

Key facts: Road Safety in Tasmania

On average, 300 people are killed or seriously injured on Tasmanian roads each year.

As the road safety data shows, there's been no improvement for a decade.

The 10-year average to December 31, 2022, for deaths sits stubbornly on 35.4 and the serious injuries at 271.

Sadly, in 2022, we experienced our worst level of road trauma since 2009 with 51 deaths and 268 serious injuries.

In 2009, 63 people died on our roads and 290 were seriously injured.

As the Australian Automobile Association report, Benchmarking the Performance of the National Road Safety Strategy (to March 31, 2023), shows, Tasmania is the state with the worst road safety record.

The report reveals that in the 12 months to March 31, 2023, Tasmania had 8.39 deaths per 100,000 population (the accepted global measurement) compared with the national average of 4.61 per 100,000 population.

If Tasmania could match the best-performing state, New South Wales (3.53 deaths per 100,000 population), 28 lives would have been saved in Tasmania.

More on Tasmanian crash statistics here: [Tasmanian crash statistics - Transport Services](#)

The Fatal 5 causes of fatal and serious injury crashes in Tasmania are speed, distraction (particularly mobile phone use), drink/drug driving, fatigue and non-use of seatbelts. This is how much they contribute to fatal and serious crashes in Tasmania:

- Speed: 29%
- Distraction: 24%
- Drink/drug driving: 24%
- Non-use of seat belts: 9%
- Fatigue: 4%

Crash statistics in Tasmania

Road users: Vehicle drivers and passengers make up 60% of fatal and serious injury crashes on our roads each year, with motorcyclists making up 25%.

Crash type: Run-off-road crashes (40%) and head on crashes (20%) make up the top two fatal and serious injury crash types in Tasmania each year.

Age: Those aged between 16-25 make up 25% of fatal and serious injury crashes in Tasmania each year, despite comprising 12% of the population.

Age: Those aged between 26-49 make up the largest proportion of fatal and serious injury crashes each year (35%), but also make up the highest population at 30%.

Gender: Males make up 65% of fatal and serious injury crashes each year, compared to 35% for females. Men and women each make up 50% of the Tasmanian population.

Location: 60% of fatal and serious injury crashes occur on rural roads, compared to 40% on urban roads, each year.

Speed zone: More than 60% of fatal and serious injury crashes occur in 80km/h and above zones.

Vehicle age: The rate of fatal crashes per registered vehicle is four times higher for vehicles aged 15 years or older than for vehicles aged five years old or less.

From Department State Growth's Towards Zero Action Plan 2020-2024

Historical speed data from traffic counters located across the state road network shows a consistent year-on-year increase in speeding behaviour since 2016. Over that time, the mean speed has increased by 0.8%.

Research shows that a 1% increase in mean speed equates to a 4% increase in fatalities.

The proportion of drivers travelling above the speed limit has also increased by 13% and the proportion of drivers travelling at more than 10km/h above the speed limits increased by 18.7%.

Research has also shown that distraction while using a mobile phone is equivalent to driving with a blood-alcohol level of between .07 and .10.

Additionally, if you're travelling at 60 km/h you will travel 33 metres for every two seconds you take your eyes off the road. At 100 km/h it's 55 metres. A lot can happen in that time.

Key infrastructure facts

- The state controls 3,774 km of road
- Councils control 14,022 km of road
- 48% of Tasmanian roads unsealed
- 80km/h limit on unsealed roads
- There are 11,000 km of non-urban roads in Tasmania with a 100km/h speed limit.

Road maintenance and road infrastructure investment were the top two member concerns in RACT's 2022 Member Survey.

RACT was pleased that State Government committed to developing 10-year plans for the Tasman, Bass, Channel and Huon highways.

However, RACT also believes that there needs to be clarity around timelines and funding, as well as an outline of major projects and maintenance and how the capacity of the state service and civil construction sector can be enhanced to roll out projects.

Police Statistics

Tasmania Police statistics for the 12 months to April 30, 2023, show that many motorists on our roads are still breaking the rules, putting themselves and others at risk.

The following are the 3-year averages to April 30, 2023, for each offence.

- Speeding offenders: 31,164
- Drink and drug driving offenders: 3,365
- Mobile phone offenders: 1,881
- Non-use of seat belts: 1,202

From Tasmania Police

Publicly available data here: [Our Performance - Tasmania Police](#)

Of that three-year average for speeding offences, 18,078 drivers were detected exceeding the speed limit by 15-29km/h.

And an average 884 drivers exceeded the speed limit by 30km/h or more over the three years to April 30, 2023.

In 2022, Tasmania Police announced, in reaction to the rise in deaths and serious injuries, that cautions would not normally be issued for first offences.

This is reflected in the Tasmania Police Performance data, which shows that 3,738 cautions were issued in the 12 months to April 30, 2023, compared to 25,000 in the previous 12 months.

There was a corresponding increase in the number of traffic infringement notices issued – 24,613 in the 12 months to April 30, 2023, compared with 13,697 in the previous 12 months.

Enforcement revenue

Tasmania is the only state that does not reinvest fines revenue into road safety initiatives, instead channelling it into general government revenue.

Victoria, Western Australia, South Australia, New South Wales and Queensland all have funding mechanisms that see between \$40-\$400 million in enforcement revenue reinvested into road safety and infrastructure each year.

The RACT will continue to advocate for revenue from the camera network to be used to expand and maintain that network.

Enforcement cameras

Tasmania's automated traffic enforcement network has been upgraded and extended.

This follows extensive work by Tasmania Police, the Department of State Growth and the Road Safety Advisory Council, and advocacy by the RACT in support of the new generation of enforcement technology.

The publicly available minutes of Tasmania's Road Safety Advisory Council show that police recommended the introduction of this new technology in 2018.

Tasmania now has 16 mobile traffic enforcement cameras and eight fixed cameras. Both Houses of State Parliament unanimously passed legislation to allow the full suite of technology to be used.

The cameras can detect not just speeding, but mobile phone use, seat belt use and registration.

RACT wants the network expanded to 32 cameras across Tasmania as part of a best-practice model to improving safety as a deterrence to poor driver behaviour.

The cameras will give greater coverage while maintaining the current level of police traffic operations.

Tasmania Police also operate hand-held and vehicle-mounted speed-detection technology and have increased their traffic enforcement with the re-introduction of the Highway Patrol.