

Stop – Go: Controlling the dangers at roadwork sites

November 20 2013

Roadworks frustrate drivers and pose a significant danger to motorists and workers, which is why a new QUT study is seeking to pinpoint driver reactions to work zone "hazards".

Dr Ross Blackman, from QUT's Centre for Accident Research & Road Safety - Queensland (CARRS-Q), said understanding the driver experience at roadwork sites was vital to providing a safe working environment for employees.

"We suspect the environment at roadwork sites has an influence on how people drive through these areas," he said.

"For example we want to know whether lower speed limits, roadwork equipment or delays impact the way [drivers](#) navigate roadwork sites."

Dr Blackman said roadwork sites were a dangerous place due to the presence of many hazards including heavy machinery, adverse environmental conditions and moving vehicles of all shapes and sizes.

"Ideally roadwork sites should be as safe as any other road environment but we know this is not the case," he said.

"Roadwork sites have high crash rates and there have been numerous fatalities at roadwork sites in Queensland and these have involved workers and public road users.

"What we want to know is how Queensland drivers react to the particular characteristics and features of a work zone, as well as how they feel about roadworks more generally.

"This study will explore road users' perceptions and experiences of roadworks, with the goal of improving safety without compromising the mobility of road users."

Dr Blackman said as a result of widespread flooding across the state, extensive roadwork projects were being carried out on Queensland roads.

"Roadworks are a fact of life, particularly in a state like Queensland where a large road network is required to service a relatively small population and extreme weather events are relatively frequent," Dr Blackman said.

"Road users benefit in the long term from better and more sustainable roads, while in the short term the necessary work may cause inconvenience and frustration."

Provided by Queensland University of Technology

Citation: Stop – Go: Controlling the dangers at roadwork sites (2013, November 20) retrieved 2 May 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2013-11-dangers-roadwork-sites.html>

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