

# Road Transportation and Traffic Law Enforcement in Nigeria: A case study of the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC)

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## Abstract

*Road Transportation and Traffic Law Enforcement in Nigeria was established in order to reduce the increasing road crashes and fatalities as well as making road users comply with traffic Laws and regulations as a counter measure, which remain as a great challenge in Nigeria. This paper discussed the roles of the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) in the enforcement of Road Traffic Laws. The methodology used for this paper was the collections of data. The finding from the study revealed that there is dearth of operational equipments in FRSC thus hampering its performance. It further observed that Road traffic laws are strong and adequate, but lack effective enforcement, which is responsible for non-compliance. The study also revealed that FRSC has done very well in its performance especially in Educating motorists through various public enlightenment campaigns. The study shows that there are bad roads with narrow lanes and potholes resulting to traffic congestions and crashes. Having identified these challenges, the study recommended among others, adequate funding of the corps, effective enforcement of existing road traffic laws by all the relevant law enforcement agencies, training of the law enforcement personnel and construction of befitting roads.*

**Key words:** *Road Transportation, Traffic Law Enforcement, Challenges, Federal Road Safety Corps*

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## Introduction

Road Traffic injuries have escalated to serious health, social and economic hazard, in developing countries. According to Yar'Adua (2008), Road Traffic Accidents cost US\$ 18 billion globally in low income and middle income countries; and that road

related injuries will rise to third position ahead of such diseases as Tuberculosis and even HIV/AIDS. He submit that a total of 55, 195 Road Traffic Accident were reported in Nigeria from 2003-2007, out of which 25,939 persons were killed and

85,976 others injured. Yar'Adua posted that the situation of Road Traffic Accidents in contemporary world and local perspectives has given an insight into the significance of the existence of the Federal Road Safety Commission.

An analysis of the causes of death in a number of countries throughout the developing countries has shown that deaths and fatalities from road traffic accident in Nigeria rank among the highest in the world and second behind those by hunger and gastroenteritis Adebisi (1988) cited in Balogun (2006). A number of experts have suggested several causes of road traffic accident to broadly include the following:

According to Oyeyemi (2003:4), human factors constitute about 80% of the cause of road traffic accidents recorded in the country. This includes dangerous overtaking at bends, crest of a hill, over speeding, driving under the influence of alcohol/drugs and the use of mobile phone while driving among others. Oyeyemi continues that this is a situation where drivers operate mechanically deficient vehicles on the roads on the roads carrying passengers and property without safety consideration. Such vehicles are not road worthy and they do not meet minimum safety standards. Bad weather condition leading to mist, haze, harmattan and sometimes heavy rainfall resulting in poor visibility and accidents.

Thus, the objective of this paper is to examine and analyze the challenges confronting the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) in its primary role of enforcing road traffic laws in Nigeria with a view to proffering recommendations and implementation strategies; examine the

roles of FRSC in enforcing traffic laws; assess the level of compliance with road traffic laws by motorists and other road users; identify the challenges confronting FRSC in discharging its mandate and to proffer recommendations, provide implementation strategies towards improving the operational standard of FRSC on how to effectively carry out its constitutional responsibilities

Oyeyemi (2003) concludes that Road Traffic Accidents constitute a major cause of death and loss of property in the country, depleting the workforce of the nation and rendering victims and their relatives to suffer severe psychological trauma. Billions of naira worth of property including human beings, most of them belonging to the productive age group are consumed through automobile fire incidents on the roads due to accidents. Different accident statistic have been presented by a number of stakeholders to underscore the adverse effect of road traffic accidents on the economy.

According to Rom Kalilu (2008), reported cases of RTA from 1960 up to 2006 indicate that there were 967, 618 crashes with 1,159,642 casualties. He argues that there was a drastic and sharp reduction in the reported cases of road traffic accidents in 1988, the year that the Federal Road Safety Corps was established. Just about a decade (1980-1989) before FRSC was established, road traffic accident records were on the increase.

