

1. OVERVIEW

Recent changes in numbers of deaths

- In 2008, there were 1,464 people killed in road crashes. In comparison to the previous year, this is a decline of 8.7%. During the five year period ending 2008, the average annual decline was 1.4%.
- Comparing 2008 with 2007, most jurisdictions achieved significant decreases in road deaths:
 - decreases were recorded in NSW (down 8.7%), Victoria (down 8.7%), Queensland (down 9.2%), South Australia (down 20.2%), Western Australia (down 11.1%) and Tasmania (down 11.1%)
 - the Northern Territory was up 29.3% and the Australian Capital Territory was unchanged.
- Among different road user groups:
 - driver deaths decreased by 11.5%,
 - passenger deaths decreased by 10.1%
 - pedestrian deaths decreased by 5.4%
 - motorcyclist deaths increased by 3.4%
 - there were 14 fewer cyclist deaths (down from 41 to 27).
- Male deaths decreased by 8.1 % and female deaths decreased by 10.2%.

Five-year trends

- Between 2003 and 2008 national road deaths decreased by an average of 1.4% per year.
- The five-year trend differed between males and females. Females showed an average annual decrease of 3.4% and males had an average annual decrease of 0.6%.
- The five-year trend has varied between jurisdictions:
 - the greatest average annual decrease was observed in South Australia (down 7.9%), followed by NSW (down 5.6%), Tasmania (down 2.3%) and Victoria (down 1.6%)
 - the greatest average annual increase occurred in the Northern Territory (up 9.2%), followed by the ACT (up 5.4%), Western Australia (up 5.3%) and Queensland (up 2.1%).
- Between road user groups:
 - passenger deaths showed the largest average annual decrease of 5.2%
 - pedestrian deaths had an average annual decrease of 3.2%
 - driver deaths had an average annual decrease of 0.9%
 - motorcyclist deaths increased by an average of 5.7% annually
 - no trend was apparent for cyclist deaths.
- Across age groups:
 - deaths in the 0-16 age group declined at an average rate of 7.6 % per year
 - the 17-25 age group declined on average by 2.0% per year
 - the 26-39 year group showed no trend across the last five years
 - the 40-59 year group increased with a marginal rate of 0.7 % per year
 - the 60+ age group declined on average by 2.3% per year.