A Road Safety Audit (RSA) is the formal safety performance examination of an existing or future road or intersection by an independent, multidisciplinary team (different experts working together).

It qualitatively estimates and reports on potential road safety issues and identifies opportunities for improvements in safety for all road users.

The aim of an RSA is to answer the following questions:

- What elements of the road may present a safety concern?
- To what extent, to which road users, and under what circumstances?
- What opportunities exist to eliminate or mitigate identified safety concerns?

Public agencies with a desire to improve the overall safety performance of roadways under their jurisdiction should be excited about the concept of RSAs.

Road safety audits can be used in any phase of project development from planning and preliminary engineering, design and construction.

RSAs can also be used on any sized project from minor intersection and roadway to mega-projects.

Practical illustration of Road Safety Audits results is given hereunder:

Before

This is a photo of an intersection, before a road safety audit was conducted. The 2 traffic signal heads are hung on a diagonal span of wire and

After

This is the same intersection after a road safety audit was conducted. The traffic signals are now hung on a box span of wire and they are now able to be hung directly over the travel
only one head is over the travel lanes. There are two lanes approaching the intersection separated by a dashed white pavement marking. 

lanes. Now there are three traffic signal heads, two for the through lane and one for the left turn lane. Pavement markings now show a separate left-turn lane at the intersection.

A road safety audit and a traditional safety review are different processes. It is important to understand the difference between the road safety reviews that are commonly performed and newer road safety audits.

What is the difference between RSA and a (TSR)Traditional Safety Review?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Road Safety Audit</th>
<th>Traditional Safety Review</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Performed by a team independent of the project</td>
<td>The safety review team is usually not completely independent of the design team.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Performed by a multi-disciplinary team (different experts)</td>
<td>Typically performed by a team with only design and/or safety expertise.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Considers all potential road users</td>
<td>Often concentrates on motorized traffic.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accounting for road user capabilities and limitations is an essential element of an RSA</td>
<td>Safety Reviews do not normally consider human factor issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always generates a formal RSA report</td>
<td>Often does not generate a formal report.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A formal response report is an essential element of an RSA</td>
<td>Often does not generate a formal response report.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Before

Rural road before a road safety audit

After

Same rural road after a road safety audit where guardrail has been installed