The challenges of road traffic accident necessitated the decision of the Federal Government to establish a Lead Agency with specific responsibilities to address the

wanton destruction of lives and property on the highways. This became necessary because the nation lacks capacity to provide advance rescue services to handle emergency arising from road accidents. According to Oyeyemi (2003), most victims of RTA who could have survived during road crashed die as a result of poor handling, timing or even badly managed pre-hospital trauma life supported services. The worst scenario is when such crashes occur at night in the country, which hampers prompt search and rescue process due to poor visibility. There is also lack of necessary cooperation from the public and private hospitals who are not favourably disposed to receive victims of road crashes and provide them with the desire Medicare with dispatch.

The establishment of FRSC by Decree No 45 of 1988 as amended by decree 35 of 1992 later cited as FRSC act (CAP 141) Laws of the Federation of Nigeria (LFN) 1990 and re-enacted as FRSC (Establishment) Act 2007 was in line with the principles of good governance. This is because section 11 (1) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999) states thus:

*“The National Assembly may make laws for Federation or any part thereof with respect to the maintenance and securing of public safety and public order and providing, maintaining and securing such supplied and services as may be designated by the National Assembly as essential supplies and services.”*

Olagunju (2009), observes that lack of efficient and effective traffic law enforcement has been responsible for several accidents in the country especially among motorcycle operators. Olagunju notes further that participants at a one day workshop on motorcycle operations in Nigeria, organized by the Federal Road Safety Corps in March 2006 expressed dismay at the level of disobedience to traffic rules and regulations by the riders. The conduct of these commercial motorcyclists characterized by poor knowledge of traffic rules and regulations, engaging in drugs and use of mobile phones while riding resulted to many motorcycle accidents.

Olagunju (2009) further narrates the frustration of Adamawa State Government Committee on “Achaba” (Commercial Motorcycle Operator) operations on how to sanitize the activities of commercial motorcyclist in the State. the author notes that even when the committee had legal backing on the use of motorcycles for commercial purpose in the state, unfortunately, the provisions of the law were not implemented. The uncooperative attitude of the commercial motorcyclists compelled the state committee to recommend for the enforcement of all relevant laws guiding the activities in the State in order to bring orderliness in public transportation in the state. This study agrees with the position of the author that adequate traffic law enforcement will lead to more reduction in accidents rate on the road.

Nwachukwu (1998) post that the observance and enforcement of road safety laws and regulations has contributed

positively to the significant reduction of loss of lives and property on the roads. He further states that these laws and regulations have suffered violent abuses from motorists and unscrupulous members of the public as well as misinterpretations. The author adds that there are instances where Special Mobile Courts are circumstance; any defaulter who is convicted is sentenced to a term of imprisonment with option of fine.

According to Nwachukwu (1998) the idea of the Mobile court is to facilitate the trial of road traffic offenders thereby ensuring discipline on the highways. The author recognizes the first attempt by Oyo state government in tackling road hazards when it created Oyo state Road Safety Corps in 1977 by Edict No. of 1977. There are various rules and regulations that could be implemented to minimize road accident occurrences on the roads (Badejo, 1998:95). These rules and regulations if well observed and adhered to would reduce road hazards. The author identifies such regulations if well observed and adhered to would reduce road, the responsibilities of the driver, the road worthiness situation of the vehicle and the penalties for flouting those regulations. He posits that law enforcement agencies of all categories have an obligation to ensure their compliance. The author is of the opinion that there are several problems affecting the ability to enforce some of the rules that help mitigate road accident. These challenges have social, economic, political and environmental implications thus making it difficult to achieve minimum standard of road safety in the country. Commenting on Nigerian cultural Values and Road Traffic

Accidents, Maduagwu (1998:77) observes thus:

*Most Nigerian drivers have no regards whatever for traffic laws and regulations: They do not observe speed limit any more than they obey traffic signs on the highway. With no thought on the other road users. They overtake anywhere and anyhow. Nigerian drivers even park parallel on the middle of the road to greet one another or to chat, holding other Traffic to ransom.*

