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New charge: Causing serious injury by dangerous driving

This charge has two main changes/facets:

	1. <u>Mention of injury</u>	2. <u>Maximum custodial sentence</u>
Current situation	No on the road driving charge mentions when someone has been injured.	2 years
Proposed	To apply in cases with life changing injury	5 years
Impact	Expect to be rarely used, maybe only 10-20 times a year.	In 2010, only 38 drivers convicted of dangerous driving given 18-24 months custodial sentence, so maximum sentence rarely used at present.
RoadPeace conclusion		
Pro	Injury is finally being mentioned in a (on the road) driving charge. RoadPeace launched Justice Campaign in 1998 which included calling for death and serious injury to be mentioned in driving offences.	Improved consistency of punishment on basis of culpability. This narrows the gap with Causing Death by Dangerous Driving (14 years maximum custodial sentence)
Con	Only apply to a very few cases and no change with other driving offences which involve the vast majority of culpable injury.	Only proposed increase in maximum custodial sentence. No mention of alternative punishment, e.g. longer driving ban or vehicle confiscation Also concern that higher sentence might result in plea bargaining to careless driving charge.

Our conclusion: This charge represents a step in the right direction but it is long overdue and many further leaps are needed. It is not good enough if the change stops here. All those injured by law breaking drivers deserve to be mentioned. Crime on the road is still crime and victims should be counted.