cell phone use while driving- statistics and polls

- Quebec
 - 2007: 4.5 million people own a cell phone
 - **Driving behaviour** (SAAQ poll 2005)
 - 2005:
 - 49% of drivers own a cell phone
 - 58% have used it while driving
 - Those who use it do so on a regular basis
 - **Public opinion**
 - 2006 (INSPQ poll):
 - 93% believe that cell phone use while driving should be regulated
 - » 49% favour a complete ban
 - 2007 (SAAQ poll):
 - 95% favour regulation of cell phone use while driving:
 - » 46% favour a complete ban
 - » 49% favour a ban on hand-held devices

Cell phone use while driving-foreign legislation

- International overview
 - More than 50 countries have introduced legislation regulating the use of cell phones while driving:
 - hand-held devices only
 - very few countries have banned hands-free systems; however:
 - in 17 American states there is a complete ban for certain sub-groups: school bus drivers and/or new drivers.
- Canada
 - Newfoundland and Labrador (2003)

Cell phone use while driving- Conclusions of scientific research

- Significant source of cognitive and visual distraction
- Affects driving performance and behaviour:
 - by increasing braking reaction time in critical situations or in response to the appearance of a visual stimulus
 - by reducing the field of vision
 - by increasing the time required to make adjustments to maintain a safe distance from other vehicles
 - by decreasing the ability to detect internal and external stimuli
- Degree of distraction is not linked to the type of device used:
 - Hands-free devices do not represent a safer solution

Cell phone use while driving- Conclusions of scientific research

- Compared to non-users, those who use a cell phone while driving:
 - are **one and a half times more likely** to commit infractions of the Highway Safety Code
 - are **38% more likely** to be in a road accident
- The risk increases with the frequency of use (up to 2 times greater for heavy users)

Cell phone use while driving- Recommendations of other partners

Some partners have taken a stance on the regulation of cell phone use while driving

- **Coroners (2004)**
 - The investigation report of coroner Claude Paquin (March 2004) recommends:
 - including in the Highway Safety Code a provision banning the use of a cell phone by the driver of a moving vehicle
 - 2004 to 2007: analysis of coroner reports reveals that cell phone use was a contributing factor in around ten fatal accidents
- **Public health advisory (INSPQ, January 2007)**
 - Recommends a complete ban on cell phone use while driving

**Parliamentary
commission
March 2006**

Parliamentary commission

March 2006

- Initiative mandate on road safety
- Parliamentarians representing the three parties in the National Assembly
- 4 topics studied
 - Cell phones
 - Speeding
 - Motorcycles
 - Winter conditions
- Consultation of 22 individuals and organizations; over 830 stakeholders answered an online questionnaire
- Recommendations regarding cell phone use while driving:
 - Introduce legislative changes allowing only the use of hands-free cell phone devices while driving any type of motor vehicle.
 - Introduce legislative changes allowing drivers of a motorized vehicle to use other types of cell phones only when the vehicle is stationary.
 - Conduct a large-scale public awareness campaign to inform drivers of the risks associated with driving distractions and, in particular, with the use of cell phones while driving.



Table québécoise de la sécurité routière

Table québécoise de la sécurité routière

- The mandate
 - Make recommendations to the Minister of Transport aimed at improving road safety in Quebec
- The 44 members
 - Associations of road users
 - Academic community
 - Municipal representatives
 - Police force representatives
 - Relevant governmental departments and agencies

Table québécoise de la sécurité routière - process

- Working method

- Take into account data, existing knowledge and foreign practices
- Consider the concerns of all partners, to foster engagement
- Build consensus
- Submit recommendations

Table québécoise de la sécurité routière - recommandation

- **Recommandation of the Table (consensus of members):**
 - Promote the introduction of new legislation aimed at controlling the use of cell phones while driving
- **Concerns raised:**
 - Difficulty of enforcing a hands-free ban: for a law to be effective, it must be enforceable
 - Work tool, particularly for the transportation industry (people and merchandise) and for the taxi industry
 - The problem needs to be better documented – modify accident reports



Bill No. 42

Bill No. 42

- Parliamentary commission in November-December 2007:
 - 28 individuals and organizations heard
- Adopted in December 2007
 - **sec. 439.1 HSC:** “No person may, while driving a road vehicle, use a hand-held device that includes a telephone function (...)”
 - Provision came into effect: April 1, 2008
 - 3-month period during which offenders received a warning rather than a ticket
 - Since July 1, 2008, the designated penalty is:
 - a fine of between \$80 and 100, plus fees
 - 3 demerit points

Bill No. 42

- A step in the right direction

- A measure developed by taking into account the scientific conclusions, the enforceability and the potential impacts on businesses and workers
- Brings part of the problem under control (the most urgent aspect)
- Enforceable by police officers
- The legislation is accompanied by public messages aimed at raising public awareness
 - SAAQ
 - MTQ: sign boards with various messages



Since 2007

Since 2007

- Number of tickets issued:
 - SQ: 2,422 (July 1 to October 31, 2008)
 - SPVM: 4,693 (July 1 to October 31, 2008)
- Nova Scotia also introduced legislation banning hand-held devices (2008)
- Ontario: legislation is currently being adopted

Conclusion

- Improve knowledge:
 - Modify accident reports (underway)
 - Continue to seek for work tools that can be used as alternatives to cell phones
- Continue raising awareness:
 - hands-free devices also represent a safety risk