He attributes this to discipline which is a major manifestation of the so-called Nigerian factor that is noticed on the roads. Many authors are of the view that in order to be effective in traffic law enforcement, policing activities should be structured so as to pose a meaningful and immediate deterrence threat would be traffic offender. According to Rottengather (1990), one of the fundamental problem hindering this process is the inability of the relevant authorities to maintain necessary high levels of enforcement. In a separate study of police in the Netherlands, Spain, Norway and Ireland, Ostvic et al (1989) conclude that the police identified understaffing as one of the most important factors hindering enforcement operations. Rottengatter (1990) further identifies a number of other factors which contribute to the situation as follows:

- a. the intensity of motorized traffic has increased rapidly in the last decade, without corresponding increases in policing resources,
- b. public opinion and politics are generally not in favour of intensive surveillance and enforcement,

c. legal requirements and procedures often seriously jeopardize efficient law enforcement,

d. The task of traffic law enforcement has to compete something with other social issues which equally demand the attention of law enforcement agents such as increase in violence and environmental disasters.

Onakomiya (1977) in pere (2007) states that Road Traffic Accidents have assumed one of the most discussed issues in Nigeria inspite of the robust campaigns carried out by FRSC routinely. He lists some of the factors responsible for road traffic accident as human, environmental and vehicular factors. Supporting this position particularly the human, factor element, Garba (2009) expatiate more when the author summarized the problems to include poor knowledge of road safety education and enforcement of traffic laws and Highway Code, indiscipline, non compliance, incomprehension of road signs and traffic signals, absence of well-structured socio-cultural oriented traffic laws and regulations.

Kwaga (2006 cited in Garba, 2007) found in his study on socio-Economic effects of road traffic accidents in Nigeria that Road Traffic Accidents have become a major concern world over to the extent that lives are wasted daily. He confirms that causes of Road Traffic Accidents have been traced to human, environment and vehicular factors. Yakasai (1998) divides cause of RTA into three main groups which are; the vehicle and environmental conditions. He claims that both the second and third factors are usually not responsible for causing road traffic accidents. He posits that it is the driver's reaction or response to

those factors that eventually leads to road traffic crash. The author concludes that most accidents are directly or indirectly caused by improper driving habits, poor mental and physical condition of the driver. Other which he identifies is lack of knowledge and attention to the vehicle behavior, ignorance and disregard to traffic regulations as well as lack of consideration for other road users.

Rom Kalilu (2008) opines that safety is beyond a non-road accident situation. Road accidents must be seen beyond the levels of involvement of those on the road alone. It should be seen in relation to everyone as well everything that is in many ways connected with road transport. He states that the cumulative effects of all the problems are traffic congestion, pollution, stress, emotional imbalance, depression, time hour loss, accidents. Others are destruction of transport facilities, economic loss to individual and the nation in terms of Gross Domestic product (GDP), injuries, disabilities and death. All these affect the span of life as well as peace and security of the country. The author, however, identifies the problem of enforcement challenge, and concludes that law enforcement agents are largely ill-equipped with unserviceable vehicles and poor communication and tracking devices.

### **Materials and Method**

The study method consist of officers and men of the Federal Road Safety Corps from the three senatorial district of Nasarawa North, Nasarawa South and Nasarawa West. Others included private and commercial drivers, Nigeria Police Force (NPP), Vehicle Inspection Officers (VIO)

and other road users within the same senatorial districts of the state. Questionnaires were administered among the FRSC in order to elicit the needed information. The collected data with

analysis also served as the basis for additional information on the subject. Finally, inferences, deductions and logical conclusions were drawn

### Data Analysis and Presentation of findings

**Table 1:1: Driving /Riding Experience**  
**How long have you been Driving/Riding?**

Duration		Frequency	Percentage	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
	5-10 years	72	49.3	49.3	49.3
	11-15 years	26	17.8	17.8	67.1
Valid	16-20 yr	29	19.9	19.9	87.0
	Above 21	19	13.0	13.0	100.0
	Total	146	100.0	100.0	

