



The Challenge

Before legislative change, road maintenance workers in Ontario were not equally protected under the law. The original *Slow Down, Move Over* legislation only covered emergency vehicles and tow trucks, not construction or maintenance crews. Roadside workers regularly faced dangerous conditions from fast-moving vehicles whilst performing essential work, resulting in injuries and even fatalities each year.

Resource - [Advocacy initiative aims to strengthen protection for roadside workers](#)

The Approach

We worked with out Ontario government contacts and directly engaged with the Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development and Ministry of Transportation. We built partnerships with other industry groups and labor organizations to amplify calls for broader legal protection for roadside workers. With the use of public awareness campaigns across all channels like traditional media, social media which ran in parallel, sharing the dangers through outreach and media such as the “Site Unseen” project and urging motorists to respect construction zones.

- The association partnered with unions and allied groups (like LiUNA), amplifying the collective voice in government consultations
- ORBA worked closely with government to propose expanding Section 159 of the Highway Traffic Act, ensuring detailed drafts included mandatory speed reduction and lane changes for drivers near roadside workers.
- Presented to the MTO the need to include “Struck by” stats in their annual report to represent the number of road workers injured or fatally struck by passing vehicles.
- We are asking our members and stakeholders to submit feedback during public comment period on proposed changes to *Slow Down Move Over* Law.
- We prioritized the conversation at our 2025 ORBA Convention: *Understanding and Preventing Work Zone Intrusion*, keynote speaker Peter Wehmeyer (Traffic Control Industry Expert), panelists Mark Baxter (President at Police Association of Ontario), James Delamere (EVP, Ramudden Global North America), Michelle Roberts (VP, Stakeholder & Public Relations at Infrastructure Health & Safety Association (IHSA)), and Rob Covassin (Director EHS, Transportation Group at Aecon), and moderator Jesse Hopkins (SVP – Ramudden Global North America) highlighted current complexities affecting road safety while exploring proactive strategies to help reduce lost-time injuries.



Resource: <https://www.newswire.ca/news-releases/ontario-drivers-ignore-road-rules-threatening-the-safety-of-construction-workers-580231061.html>

https://www.linkedin.com/posts/ontario-road-builders-association_orba-roadsafety-slowdownmoveover-activity-7361085604035506178-mPmQ/

https://www.linkedin.com/posts/ontario-road-builders-association_orba-roadsafety-transportationinfrastructurematters-activity-7361447768961269760-52tt/

The Outcome

Our advocacy led to *Highway Traffic Act* amendments, officially protecting road workers under the law. Improving overall safety for frontline workers but also raising public awareness of work zones, leading to a measurable reduction in roadside injuries. This new law was a win for the industry and celebrated by ORBA, our stakeholders and government officials.

- The legislation amendment took effect April 2, 2025, under Bill 229, the *Working for Workers Six Act*.

Lessons Learned

1. With strategic partnerships you can amplify your advocacy.
 - We collaborated with allied associations in the industry to amplify our voice for road worker safety.
2. Public awareness/ education is crucial in our industry.
 - Campaigns like “Site Unseen” and social media content effectively change drivers’ behaviours, bringing awareness to work zones.
3. Using data to show impact, drives policy.
 - Providing the MTO with “Struck By” stats and workers stories humanizes the approach, influencing lawmakers’ decisions.

Insights From ORAB’s Leadership Team -

“Expanding the Slow Down, Move Over law means Ontario’s road maintenance workers finally get the protection they deserve. This victory is the result of persistent collaboration with government, allied stakeholders and our industry partners, to put the safety of every roadside worker front and centre in provincial legislation.”

— Walid Abou-Hamde, CEO, Ontario Road Builders’ Association



“Behind every work zone are real people with families and stories. By sharing those voices and putting hard numbers in front of lawmakers, we’ve shown that data, partnership and lived experience drive meaningful change in policy and ultimately save lives.” – Malcolm Croskery, Chair of ORBA and President of Pioneer Construction

“We’re working with the government on an advocacy initiative to amend the Highway Traffic Act to include the ‘Slow Down, Move Over’ provisions, which would require motorists to reduce their speed and switch lanes, when possible, when approaching road maintenance workers or other roadside workers.”

— Steven Crombie, Senior Director of Public Affairs, Ontario Road Builders’ Association