Source: Researcher's Field Survey, 2010

Table 1:1 indicates that 49.3% of the respondents have 5-10years driving /riding experience, 19.9% have 16-20years experience and 13% of drivers/riders have

above 21years experience. It therefore implies that most the road traffic accidents are caused by inexperienced drivers/riders

### Early Training of the Respondents

**Table 1:2 Driver/Riders' Early Training**  
**How did you learn to Drive/Ride?**

Responses		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	Driving school	39	26.7	26.7	26.7
	Private lesson	37	25.3	25.3	52.1
	Through a member of family	34	23.3	23.3	75.3
	Through a friend	34	23.3	23.3	98.6
	Others	2	1.4	1.4	100.0
	Total	146	100.0	100.0	

Source: Researcher's Field Survey, 2010

Table 1:2 shows that 26.7% of the respondents received their in training from driving school, 25.3% received through private training, 23.3% each obtained their training either through a member of the

family or through a friend. Furthermore, this finding indicates that most drivers/riders are yet to embrace the culture of formal training in driving school.

### Knowledge of Road Signs

**Table 1:3: Knowledge of Road Signs  
How familiar are you with road signs?**

Responses		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	Very familiar	96	65.8	65.8	65.8
	Familiar	37	25.3	25.3	91.1
	Fairly Familiar	12	8.2	8.2	99.3
	Not Familiar	1	.7	.7	100.0
	Total	146	100.0	100.0	

Source: Researcher's Field Survey, 2010

Table 1:3 indicates that 65.8% of the respondents are very familiar with road signs o the high ways. 25.3% are familiar while 7% are not familiar.

### Possession of valid Drivers License by the respondents

**Table 1:4: Possession of valid Drivers License  
Do you have a Driver's License?**

Responses		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	Yes	126	86.3	86.3	86.3
	No	20	13.7	13.7	100.0
	Total	146	100.0	100.0	

Source: Researcher's Field Survey, 2010

Table 1:4 shows that 86.3% of the respondents agreed that they hold a valid diver's license while 13.7% do not have a driver's license.

### Did you go through a Driving /Riding Test before you obtained your License?

**Table 1:5: Undergoing driving test.**

Responses		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	Yes	88	60.3	60.3	60.3
	No	58	39.7	39.7	100.0
	Total	146	100.0	100.0	

Source: Researcher's Field Survey, 2010

Table 1:5 indicates that 60.3% of the respondents went through a driving/riding test before they obtained their driver's

license. On the other hand, 39.7% did not go through a driving/riding test before they obtained their driver's license

**What class of Driver's License do you possess?**

**Table 1:6: Class of Driver's License**

Class of Driving License		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	Class A	13	8.9	65.8	8.9
	Class B	32	21.9	25.3	30.8
	Class C	7	4.8	8.2	35.6
	Class E	76	52.1	.7	87.7
	Class G	1	.7	100.0	88.4
	No Drivers License	17	11.6		100.0
	Total	146	100.0		

Source: Researcher's Field Survey, 2010

Table 1:6 shows that 21.9% of the respondents hold class B license mainly carried by private drivers while 52.1% of the respondents hold class E license

popularly used by commercial drivers. Only 8.9% used Class A mainly carried by motorcyclists

**Have you witnessing Road Traffic Accident?**

**Table 1:7: Witnessing Road Traffic Accident**

Responses		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	Yes	62	42.5	42.5	42.5
	No	84	57.5	57.5	100.0
	Total	146	100.0	100.0	

Source: Researcher's Field Survey, 2010



Table 1:7 indicates that 42.5% of the respondents have been involved in road traffic accident and 57.5% have not

### Causes of RTA

Some of the respondents are of the opinion that the underlisted are the major causes of road traffic accident. Their responses are presented below as follows:

- a. Over speeding – 30%
- b. Bad roads without road signs – 8%
- c. Uneducated drivers/riders – 10%
- d. Use of mobile phone while driving – 5%
- e. That the present laws are not serving as a deterrent to traffic offenders – 5%
- f. Rickety vehicles that are not road worthy due to poor maintenance culture – 10%
- g. Drunk driving – 20%
- h. Wrong overtaking 12%

### How will you assess the performance of FRSC in enforcing road Traffic laws?

Table 1:8: Assessment of FRSC on enforcement of road traffic laws

Responses		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	Very effective	51	43.9	43.9	34.9
	Effective	61	41.8	41.8	76.7
	Fairly effective	28	19.2	19.2	95.9
	Not effective	6	4.1	4.1	100.0
	Total	146	100.0	100.0	

Source: Researcher’s Field Survey, 2010

Table 1:9 shows that 34.9% of the respondents rated FRSC as a very effective organization. 4.1% found the FRSC as not

effective. Generally, the agency is seen as effective.

### Law Enforcement Personnel

#### Distribution of the respondents into Law Enforcement Service Organization.

Table 1:9: Distribution of service organization

Service organization		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	FRSC	86	64.7	64.7	64.7
	Police	44	33.1	33.1	97.7
	VIO	3	2.3	2.3	100.0
	Total	133	100.0	100.0	

Source: Researcher’s Field Survey, 2010

Table 1:9 indicates that 64% of the respondents are from the FRSC, 33.1% from the Nigeria Police Force (NPF) and

2.3% are Vehicle Inspection Officers (VIO).

### How do you rate the enforcement of Road Traffic Laws in Nigeria?

**Table 1:10: Respondents' views on enforcement of traffic laws**

Responses		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	Very high	7	5.3	5.3	5.3
	High	55	41.4	41.4	46.6
	Low	63	47.4	47.4	94.0
	Poor	8	6.0	6.0	100.0
	Total	133	100.0	100.0	

Source: Researcher's Field Survey, 2010

Table 1:10 shows that 41.4% of the respondents rated the enforcement of road traffic laws in Nigeria as high but 47.4%

rated low. That means that more people are of the opinion that enforcement capacity is below average.

### Discussion

#### Development of Road Traffic Administration in Nigeria

According to Nwaegbe (2008) and Balogun (2006:7) the most significant step taken to address road safety matters in Nigeria was the promulgation of motor Traffic Ordinance of 1913 which was restricted to the Southern protectorate. By 1916, the National Motor Traffic Ordinance was promulgated following the amalgamation of the Northern and a southern protectorate in 1914. This was, however, reviewed in 1940 and 1945 sequel to English Road Traffic Act of 1930. The Traffic Road police Unit was established in 1960 after independence with its functions and limitations. The Nigeria Army introduced her annual one week safety

campaign in 1972 to sensitize the public on the dangers of road traffic accidents. Though the programme was laudable, it was not sustained hence it suffered for lack of continuity. A Highway Code was produced in 1972 to serve as a guide to drivers. The Federal Government declared 1974 as National Road Safety year when there was noticeable increase in road traffic accidents and subsequently established a Road Safety Advisory commission under the Federal Ministry of Works and Housing in the same year.

The most visible action on road safety was the establishment of Oyo Road safety corps (ORSC) through Edict No. 18 of 1977 by the old Oyo state Government. The perennial and high rate of accidents along

the ife-Ibadan road was a precursor to the decision to establish the ORSC. As a result of political differences. The corps was not allowed by the then federal Government to operate on the federal Roads along with similar traffic agencies in 1983.

The federal Government also put in place some legislative framework to promote road safety activities in the country. These legislations includes the federal Highways Act cap p. 19, National Road Traffic Regulations 2004 in addition to state Traffic laws 1976. By 1980s the carnage on the roads became a laming despite the efforts of the Federal Government especially at providing the necessary legislations to curb road traffic accidents. This scenario placed Nigeria as being second to Ethiopia with the worst road traffic accident records in the world prior to the establishment of the Federal Road Safety Commission.

### **Federal Road Safety Commission**

Following the challenges posed by road traffic accidents in the country And in a bid to confront this malaise, the federal Ministry Government on February 18<sup>th</sup> 1988 established the Federal Road Safety Commission to serve as a Lead Agency on road safety matters, vide Decree No.45 of 1988 as amended by Decree No.35 of 1992. Both decrees were later cited as FRSC Act (CAP 141) FRSC (Establishment) Act 2007.

While Decree No.45 of 1988 restricted FRSC operations to Federal highways, Decree No.35 of 1992 gave FRSC additional jurisdiction to cover all public highways in the country and empowered the personal of the corps to bear arms. Furthermore, Decree No.35 of 1992 changes the designation of the Chief Executive Officer from Director of

Organization and Chief Executive (DOACE) to the present status of Corps Marshal and Chief Executive (COMACE). Section 1 (2) of FRSC Act created the Commission which shall consist of a Chairman and five other persons to be appointed by the president, C-in-C on part time basis and the Corp Marshal and Chief Executive of the corps member. The Commission has the responsibility of organizing, administering and making policies with regards to road safety administration in Nigeria.

The Corps was established by virtues of Section 10 (1) as the operational arm of the Commission and consists of uniform and non-uniformed members. The regular Marshals are the uniform members who own salaries, while the non-uniformed members are the Special Marshals who are volunteers. Section 10 (2) charges the corps the with the following functions: making the highways safe for motorists and other road users, recommending works and devices designed to eliminate or minimize accidents on the highways and advising the Federal and State Governments including the Federal Capital Territory Administration and relevant governmental agencies on the locality where such works and devices are required; educating motorists and members of the public on the importance of discipline on the highway; preventing or minimizing accidents on the highway; designing and producing vehicle number plate; designing and producing the driver's license; to be used by various categories of vehicle operators; determining, from time to time, the requirements to be satisfied by an applicant for a driver's license; determining and enforcing speed limits for all categories of roads and vehicles and controlling the use of speed limiting devices; giving prompt

attention and care to victims of accidents among others.

At inception in 1988, the Management of FRSC created 5 Zonal Command located in Aba, Bauchi, Benin, Ibadan and Kaduna to coordinate the activities of the Commission in the various States. The Commission had its first National Headquarters at Ibadan, which was later moved to Gbagada, Lagos and finally moved to Abuja in 1991.

### **Organogram of federal Road Safety Corps**

The current FRSC Organogram has been carefully structured and streamlined along key specialized and professional departments and Corps Offices. At present, the Corps has 8 Departments, 12 Corps Offices and other specialized units for improved service delivery. The departments are: operations, Motor vehicle Administration (MVA), Training, Standards and Certification (TSC), Policy Research and Statistics (PRS), Administration and Human Resources (AHR), Finance and Accounts, Special Marshals and partnership as well as Safety Engineering Department (SED). The Corps Offices includes; Corps Intelligence, Public Education, Protocol, Corps Logistics, Corps Transport Standardization Office, Adult, Rescue and Medical Services and Corps Procurement. The rest are: corps Secretary, Corps Legal Adviser, Corps Provost, and Corps Planning Budget. The comprehensive Organogram showing the hierarchy of authority with the Corps Marshal and Chief Executive on top is presented in Figure 3.1 below. The remaining 12 Zonal Commands, 37 Sector Commands representing all the States and FCT report to the Corps Marshal through the

Head of Operations at FRSC National Headquarters, Abuja.

### **The Role of FRSC in Enforcing Road Traffic Laws**

In line with her vision statement which is “to reduce road traffic crashes and create Safe Motoring Environment in Nigeria,” the FRSC has set an agenda of “Safer Roads, fuller lives” through several operational programmes especially, in enforcement of traffic laws. These activities are carried out by providing emergency rescue services, public education, setting standards and professionalism in the road transport sub-sector, setting standards for and certifying driving schools, and engaging as well as mobilizing relevant stakeholders to improve road safety in Nigeria among others.

### **Operations**

The challenge of policing about 198,000 kilometers of road network in the country is enormous. To respond to this and urban traffic congestion, FRSC deploys her regular and special Marshals daily to check the high rate of road crashes, injuries and death on the highways. According FRSC (2009:16), as at 2007 the Corps had 170 Commands made up of 12 Zonal Commands, 37 Sector Commands including the federal Capital Territory (FCT) and 21 Unit Commands with 170 patrol vehicles. There were six (6) tow trucks on critical corridors of the highways with personnel of 20,000 comprising 12,000 Regular Marshals and 8,000 Special Marshals. This meant that only about 12.5% of highways were covered, with vehicle covering an average of 145.9 kilometers.

In response to the existing gap, additional 202 patrol vehicles, 6 heavy duty tow trucks,

29 ambulances and 246 motorbikes were injected into the system to beef up patrol operations in 2008. Furthermore, 200 patrol vehicles were refurbished while a total of 1000 Regular Marshals and 5000 Special Marshals were recruited. A combination of these actions brought substantial improvement on highways coverage leading to a rise from 12.5% in 2007 to 41% by early 2009. Traffic Control Units (TCU) was equally established in all FRSC formation to ensure hitch-free traffic flow.

Occasionally, the Corps introduced special patrols and operations to respond to specific traffic challenges. For instance, 'Operation Eagle Eye' during the Ember Months and 'Operation Rainstorm' during the rainy season. Free Safety Vehicle Check is another enforcement strategy aimed at ensuring minimum safety standards of vehicles without prosecuting offenders but, rather guiding them on appropriate remedial actions. Accidents involving motorcycle operators are equally addressed with nationwide public enlightenment and plan to regulate their conduct and operations. This led to the enactment of motorcycle safety bills by some State Government hence an enforcement date of 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2009 was fixed for compulsory use of safety helmet for motorcycle riders and their passengers. In the same vein, a nationwide awareness campaign/enforcement tagged, 'Total War on Overloading' (TOWOL) was launched to check high cases of overloading in the country. Source from Operations Department of FRSC indicate that between January to June, 2009, 5,844 traffic offenders were arrested for overloading violations.

### **Challenges of Road Traffic Law Enforcement**

The following were identified by the respondents as the major challenges confronting FRSC in enforcing road traffic laws:

- (i) **Lack of adequate funding:** Less than adequate funding through annual budgetary releases to FRSC have not been enough to execute capital projects and cater for overhead costs. Right now about 95% of residential and office accommodation in the Crops are rented. A lot of money is paid on maintenance of patrol vehicles, ambulances, motor bikes and rent leaving little or nothing for other projects like purchase of more heavy duty tow vehicles for removal of obstructions on the highways and other services.
- (ii) **Lack of Adequate Communication gadgets:** For efficiency and effective operations like patrolling the highways and rendering rescue services, vital operational equipment like Walkie Talkies are required to enable Road Marshals to share information among themselves. These equipment are also needed to alert other patrol teams at different locations ahead wherever there are reported case of emergencies and tracking recalcitrant traffic offenders.
- (iii) **Lack of Adequate Trained Manpower:** The need to have officers and men well trained in related field like law to prepare them for prosecution of traffic offenders cannot be overemphasized. Other areas are rescue and emergency services, ICT and human resource development among others. This would build more confidence in staff to discharge their duties more firmly.

(iv) **Assault Cases:** violent traffic offenders have physically assaulted Road Marshals on duty several times simply because these offenders see FRSC staffs as defenseless since members of the Crops are not armed. Despite the provisions of Section 19 of FRSC (Establishment) Act 2007 which allows members of the Crops exposed to high risk to bear arms, the Federal Government is yet to grant administrative approval to that effect. Chidoka (2010) confirms that there are increasing case of mob attacks on the personnel and offices of the Crops across the country leading to destruction of patrol vehicles and other equipment. He further reveals that 40 cases were recorded in 2009 alone while 21 others were recorded between January and June 2010. he concludes that over 100 personnel sustained various injuries in the attacks while an officer was kidnapper in the south-East.

(v) **Lack of inter-Agency Cooperation:** FRSC receives less than adequate cooperation from key government agencies. For instance, whenever the Corps embarks on Special operations like enforcement of use of safety helmets and end of year special patrols, the Nigeria police Force would be approached to assist provide security. Unfortunately, the expected cooperation is never forth coming. Similarly, some judges either for personal reasons makes judicial pronouncements that weaken the course of law enforcement. For example, inspite of the provision in Section 15 of FRSC (Establishment) Act 2007 that the operation of the Crops shall cover all public highways, some judges have not accepted the position of the law on this, hence judgments have been awarded against FRSC whenever there is dispute. As reported by “Leadership

Newspaper” of 8<sup>th</sup> June, 2010, a High Court judge in calabar ruled that FRSC has no statutory power to regulate road traffic activities on State roads. This judgement which was pronounced in 2007 was reaffirmed recently in 2010 by an Appeal Court judgement.

(vi) **Indiscipline and Lawlessness:** There is high level of indiscipline in the country exhibited by both the elite and illiterate members of the society especially as it regards Route Violation. Uniformed men drive against traffic and at times mount illegal road blocks causing obstructions on the road. Tanker and trailer drivers park indiscriminately on the highways with reckless abandon. Some Nigerians are not willing to wear safety helmets due to cultural biases because of their dress code. The Crops has continued to intensify public enlightenment on this. One of the strategies adopted by the Crops is to enlist the support of prominent traditional rulers for intervention as reported by “Punch Newspaper” of 12<sup>th</sup> July, 2009

(vii) **Corruption:** Corruption and misconduct on the part of law enforcement officers make them to compromise. Such officers collect bribes from motorists and allow them to ply the highways with overloaded and rickety vehicles among other traffic offences. This is why serials traffic offenders continue to violate traffic rules and regulation with impunity.

(viii) **Lack of Traffic Signs:** The present networks or roads are poorly constructed, not regularly maintained and in most cases, these roads do not have traffic signs. The absence of good roads creates creates traffic congestion and multiple road traffic accidents.

## **Recommendations**

The following recommendations are stated for effective operations:-

- (i) The FRSC should seek for presidential approval for the personnel of the crops to carry light arms especially for those patrolling the highways.
- (ii) The federal Government should establish a coordinating department in the office of the National Security Adviser that will represent the interest of all paramilitary agencies
- (iii) The federal and states Government should build modern and standard roads with safety components (Signage's parks and help areas) to reduce road accidents and improve road traffic enforcement.
- (iv) The federal Road safety corps should acquire more patrol equipment to effectively police the Nation's highways.
- (v) The federal Road safety corps should acquire modern Information and Communication technology (ICT) that can capture data on traffic movement in major cities and highways for efficient enforcement of traffic laws.
- (vi) Law enforcement Agencies should continuously train and retrain their personnel to improve on their knowledge of road traffic enforcement.

- (vii) The Road safety corps should intensify its public enlightenment campaigns through the electronic media to educate road users on road traffic.

## **Conclusion**

It has been established that Road Traffic Accident are still claiming lives and properties all over the world, and leading to adverse social and economic cost on countries. The malaise of road traffic crashes has therefore become a major threat to road transportation sector in particular, since it is still the most patronized mode of transportation in Nigeria. The study has identified that challenges of road traffic law enforcement is not Lack of effective laws or deficient legislative framework, but inadequate compliance and sometimes weak enforcements. The establishment of the FRSC as lead Agency on road safety matters in addition to similar state Government agencies, which has gone a long way in reducing deaths on the highways as compared to the early 1970s. The good performance of FRSC has been noted with strong emphasis, but more is still expected on the part of the Government, especially in providing adequate funds to enable the FRSC to carry out its activities more efficiently and effectively to the satisfaction of all and sundry.

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